REL3251 - Islam in Modern Society
Course Outline

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Semester 1 - 2007
Unit Weighting: 10
Teaching Method: 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 Term

Course Objectives
1. To provide students with an understanding of Islam (its history, beliefs and values, and common mis-conceptions 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.

Course Outline Issued and Correct as at: Week 1, Semester 1 - 2007

CTS Download Date: 16 February 2007
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 (e.g., 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 (e.g., Christianity, Imperialism).

4. To enable students to distinguish between (i) the theory of Islam and Islam as it 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. 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 (e.g., 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 (e.g., 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 both Islamic women and Western women have been exploited for 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>Essays / Written Assignments</th>
<th>40%; 2,000 words; due week 9.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Examination: Take Home</td>
<td>50%; 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%; 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

RELI3251

ISLAM IN MODERN SOCIETY

Enquiries: School of Humanities and Social Science

Semester 1 – 2007

Seminar Monday 15:00 - 17:00 [W308]
Or Tuesday 15:00 - 17:00 [W202]

Plagiarism

University policy prohibits students plagiarising material under any circumstances. A student plagiarises if she presents the thought/works of another as her own. 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 work as if 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 a software plagiarism detection system called Turnitin. When you submit assessment items be aware that for the purpose of assessing any assessment item the University may (i) reproduce this item and provide a copy to another member of the University; (ii) 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); (iii) submit the assessment item to other forms of plagiarism checking

Written Assessment Items

Students may be required to provide written assessment items in electronic form as well as hard copy.

Extensions of Time, Deferred Assessment and Special Consideration for Assessment Items/Exams

Students are required to submit assessment items by the due date, 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 info on the options available to you: http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policy/academic/adm_prog/adverse_circumstances.pdf

Students should be aware of the following important deadlines:

Requests for Special Consideration must be lodged no later than 3 working days after the date of submission or examination.
Requests for Extensions of Time on Assessments must be lodged no later than the due date of item.

Requests for Rescheduling Exams must be lodged no later than 5 working days before the date of exam.

Applications may not be accepted if received after the deadline. Students who are unable to meet the above deadlines due to extenuating circumstances should speak to their Program Officer in the first instance.

Changing your Enrolment

The last date to withdraw without financial or academic penalty (called the HECS Census Dates) for semester 1 courses is: 31 March 2007. 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/trimester, except under exceptional circumstances. Any application to add a course after the second week of semester/trimester must be on the appropriate form, and should be discussed with the Student Enquiry Centre. To change your enrolment online, please refer to: http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/enrolment/changingenrolment.html

Contact Details: Faculty Student Service Offices
The Faculty of Education and Arts
Room: Level 3, Shortland Union Phone: 02 4921 5000

The Dean of Students
Resolution Precinct
Phone: 02 4921 5806
Fax: 02 4921 7151
resolutionprecinct@newcastle.edu.au

Various services are offered by the University Student Support Unit: http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/studentsupport/index.html

Alteration of this Course Outline
No change to this course outline will be permitted after week 2 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
Web Address for Rules Governing Professional Doctorate 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 02 4921 5766, or via email at: 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 of semester.

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 items by the due date.

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 or double 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 Assessment Item Coversheet:** All assignments must be submitted with the University
coversheet available at: http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/forms/
- **By arrangement with the lecturer, assignments may be submitted at any Student Hub located at:**
  - Level 3, Shortland Union, Callaghan
  - Level 2, Student Services Centre, Callaghan
  - Ground Floor, University House, City
  - Ground Floor, Administration Building, Ourimbah
- **Date-stamping assignments:** All students must date-stamp their own assignments using the
  machine provided at each Student Hub. If mailing an assignment, this should be address to the
  relevant School. Mailed assignments are accepted from the date posted, confirmed by a Post Office
  date-stamp; they are also date-stamped upon receipt by Schools.
- **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.
- **Keep a copy of all assignments:** It is the student’s responsibility to produce a copy of their work if it
  goes astray after submission. Students are advised to keep updated back-ups in electronic and hard
  copy formats.

Online copy submission to Turnitin
In addition to hard copy submission, students are required to submit an electronic version of
assignments to Turnitin via the course Blackboard website. Prior to final submission, all students have
the opportunity to submit one draft of their assignment to Turnitin to self-check their referencing.

Special Circumstances
Students wishing to apply for Special Circumstances or Extension of Time should apply online @

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: http://www.newcastle.edu.au/study/forms/
Return of Assignments
Students can collect assignments from a nominated Student Hub during office hours. Students will be informed which Hub to go to and the earliest date that assignments will be available for collection. Students must present their student identification card to collect their assignment.

Preferred Referencing Style
In this course, it is recommended that you use the Harvard in-text referencing system (similar to the APA system) for referencing sources of information used in assignments. Inadequate or incorrect reference to the work of others may be viewed as plagiarism and result in reduced marks or failure. An in-text citation names the author of the source, gives the date of publication, and for a direct quote includes a page number, in parentheses. At the end of the paper, a list of references provides publication information about the source; the list is alphabetised by authors’ last names (or by titles for works without authors). Further information can be obtained from: www.newcastle.edu.au/services/library/tutorials/infoskills/index.html

Student Representatives
Student Representatives are a major channel of communication between students and the School. Contact details of Student Representatives can be found on School websites.

Student Communication
Students should discuss any course related matters with their Lecturer/Course Coordinator in the first instance and then their Discipline/Program Convenor. If this proves unsatisfactory, they should 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, Health Service and a range of free Student Support Services can be found at: http://www.newcastle.edu.au/currentstudents/index.html
Assessment Details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seminar Paper</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>800-1000 words. Due the week following week of seminar presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>2000 words. Due end of week 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take Home Exam</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>2000 words (2 essay-style answers of 1000 words each). Distributed in Week 14 and due in Week 15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Seminar Paper

Students will deliver a seminar presentation and submit a seminar paper the week following their presentation. Seminar presentations and papers will be based around the recommended readings/videos/DVDs for the week in which students choose to deliver their presentations, but, as with all the assessment tasks for this course, the grades which students receive for their seminar papers will not be based simply on their ability to provide a competent summary of the readings/video/DVD in question. The grade received will also reflect the student’s abilities to:

1. distinguish between those aspects of the reference material which are relevant to the course and those which are not.
2. avoid repetition of material which other students have already dealt with.
3. critically engage with the source 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 encourages classroom discussion.

To get the most out of this course (in terms of both the grades you receive and your broader education) you should prepare before coming to class each week - whether you are presenting a seminar paper or not. A schedule of seminar paper topics 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 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) that 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 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 *jihadies* 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 *jihadies* 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.

**Recommended Reading**

There are no prescribed texts or readings for this course but there are recommended texts and weekly readings (see schedule). A list of ‘Additional Weekly Readings’ will be made available on Blackboard.

**Some Recommended Texts**


Anonymous (2004) *Imperial Hubris: Why the West is losing the War on Terror*, Washington, D.C. Brassey’s, 1st Ed.


Also see Lateline interview with Professor Akbar Ahmed (17/04/2006)
http://www.abc.net.au/lateline/content/2006/s1617658.htm

**Some Relevant Video and DVD Programs**
(parts of which may be shown in class by the lecturer, but which can also be incorporated in seminar presentations, or viewed privately as a supplement to lecture-seminar material)

*The Power of Nightmares* (DVD) 303.625POWE
Explores the idea that we are threatened by a hidden and organised terrorist network is an illusion. At the heart of the story are two groups: the American neo-conservatives and the radical Islamists. Both were idealists born out of the failure of the liberal dream to build a better world. These two groups have changed the world but not in the way either intended. Together they created today's nightmare vision of an organised terror network - a fantasy that politicians then found restored their power and authority in a disillusioned age

*Children of Abraham* (DVD) 200CHIL
Examines religious tensions dominating world events in the aftermath of 9/11, exploring the three monotheistic faiths - Judaism, Christianity and Islam - and the relationship between them from a historical, theological and contemporary perspective. Legacy of the Prophet Abraham

*Islam, Empire of Faith: The Messenger* VHS 909.097671GARD
Details the history of Islam as a faith, a culture, and a civilization. Ep. 1. The messenger, introduces the rise of Islam and the extraordinary life of the Prophet Mohammed. Ep. 2. The awakening, examines the profound influence Islam had on the intellectual development of the West during the Middle Ages. Ep. 3. The Ottomans, profiles the rise of the Ottoman Empire, ending at the reign of Suleiman the Magnificent

*The Longest Hatred* (VHS) 305.8924LONG
Traces the origins and development of anti-semitism culminating in the Holocaust, and the resurgence of anti-semitism today (Library holds pt. 1 only)

*Promises and Betrayals* (DVD) 956.94PROM
Shows how British double-dealing during the First World War ignited conflict between Arab and Jew in the Middle East. A story of intrigue among rival empires; of misguided strategies; and of how conflicting promises to Arab and Jew created a legacy of bloodshed which determined the fate of the Middle East.

*In Search of Peace* (VHS) 956.94INSE
Chronicles the first two decades of Israel's existence, offering insights on origins of the Middle East conflict.

*Beneath the Veil*, (VHS) 323.044 BENE
Why are thousands of people fleeing Afghanistan in search of havens like Australia? What could have driven the escape of the Afghans rescued by the Tampa? *Four Corners* takes viewers on a shocking journey into Afghanistan to reveal the horror of life under Taliban rule.

*A Mission to Die For* (VHS) 303.625 MISS
The subject of this program is Mohamed Atta, the 33-year-old suspected ringleader of 19 suicide hijackers whose last act took thousands of innocent lives, and raised the frightening prospect of future conflict between Islam and the West. What drove Atta, this "very nice, very delicate" but
superficially unremarkable man, to commit an act of such abominable evil? Was he insane, or were his motives and ruthless determination rooted somewhere in his background? Four Corners reporter Liz Jackson goes in search of an answer by following Mohamed Atta's life, from his beginnings in a middle class family in a north Egyptian village, to his end in the burning north tower of the World Trade Centre.

Gay Muslims (DVD) 306.6209176 GAYM
A film about young gay Muslims as they reveal their deep conflict with living in a country that is accepting of homosexuality, but belonging to a religion in which it is condemned.

Islam in Indonesia (DVD) 297.09598ISLA
Geraldine Doogue travels to our near neighbour, the world's most populous Muslim country, where a battle is underway for the hearts and minds of believers. Part One focuses on progressive Muslim leaders as they try to counter extremism, fundamentalism and a general swing to the right amongst Muslims, in a bid to promote an open, tolerant and pluralist version of their faith. In Part Two Geraldine Doogue discovers the focus of conservative power is the Majelis Ulama Indonesia (MUI), the Council of Indonesian Islamic Scholars which has recently issued a fatwa against progressive thinking, innovation and pluralism. She explores what this means for Australia and for the future of Indonesia.

Compass: Tomorrow’s Islam (VHS) 305.6971
Looks at Islamic intellectuals and leaders from major world cities post September 11, 2001 (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.

Other VHS and DVD Titles

(which will not be shown in class by the lecturer but which may, nonetheless, be incorporated in seminar presentations, or viewed privately as a supplement to lecture-seminar material)

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.
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)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Begin</th>
<th>Topic &amp; Recommended Readings/Videos/DVDs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Feb 19</td>
<td><strong>Introduction to Course - Modern Society</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Feb 26</td>
<td><strong>Modern Society</strong>&lt;br&gt;Video: <em>The Power of Nightmares</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Mar 12</td>
<td><strong>Islam: European Colonialism and the Rise of Islamic ‘Fundamentalism’</strong>&lt;br&gt;Esposito, John L. (1995) <em>The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality?</em>, “Contemporary Islam: Reformation or Revolution?” pp.7-12&lt;br&gt;Esposito, J. <em>op cit</em>, Ch.3: “The West Triumphant: Muslim Responses”, pp.47-76&lt;br&gt;(or any section of any text/video/DVD which deals with the impact of European colonialism)&lt;br&gt;<strong>Video:</strong> <em>The Power of Nightmares</em></td>
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**Mid-Semester Recess: Friday 6 April – Friday 20 April**
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Apr 23</td>
<td>The War on Terror and Iraq</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Apr 30</td>
<td>Post-Saddam Iraq (2003 to the present)</td>
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<td>The <em>Shia-Sunni</em> Conflict and International Jihad - What is at Stake in Iraq and for who? (Readings to be Announced)</td>
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<td>Video: Al Zarqawi: The Face of Terror</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>May 7</td>
<td>(a) Muslim Women under “Islamic fundamentalism” and Islamic Law”?</td>
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<td>(b) Islam, Politics and Women</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>May 14</td>
<td>Muslims in the West/ Islam and Multi-Culturalism</td>
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<td>* The Danish Cartoons Affair*</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>May 21</td>
<td>Islam and Multi-Culturalism in Australia (Recent Developments)</td>
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<td><em>The Sheik Taj din al-Hilaly Affair</em></td>
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<td>Video: Killing off Multi-Culturalism</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>May 28</td>
<td>Islam and the Future/Modern Society and the Future (where do we go from here?)</td>
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<td>Videos: <em>Islam in Indonesia</em> and <em>Tomorrow’s Islam</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>June 4</td>
<td>Islam and Modern Society: Overview of Course</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Queen’s Birthday Public Holiday: Monday 11 June
Examination period: Tuesday 12 June – Friday 29 June

School of Humanities and Social Science