

COURSE SPECIFICATION DOCUMENT

NOTE: ANY CHANGES TO A CSD MUST GO THROUGH ALL OF THE RELEVANT APPROVAL PROCESSES, INCLUDING LTPC.

Academic School/Department: Communications, Arts and Social Sciences

Programme: Political Science

FHEQ Level: 5

Course Title: Islam and the West

Course Code: PLT 5410

Course Leader: Professor Alex Seago

Student Engagement Hours: **120**

Lectures: 22.5

Seminar / Tutorials: 22.5

Independent / Guided Learning : 75

Semester: FALL and/or SPRING and/or SUMMER

Credits: 12 UK CATS credits
6 ECTS credits
3 US credits

Course Description:

The aim of this course is to focus on the historical, political and religious relationships between "Islam" and the "West". Islam has for centuries been Europe's neighbour and cultural contestant with a history of conflict and co-existence. Since September 11 there has been increasing talk of a "clash of civilizations", but globalization has also created an interdependency of faiths which requires greater co-operation, understanding, and dialogue. A recurrent theme of this course will be whether it is possible to separate the world into monolithic entities called "Islam" and the "West". Why is one defined in terms of religion and the other a geographical designation? Further, we are increasingly witnessing "Islam in the West". Muslims are not confined to the Middle East but have spread in large numbers to Europe and the United States and there have been Islamic communities living in the Balkans and in parts of southern Europe for centuries. Another theme will be the relations between religion and state in Islam and Christianity. Is Islam inherently resistant to secularization as some scholars believe?

Pre-requisites: PLT 3100 or PLT 3105 or INR 4100 or INR 4105 or HST 3100 or HST 3105

Aims and Objectives:

- Give students a critical perspective on debates surrounding 'Orientalism' and the 'clash of civilisations' thesis
- Give students a comparative perspective on Islam and its relationship with the 'Judeo-Christian' tradition both theologically and historically.

- Throw light on the diversity of contemporary Islamic movements and their attitude to various aspects of 'Western modernity' such as democracy, human rights, feminism and secularism.

Programme Outcomes:

At the end of this course, the students will have achieved the following programme outcomes.

5A(iii); 5B(i); 5B(ii); 5B(iii); 5C(i); 5C(ii); 5C(iii); 5D(ii)

A detailed list of the programme outcomes are found in the Programme Specification. This is located at the Departmental/Schools page of the portal.

Learning Outcomes:

At the end of this course, the students will have achieved the following learning outcomes.

- Demonstrates a critical engagement with major thinkers and intellectual paradigms in the study of 'Islam and the West'
- Demonstrates a detailed understanding of the political implications of religious institutions, practices and systems as they affect relations between 'Islam and the West'.
- Demonstrates a critical and theoretical engagement with core problems and issues faced in the study of 'Islam and the West'
- Demonstrates a detailed understanding of the continuities and transformations evident in the relations between 'Islam and the West'
- Completes assigned work with a degree of clarity, technical competence and critical thinking, and a degree of independence and capacity for self-evaluation, appropriate for a 5000-level course

Indicative Content:

- An understanding of debates surrounding Orientalism and the 'clash of civilisations' thesis.
- An introduction to some of the key issues in Islamic theology and jurisprudence and the relationship between Islam and the 'Judeo-Christian Tradition'.
- An exploration of some of the key episodes in medieval Islamic history and their impact on the Christian West especially the Crusades and 'Islamic Science'.
- An introduction to the Arab-Israeli conflict and its implications for Islam-West relations.
- An analysis of contemporary 'Islamism' and 'Islamic fundamentalism' and the attitude of these movements to various aspects of 'Western modernity': secularism, human rights, democracy etc ..
- An introduction to debates surrounding Islam and Gender.
- An exploration of some of the central issues surrounding 'Islam in the West' i.e. Muslims living in Western contexts.
- Is 'Islam and the West' a valid paradigm?

Assessment:

This course conforms to the Richmond University Standard Assessment Norms approved at Academic Council on June 28, 2012.

Teaching Methodology:

This course will be taught through a combination of lectures and seminar-type activities, including group work, sub-group activities, classroom discussion, and the showing of

