REL13251 - Islam in Modern Society
Semester 1, 2006

Course Outline

Course Co-ordinator: Colin Wilks
Room: MC107
Ph: 49215192
Email: Colin.Wilks@newcastle.edu.au

Semester: Semester 1 - 2006
Unit Weighting: 10
Teaching Methods: Seminar

Brief Course Description
Provides students with an understanding of Islam (its history, beliefs and values) and modern society (its history, philosophical foundations and values) and the relationship which has existed between them, and, in the process, dispels some common misconceptions which many westerners (and some Muslims) have about Islam and which many Muslims (and some Westerners) have about modern society. Students are introduced to the different versions of Islam which have been practised at various times and in various cultures throughout history, and to the differing manifestations of modern society. There is a particular focus on the relationship between Western Imperialism and modern Islamist movements, and the extent to which this relationship can be understood as a ‘Clash of Civilisations’; the role of women in Islam, and the development of Islamic communities within the Western world.

Contact Hours
Seminar for 2 Hours per Week for the Full Semester

Course Objectives
1. To provide students with an understanding of Islam (its history, beliefs and values, and some common misconceptions about its history, beliefs and values) and modern society (its history, values and philosophical foundations, and some common misconceptions about its history, values and philosophical foundations).

2. To provide students with an understanding of the history and reasons for conflict between Islam (or parts thereof) and modern society (or parts thereof), and to enable them to distinguish between the dimensions of this conflict which stem from actual or perceived religious differences and those which actually stem from non-religious factors but are fuelled by the political manipulation of actual or perceived religious differences.

3. To enable students to distinguish between (i) the religion of Islam and the body of tradition and custom with which it has become historically associated in some Islamic societies (eg. the veiling of women, honour killings, female circumcision), and (ii) the philosophy of modern western society and the body of tradition and custom with which it has become historically associated (eg. Christianity, Imperialism).
4. To enable students to distinguish between (i) the theory of Islam and Islam as it has been practised in various historical periods and in different contemporary cultures, and (ii) the theory of modern western society and the way it has actually been practised in various historical periods in different western nations.

5. To enable students to contextualise the situation of Muslim women in different Islamic and western cultures, and to understand how the situations of Islamic women and Western women have been exploited for political propaganda purposes by Islam and the West.

6. To familiarise students with (i) the approaches and responses of various Islamic societies to the modern world, and (ii) the various approaches and responses of the modern world to Islam.

Course Content
1. The religion of Islam (its history, beliefs and values, and common misconceptions about its history beliefs and values) and modern society (its history, values and philosophical foundations, and common misconceptions about its history, values and philosophical foundations).

2. The history and reasons for conflict between Islam (or parts thereof) and modern society (or parts thereof); the dimensions of this conflict which stem from actual or perceived religious differences, as opposed to those which actually stem from non-religious factors but are fuelled by the political manipulation of actual or perceived religious differences.

3. The distinction between (i) the religion of Islam and the body of tradition and custom with which it has become historically associated in some Islamic societies (eg. the veiling of women, honour killings, female circumcision), and (ii) modern western society and the body of tradition and custom with which it has become historically associated (eg. Christianity, Imperialism).

4. The distinction between (i) the theory of Islam and Islam as it is and has actually been practised in various historical periods and in different contemporary cultures, and (ii) the theory of modern western society and the way it has actually been practised in various historical periods in different western nations.

5. The situation of Muslim women in different Islamic and western cultures, and how the situations of Islamic women and Western women have been exploited for political propaganda purposes by Islam and the West.

6. The approaches and responses of various Islamic societies to the modern world; and the approaches and responses of the modern world to Islam.

Assessment Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Items</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Essays / Written Assignments</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>2,000 words; due week 9.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examination: Take Home</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>1,000 words; requiring two out of several short questions to be answered. Distributed in Week 13, to be returned in Week 14.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group/tutorial participation and contribution</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>This mark will be based upon a systematic and ongoing evaluation of the quality and quantity of the student's contributions to seminar discussion. The procedures involved will be clearly explained to the students.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assumed Knowledge
20 units at 1000 level

Callaghan Campus Timetable
REL3251

Enquiries: School of Humanities and Social Science
Semester 1 – 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Room</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seminar</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>15:00 - 17:00</td>
<td>[W308]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Or</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>11:00 - 13:00</td>
<td>[V102]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Or</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>15:00 - 17:00</td>
<td>[W202]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

School of Humanities and Social Science
Plagiarism

University policy prohibits students plagiarising any material under any circumstances. A student plagiarises if he or she presents the thoughts or works of another as one's own. Without limiting the generality of this definition, it may include:

- copying or paraphrasing material from any source without due acknowledgment;
- using another's ideas without due acknowledgment;
- working with others without permission and presenting the resulting work as if it was completed independently.

Plagiarism is not only related to written works, but also to material such as data, images, music, formulae, websites and computer programs. Aiding another student to plagiarise is also a violation of the Plagiarism Policy and may invoke a penalty. For further information on the University policy on plagiarism, please refer to the Policy on Student Academic Integrity at the following link -


The University has established a software plagiarism detection system called Turnitin. When you submit assessment items please be aware that for the purpose of assessing any assessment item the University may -

- Reproduce this assessment item and provide a copy to another member of the University; and/or
- Communicate a copy of this assessment item to a plagiarism checking service (which may then retain a copy of the item on its database for the purpose of future plagiarism checking).
- Submit the assessment item to other forms of plagiarism checking

Extension of Time for Assessment Items, Deferred Assessment and Special Consideration for Assessment Items or Formal Written Examinations

Students are required to submit assessment items by the due date, as advised in the Course Outline, unless the Course Coordinator approves an extension of time for submission of the item. University policy is that an assessment item submitted after the due date, without an approved extension, will be penalised. Any student:

1. who is applying for an extension of time for submission of an assessment item on the basis of medical, compassionate, hardship/trauma or unavoidable commitment; or

2. whose attendance at or performance in an assessment item or formal written examination has been or will be affected by medical, compassionate, hardship/trauma or unavoidable commitment;

must report the circumstances, with supporting documentation, to the appropriate officer on the prescribed form. Please go to the Policy and the on-line form for further information, particularly for information on the options available to you, at:


Changing your Enrolment

The last dates to withdraw without financial or academic penalty (the HECS Census Dates) are:

For semester 1 courses: 31 March 2006

Students may withdraw from a course without academic penalty on or before the last day of semester and prior to the commencement of the formal exam period. Any withdrawal from a course after the last day of semester will result in a fail grade.

Students cannot enrol in a new course after the second week of semester, except under exceptional circumstances. Any application to add a course after the second week of semester must be on the appropriate form, and should be discussed with the School Office. To change your enrolment online, please refer to

http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/enrolment/change-enrol.html

Contact Details

Faculty Student Service Offices: The Faculty of Education and Arts, Room: GP1-22 (General Purpose Building) - Phone: 02 215 314

The Dean of Students: Dr Jennifer Archer , Phone: 492 15806 - Fax: 492 17151
resolutionpreinct@newcastle.edu.au

Various services are offered by the University Student Support Unit:
Alteration of this Course Outline

No change to this course outline will be permitted after the end of the second week of term except in exceptional circumstances and with Head of School approval. Students will be notified in advance of any approved changes.

Web Address for Rules Governing Undergraduate Academic Awards

Web Address for Rules Governing Postgraduate Academic Awards

STUDENTS WITH A DISABILITY OR CHRONIC ILLNESS

The University is committed to providing a range of support services for students with a disability or chronic illness. If you have a disability or chronic illness which you feel may impact on your studies, please feel free to discuss your support needs with your lecturer or course coordinator. Disability Support may also be provided by the Student Support Service (Disability). Students must be registered to receive this type of support. To register please contact the Disability Liaison Officer on 49 21 5766, or email: student-disability@newcastle.edu.au

As some forms of support can take a few weeks to implement it is extremely important that you discuss your needs with your lecturer, course coordinator or Student Support Service staff at the beginning of each semester. For more information related to confidentiality and documentation please visit the Student Support Service (Disability) website at: www.newcastle.edu.au/services/disability

Online Tutorial Registration:
Students are required to enrol in the Lecture and a specific Tutorial time for this course via the Online Registration system: http://studinfo1.newcastle.edu.au/rego/stud_choose_login.cfm Registrations close at the end of week 2.

Studentmail and Blackboard:  www.blackboard.newcastle.edu.au/
This course uses Blackboard and studentmail to contact students, so you are advised to keep your email accounts within the quota to ensure you receive essential messages. To receive an expedited response to queries, post questions on the Blackboard discussion forum if there is one, or if emailing staff directly use the course code in the subject line of your email. Students are advised to check their studentmail and the course Blackboard site on a weekly basis.

Written Assignment Presentation and Submission Details
Students are required to submit assessment by the due date. Late assignments will be subject to the penalties described below.

Hard copy submission:
✦ Type your assignments: All work must be typewritten in 11 or 12 point black font. Leave a wide margin for marker’s comments, use 1.5 spacing, and include page numbers.
✦ Word length: The word limit of all assessment items should be strictly followed – 10% above or below is acceptable, otherwise penalties may apply.
✦ Proof read your work because spelling, grammatical and referencing mistakes will be penalised.
✦ Staple the pages of your assignment together (do not use pins or paper clips).
✦ University coversheet: All assignments must be submitted with the University coversheet: www.newcastle.edu.au/policy/academic/general/assess_coversheet.pdf
✦ Assignments are to be deposited in the relevant discipline assignment box:

    School of Humanities and Social Science Office, Level 1, McMullin Building, MC127

✦ Do not fax or email assignments: Only hard copies of assignments will be considered for assessment. Inability to physically submit a hard copy of an assignment by the deadline due to other commitments or distance from campus is an unacceptable excuse. Assignments mailed to Schools are accepted from the date posted.
✦ Keep a copy of all assignments: All assignments are date-stamped upon receipt. However, it is the student’s responsibility to produce a copy of their work if the assignment goes astray after submission. Students are advised to keep updated back-ups in hard copy and on disk.

Penalties for Late Assignments
Assignments submitted after the due date, without an approved extension of time will be penalised by the reduction of 5% of the possible maximum mark for the assessment item for each day or part day that the item is late. Weekends
count as one day in determining the penalty. Assessment items submitted more than ten days after the due date will be awarded zero marks.

**Special Consideration/Extension of Time Applications**
Students wishing to apply for Special Consideration or Extension of Time should obtain the appropriate form from the Student HUBS.

**Remarks:** Students can request to have their work re-marked by the Course Coordinator or Discipline Convenor (or their delegate); three outcomes are possible: the same grade, a lower grade, or a higher grade being awarded. Students may also appeal against their final result for a course. Please consult the University policy at:

**Return of Assignments**
Where possible, assignments will be marked within 3 weeks and returned to students in class. At the end of semester, students can collect assignments from the Student HUBS during office hours.

**Student Representatives**
We are very interested in your feedback and suggestions for improvement. Student Representatives are the channel of communication between students and the School Board. Contact details of Student Representatives can be found on the School website.

**Student Communication**
Students should discuss any course related matters with their Tutor, Lecturer, or Course Coordinator in the first instance and then the relevant Discipline or Program Convenor. If this proves unsatisfactory, they should then contact the Head of School if required. Contact details can be found on the School website.

**Essential Online Information for Students**
Information on Class and Exam Timetables, Tutorial Online Registration, Learning Support, Campus Maps, Careers information, Counselling, the Health Service and a range of free Student Support Services can be found at: β http://www.newcastle.edu.au/currentstudents/index.html
**Assessment Details**

**Summary**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Word Count</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seminar Paper</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>800-1000</td>
<td>Week following week of presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>End of week 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take Home Exam</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>2 essay-style answers of 1,000 words each</td>
<td>Distributed in Week 13, returned in Week 15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Seminar Paper**

Students will deliver a seminar presentation and submit a written seminar paper the week following their seminar presentation.

Seminar presentations and papers will be based around one or more of the prescribed readings for the week in which students choose to deliver their presentations, but, as with all the assessment tasks for this course, the grades students receive for their seminar papers will be based on more than their ability to provide a competent summary of the reading or readings in question. The grade a student receives will also reflect the student’s abilities to:

1. distinguish between those aspects of the reading material which are relevant to the course and those which are not.
2. avoid repetition of material which other students have already dealt with in previous presentations.
3. critically engage with the reading material (or those aspects of it which are relevant and have not been dealt with by other students), and to do so (i) in the light of the relevant material which other students have already dealt with and the classroom discussions which their dealing with it has facilitated, and (ii) in a way that facilitates classroom discussion.

If you wish to get the most out of this course (in terms of both the grades you receive and your broader education) you should read the “Prescribed Readings” before coming to class each week - whether you are presenting a seminar paper or not.

A schedule of weekly seminar topics and prescribed weekly readings is listed below.

**Essay Questions**

**Question 1**

‘It has become clear since the Iranian Revolution and the Gulf War that the ‘Islamic East’ and the ‘Christian West’ perceive ‘the other’ as a challenge. We know that the western media continues to provoke fear and hatred of Islam and, similarly, that the Islamic media continues to invoke fear and hatred of the western world.’

In light of the above quotation, what role, if any, has the media has played in inflaming tensions between the ‘Islamic East’ and the ‘Christian West’?
Question 2
Can the conflict between the Islamic world [or elements thereof] and the Western world [or elements thereof] be understood purely in terms of religion, or are there non-religious factors (historical, economic, political and cultural) which also need to be taken into account?

Question 3
To what extent have the psychological and social mechanisms associated with the phenomenon of ‘othering’ contributed to the current situation which exists between Islam and the Western world, and to what extent has the role of these mechanisms been selectively overstated?

Question 4
Is the conflict between Islam and the Western world an actual conflict or a conflict that exists only in the minds of certain individuals?

Question 5
What grounds, if any, did the September 11 jihadi(s) have for ‘hating’ America, and what grounds, if any, did they have for venting their hatred in the way they did?

Question 6
When the September 11 jihadi(s) hijacked their weapons of mass destruction, were they also hijacking Islam?

Take-Home Exam
The take-home exam requires students to complete two (2) of eight (8) possible questions. More specific details relating to the style in which these questions are to be answered will be made available in Week 13 of semester.

Incomplete Work
While students may fail one assessment item and still pass the course (if their aggregate mark is 50% or greater), they must complete all assessment items.
Prescribed and Recommended Reading

There are no prescribed texts for this course but there is a book of ‘Prescribed Weekly Readings’ which can be purchased from the NUSA Printary. A list of ‘Additional Weekly Readings’ will be listed on Blackboard.

Some Recommended Texts


Some Relevant Video and DVD Programs

(which may possibly be viewed in class, incorporated in seminar presentations, or viewed privately as a supplement to lecture-seminar material)

The Power of Nightmares
Islam, Empire of Faith: The Messenger
Terror and Tehran
Divide and Conquer (Four Corners Feb 2002)
About Us: Letter from America: Bonnie Green
The Big Picture: The Fifty Years War Part 1.
Beneath the Veil (Four Corners)
Covered: (Hijab)
Women Without Veils
Planet Islam, Part 1: France: The Making of a Martyr, 297.09 PLAN
The Middle East and the New World Order, Noam Chomsky, (956.05 MIDD)
Cycle of Violence (955.04 CYCL)
Saddam’s Friends, (956.70443 SADD)
Compass: Tomorrow’s Islam (a positive and constructive view of the future of Islam)
Compass: Islam Unveiled, Part 1. (tackles contentious questions about the past, present, and future of Islam)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Week begin</th>
<th>Topic &amp; Prescribed Readings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Feb 20</td>
<td>Introduction to Course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>February 27</td>
<td>Modern Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>March 6</td>
<td>Islam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>March 13</td>
<td>European Colonialism and Islamic ‘Fundamentalism’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Esposito, J. op cit, Ch.3: “The West Triumphant: Muslim Responses”, pp.47-76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>March 20</td>
<td>The Israel-Palestine Conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Al-Sowayegh, Abdulaziz (1984) Arab Petro-Politics, Part II: Arab Oil and Palestine Conflict&quot;, Chs 5 and 6, pp.51-82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>March 27</td>
<td>Afghanistan and the Taliban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>April 3</td>
<td>The September 11th Attack on America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>April 10</td>
<td>The War on Terror and Iraq</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mid-Semester Recess: Friday 14 April – Friday 28 April
| 9 | May 1 | **Muslim Women under “Islamic fundamentalism” and Islamic Law”?**  
(Some Light Relief)  
| 10 | May 8 | **Islam, Politics and Women**  
| 11 | May 15 | **Muslims in the West**  
| 12 | May 22 | **Islam and Multi-Culturalism**  
| 13 | May 29 | **Islam and Modern Society** |
| 14 | June 5 | **Overview of Course** |

**Queen’s Birthday Public Holiday: Monday 12 June**  
**Examination period: Tuesday 13 June – Friday 30 June**