The Islamic Studies Program meets the need for accurate and rigorous knowledge of a religious tradition that has shaped countless aspects of human history and culture, stands at the center of political and cultural debates in the United States, and yet continues to be examined reductively in the public square. The multidisciplinary minor in Islamic Studies provides the intellectual training to approach Islam - and the world - in a historically and culturally informed manner, challenging stereotypes while exploring the diversity, complexity, and creativity of Islam and Muslim communities world-wide. Special community-engaged courses also offer experiential opportunities in and around Baltimore that introduce students to lived religion and encourage self-awareness, critical consciousness, and sustained connections with organizations and communities in the city.

Programs

- Islamic Studies, Minor (https://e-catalogue.jhu.edu/arts-sciences/full-time-residential-programs/degree-programs/islamic-studies/islamic-studies-minor/)

Courses

AS.194.105. Islam and its Cultural and Religious Diversity, 600-1600. 3 Credits.
While media often present Islam as a fairly univocal and compact cultural and religious system, news reports about tensions, hostility and at times open conflict within the Islamic world itself are frequent. Unity and internal diversity characterize Islam nowadays and have historical roots that have deeply shaped Islam since its very inception. This course will explore the historical origins of the dynamics of unity and diversity in Islam from the predication of Muhammad and the expansion of the first caliphate, to the formation of the Ottoman, Safavid and Mughal empires. By focusing on the historical events and the cultural production of the first millennium of Islam, this course will offer a thorough historical introduction to its cultural and religious complexity.
Area: Humanities

AS.194.201. Jews, Muslims, and Christians in the Medieval World. 3 Credits.
The three most widespread monotheisms have much more in common than is generally portrayed: a common founding figure, a partly shared succession of prophets, closely comparable ethical concerns and religious practices, a history of coexistence and of cultural, religious, social and economic interaction. This course will focus on a number of key texts and historical events that have shaped the relationships between Jews, Muslims, and Christians during the Middle Ages and contributed to their reciprocal construction of the image of the “other.” The geographical center of the course will be the Mediterranean and the Near and Middle East, a true cradle of civilizations, religions, and exchange.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.194.202. Never Forget: Muslims, Islamophobia, and Dissent after 9/11. 3 Credits.
In partnership with the social justice organization Justice for Muslims Collective, this community-engaged course and oral history project will explore how diverse Muslim communities navigated and contested belonging and political and cultural agency amidst state-sponsored violence and national debates on race, gender, citizenship and national security after 9/11 and during the ongoing War on Terror. Through history, ethnography, first-person narratives, film, fiction, and online resources, students will learn about the impact of 9/11 on American Muslim communities. This includes cultural and political resistance to imperialism, racism, and Islamophobia as well as to intersectional inequities within Muslim communities that were intensified in the context of Islamophobia. Students will learn about community activism and organizing from JMC, and complete a participatory action research project with the organization. This project is an oral history archive that will address gaps in the documentation of movement histories when it comes to early organizing against War on Terror policies by Muslim communities and communities racialized or perceived as Muslim. Students will be trained to record stories of resistance among leaders who organized and responded at the local and national-level in the Greater Washington region, to support the building of an archive that will shape a wide variety of future organizing and advocacy efforts.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.194.205. Islamic Mysticism: Traditions, Legacies, Politics. 3 Credits.
For over a thousand years, the Sufi tradition has been a dynamic force in Islamic social, political and spiritual life. The tradition offers a treasure trove of devotional literature and music, philosophical treatises, contemplative practices, and institutions of social and political organization. After unpacking the politics of the term “Sufi,” we will trace the historical development of the tradition from the early ascetics in Iraq and Syria to the age of trans-national Sufi orders, with case studies from South Asia, Turkey, and the United States. We will then move into some of the key constructs of the tradition of spiritual growth and character formation: the divine-human relationship, the stages of the spiritual path, contemplative and practical disciplines, ideas of sainthood, discipleship and ethical perfection, and the psychology of love. Throughout the class, we will explore the nature of experiential language and interrogate the tradition through the lens of gender. We will also experience Sufism through ritual and music.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.194.210. Race, Gender, Citizenship: Being Muslim in America. 3 Credits.
This course explores how American Muslims navigate and contest complex notions of belonging in the context of national conversations on race, gender, citizenship, and national security. With a focus on specific case studies that range from Black Muslim movements of the early twentieth century to the ongoing War on Terror, the course adds complexity to the public conversation on what it means to be Muslim - and what it means to be American. We will draw on history, ethnography, first-person narratives, films, blogs, documentaries and fiction. As a Community Engaged course, the class will include site visits and learning with and from Muslim communities in Baltimore.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

https://krieger.jhu.edu/islamic/

For current course information and registration go to https://sis.jhu.edu/classes/
AS.194.220. The Qur'an: Text and Context. 3 Credits.
For 1400 years, the Qur'an has played a central role in Muslim intellectual, spiritual, artistic and ritual life. This course will explore the sacred scripture of Islam through its foundational ideas, history of the text and thematic development, literary style, history and methods of interpretation, and role in Muslim spiritual and ritual life. We will also explore how the Qur'an weaves through literature, music and the visual arts.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.194.230. African-Americans and the Development of Islam in America. 3 Credits.
Muslims have been a part of the American fabric since its inception. A key thread in that fabric has been the experiences of enslaved Africans and their descendants, some of whom were Muslims, and who not only added to the dynamism of the American environment, but eventually helped shape American culture, religion, and politics. The history of Islam in America is intertwined with the creation and evolution of African American identity. Contemporary Islam in America cannot be understood without this framing. This course will provide a historical lens for understanding Islam, not as an external faith to the country, but as an internal development of American religion. This course will explicate the history of early Islamic movements in the United States and the subsequent experiences of African-Americans who converted to Islam during the first half of the twentieth century. We will cover the spiritual growth of African American Muslims, their institutional presence, and their enduring impact on American culture writ large and African-American religion and culture more specifically.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.194.305. Cultures of Pilgrimage in Islam. 3 Credits.
The hajj pilgrimage to Mecca is one of the pillars of Islam. But Muslims around the world also take part in many other pilgrimages, from the massive annual Shi'a pilgrimage to Karbala to the smaller ziyarat “visits” to Sufi saint shrines, to travel to centers of Islamic learning, to pilgrimage to isolated natural features like mountains, trees, valleys. What are the theologies that propel the act of travel in Islam? How are cities, architectures, economies shaped by these cultures? And how are these traditions affected by the wars and colonial projects that plague many Muslim-majority countries in the contemporary world? Readings in this course will draw from anthropology, philosophy, Islamic interpretive texts (tafsir), and travelogues.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.194.401. Themes in Medieval Islamic Thought. 3 Credits.
This seminar examines medieval Muslim thinkers who addressed themes at the intersection of theology, philosophy, science, and ethics: the definition of the nature of God’s attributes, His uniqueness, transcendence and omnipotence; human freewill and the limits of human knowledge; the nature of the world; and the relationship among reason, religion, and science. The course will look at how these and other crucial themes were addressed by major medieval philosophers and philosophical schools not only in Islam, but also in Judaism and Christianity, and highlight similarities and differences among the three monotheistic faiths.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.194.502. Independent Study. 3 Credits.
Approval Required
Prerequisite(s): You must request Independent Academic Work using the Independent Academic Work form found in Student Self-Service: Registration & Online Forms.

Cross Listed Courses

Anthropology
AS.070.267. Culture, Religion and Politics in Iran. 3 Credits.
This is an introductory course for those interested in gaining basic knowledge about contemporary Iran. The focus will be on culture and religion and the ways in which they become interwoven into different kinds of political stakks.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences
Writing Intensive

AS.070.465. Concepts: How to Read Hindu and Islamic Texts. 3 Credits.
What is the nature of anthropological concepts and what relationships do they bear to concepts internal to a society? We invite students to think with key ideas from Hindu and Islamic traditions, asking if anthropological concepts are best seen as abstractions from the particular or as intertwined with ongoing lines of inquiry, say into the nature of the real and continual efforts to test it? Topics in ritual theory, grammar, aesthetics, translation, revelation, luminosity, figuration and the mythological among those to be considered.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences
Writing Intensive

Center for Language Education

AS.375.115. First Year Arabic. 4 Credits.
Introductory course in speaking, listening, reading, and writing Modern Standard Arabic. Presents basic grammatical structures and a basic vocabulary. Through oral-aural drill in classroom, tapes in Language Laboratory, and reading/writing exercises, students attain a basic level of competence on which they can build in subsequent years of study.
No Satisfactory/ Unsatisfactory

AS.375.116. First Year Arabic II. 5 Credits.
Continuation of AS.375.115. Introductory course in speaking, listening, reading, and writing Modern Standard Arabic. Presents basic grammatical structures and a basic vocabulary. Through oral-aural drill in classroom, tapes in Language Laboratory, and reading/writing exercises, students attain a basic level of competence on which they can build in subsequent years of study. May not be taken Satisfactory/ Unsatisfactory
Prerequisite(s): AS.375.115 or instructor permission

AS.375.215. Second Year Arabic. 4 Credits.
Designed to bring students up to competency level required for third/fourth year Arabic. Students will consolidate and expand their mastery of the four basic skills acquired in AS.375.115-116. More authentic material–written, audio, and visual–will be used, and culture will be further expanded on as a fifth skill. Recommended Course Background: AS.375.115-116 or equivalent.
Prerequisite(s): AS.375.116 or equivalent
Area: Humanities

AS.375.216. Second Year Arabic II. 5 Credits.
Continuation of AS.375.215. Designed to bring students up to competency level required for third/fourth year Arabic. Students will consolidate and expand their mastery of the four basic skills acquired in AS.375.115-116. More authentic material–written, audio, and visual–will be used, and culture will be further expanded on as a fifth skill. Accelerated students should register for Section 01. Recommended Course Background: AS.375.215 or permission required.
Prerequisite(s): AS.375.215 or instructor permission
Area: Humanities
AS.375.301. Third Year Arabic. 3 Credits.
Designed to enhance students' ability to read, discuss, and write about various topics covered in traditional and contemporary Arabic texts. Recommended Course Background: AS.375.216 or equivalent.
Prerequisite(s): AS.375.116 or instructor permission
Area: Humanities

AS.375.401. Fourth Year Arabic. 2 Credits.
This is an introductory course to different periods of the Arabic literature. Selections of famous Arabic poetry and short prose works are the substance of the course.
Prerequisite(s): AS.375.302 or equivalent
Area: Humanities

AS.375.402. Fourth Year Arabic II. 3 Credits.
This is an introductory course to different periods of the Arabic literature. Selections of famous Arabic poetry and short prose works are the substance of the course. Continuation of AS.375.401. Recommended Course Background: AS.375.302 or equivalent.
Prerequisite(s): AS.375.401 or equivalent.
Area: Humanities

History
AS.100.234. The Making of the Muslim Middle East, 600-1100 A.D.. 3 Credits.
A survey of the major historical transformations of the region we now call the 'Middle East' (from late antiquity through the 11th century) in relation to the formation and development of Islam and various Muslim empires.Cross-listed with Near Eastern Studies and the Program in Islamic Studies.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.100.362. Children and Childhood in the Middle Ages. 3 Credits.
Seminar on the history of childhood and ideas of childhood around the medieval Mediterranean; themes include child custody; medieval education and punishment; parent-child private letters; child mortality and the arts of bereavement/consolation. Cross-listed with the Program in Islamic Studies and Near Eastern Studies.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.100.374. Conquest, Conversion, and Language Change in the Middle Ages. 3 Credits.
Examines case-studies of imperial conquests (Islamic, Mongol, reconquista, early colonialism) and attendant changes in religion (Christianization; Islamization) and in language (Arabization; transition from Latin to European vernaculars) across medieval Eurasia. 
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.100.383. Conversion and Apostasy in the Middle Ages. 3 Credits.
Compares religious transformation in medieval Europe and the Middle East (ca. 600-1500), including conquest and conversion; conversion narratives; apostasy, martyrdom and other encounters between medieval Jews, Christians, and Muslims. Prerequisite: 1 history course.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.100.387. Everyday Life in the Medieval Middle East. 3 Credits.
Explores the daily lives of non-elites in the medieval Middle East—food; housing; clothes; marriage and divorce; urban festivals—through primary documents (e.g. letters, court records) and artifacts (e.g. clothing). Pre-requisite for enrollment: Students must have taken one history course.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.100.421. Sex, Law and Islam. 3 Credits.
ISIS, "virgins" in paradise, the sexual slavery of Yazidi women... This course will use anthropological and historical studies to examine the long history of how rules and understandings about sex, sexuality, and gender have mattered in how people think about Islam.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

Writing Intensive

AS.100.438. The City Victorious: Medieval Cairo. 3 Credits.
What was medieval Cairo like? Students explore urban life in this imperial capital (969-1517), including food and market habits; relations between Jews, Christians, and Muslims; patronage; plague, drought, and famine. Pre-requisite for enrollment: Students must have taken two history courses.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.100.646. Marvels and Wonder in medieval Arabic Culture.
Explores the concept of marvels in different genres of medieval Arabic culture: Qur’anic exegesis; travel literature; ‘ethnography’; cosmography and geography; marvels of the natural world (e.g. hermaphrodites); Muslim views of pre-Islamic (‘pagan’) monuments.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

History of Art
AS.010.103. Introduction to the Art of Asia. 3 Credits.
A survey of the art and architecture of Asia, from the ancient world to the present and including the Indian subcontinent, China, Japan, Korea, and Southeast Asia.
Area: Humanities

AS.010.110. Art of the Islamic World. 4 Credits.
This course is an introduction to the art of the Islamic world, covering a geography that stretches from Spain to India and a chronology that extends from the seventh century into our own time. Within this rich and varied continuum, we will look at a range of art forms—including architecture, painting, sculpture, ceramics, and calligraphy—in relation to such themes as patronage, production, function, and audience. A number of the artworks will be viewed firsthand in local collections. We will also explore the intersection of Islamic art with today’s political realities.
Area: Humanities

AS.010.319. Medieval Art and Architecture of the Holy Land. 3 Credits.
The course focuses on art and architecture in the political and religious contexts of the Middle East, from the 4th to the 14th c. The three monotheistic religions all claimed specific territories – in particular the city of Jerusalem – for cult practices. This situation resulted in military conflicts that had an impact of Jewish, Medieval, Byzantine, and Islamic art in the Holy Land. The political conflicts, which still plague the region today, are rooted in the complex situation of the medieval period. The Roman, Arab, Byzantine, and crusader invasions resulted however in exciting eclectic styles that characterize the art and architecture of the region. We will discuss concepts behind political and religious leadership, as they intersect with the power of the arts.
Area: Humanities

Writing Intensive
AS.010.329. Building an Empire: Architecture of the Ottoman Capitals, c. 1300–1600. 3 Credits.
Centered on modern-day Turkey and encompassing vast territories in Asia, Africa, and Europe, the Ottoman Empire (1299 – 1923) was the longest lived and among the most powerful Islamic states in history, with an artistic tradition to match. This course explores the functional and symbolic role that architecture played during the empire’s formative centuries, when three successive capital — Bursa, Edirne, and Istanbul — served to visualize the sultans’ growing claims to universal authority. With reference to mosques, palaces, tombs, and other categories of architecture, the course will examine the buildings in their artistic, social, and political contexts. Themes to be addressed include patronage and audience, architectural practice and the building trade, ceremonial and ritual, topography and urban planning, and the relationship of Ottoman architecture to other traditions.
Area: Humanities

AS.010.330. Art of the Caliphates: Visual Culture and Competition in the Medieval Islamic World. 3 Credits.
Despite its modern-day association with a fringe extremist movement, the term “caliphate” was traditionally used to describe the Muslim world at large, the political and spiritual ruler of which bore the title of caliph. The original Islamic caliphate was established in the seventh century as a vast empire centered on the Middle East and extending deep into Africa, Asia, and Europe. It soon broke apart into a series of competing powers, until in the tenth century, three rival dynasties—the Baghdad-based Abbasids, the Spanish Umayyads, and the Fatimids of North Africa—each claimed to be the rightful caliphate. This course will examine how these fascinating political developments and conflicts played out in the realm of art and architecture between the seventh and thirteenth centuries. As well as palaces, mosques, and commemorative buildings, the course will look at media ranging from ceramics and metalwork to textiles and illustrated manuscripts, with many of the artifacts being viewed firsthand in local museum collections. These works will be considered in relation to such themes as patronage, audience, ceremony, and meaning. Particular attention will be paid to how the various caliphates—both in emulation of and competition with one another—used visual culture as a powerful tool to assert their legitimacy.
Area: Humanities

AS.010.338. Art and the Harem: Women’s Spaces, Patronage, and (Self-)Representation in Islamic Empires. 3 Credits.
Long characterized in the Western imagination as exotic realms of fantasy, harems in Islamic tradition served as private domestic quarters for the women of elite households. This course explores the harem—as an institution, a physical space, and a community of women—from various art-historical perspectives, considering such topics as the harem’s architecture, the agency of its inhabitants as patrons and collectors, the mediating role of eunuchs in the harem’s visual and material culture, and the ability of harem women to make their mark through public artistic commissions. Our case studies will address a range of Islamic geographical and chronological contexts, though we will focus on the empires of the early modern period and, above all, the famous harem of the Ottoman sultans at the Topkapi Palace in Istanbul. In challenging popular misconceptions, the course will also look at the wealth of eroticizing imagery that the harem inspired in Western art, which we will consider through Orientalist paintings at the Walters Art Museum and illustrated rare books at Hopkins itself.
Area: Humanities

AS.010.352. Modern and Contemporary Art: Middle East and South Asia. 3 Credits.
This course will explore modern and contemporary art in colonial and postcolonial contexts from Bangladesh to northern Africa. How do artists negotiate demands to support their national and local identities while participating in modernism across borders? What role do secularism and spirituality have in modern art? How do anticolonial, Marxist, and feminist politics shape art in these regions? How do global economic forces and the rise of powerful collectors, private museums, and international art fairs shape art and artists working across this geographic area? We will foreground the role of women as artists, collectors, patrons, and scholars throughout.
Area: Humanities

AS.010.423. Modern and Contemporary Art in South Asia. 3 Credits.
How does modernism operate in the colonial context, work with and against the nationalisms of new countries (India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Bangladesh), challenge existing norms of the art world and the art market, engage with the difficult and violent upheavals of Partition and sectarian conflict, and allow for experimentations and new forms all the while? This course will explore the history of the art of the subcontinent from c. 1880 to the present by critical engagement with the art, artists, and theories at play in the South Asian region.
Area: Humanities

AS.010.440. Power Dressing: The Politics of Costume between the Ottoman Empire and the West. 3 Credits.
In the Ottoman Empire—a vast multiethnic state straddling Africa, Asia, and Europe—how one dressed was a deeply political affair. Ottoman rulers and subjects alike used clothing to express (and sometimes transgress) the hierarchical, religious, and communal distinctions defining their society, much to the fascination of foreigners who visited the empire or sought knowledge of its sartorial traditions in texts and images. This seminar will explore Ottoman dress and dress codes in the context of the empire's long and complicated relationship with Western powers, focusing on the role that costume played as a charged site of cross-cultural interaction, posturing, and self-assertion from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century. Our case studies will include costume albums—books showing people high and low in their characteristic garb—painted by Ottoman artists for Western buyers; diplomatic robes of honor and their attendant ceremonies; and cultural cross-dressing as manifested in European turquerie portraiture and masquerades. Moving into the modern period, we will consider how nineteenth-century dress reforms bridged the gap between Ottoman and Western costume while engendering new modes of Ottoman sartorial self-representation that challenged hardening Orientalist discourses in such venues as mannequin museums and world’s fairs. The seminar will make considerable use of artworks in local collections, including rare books and prints at Hopkins itself.
Area: Humanities
AS.010.631. Performing Power: Ceremonial, Diplomacy, and Gift-Giving in and beyond the Ottoman Empire.
As a major global power straddling three continents, the Ottoman Empire developed a rich and diversified ceremonial culture aimed at impressing local and international audiences alike. This seminar will explore the ways in which works of art and architecture provided settings and apparatus for, and were themselves shaped and enlivened by, the ceremonial acts in which they featured. Covering the period between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries, we will address a range of case studies—including mosque inaugurations, royal processions, the reception of foreign ambassadors, and the exchange of diplomatic gifts—with regard to their sociopolitical, visual, material, and spatial contexts. A major concern of the seminar will be the question of how Ottoman ceremonies, together with their staging and attendant art forms, were adapted in response to changing conditions and audiences, particularly with the shift from the early modern to the modern period. While our focus will be on the Ottoman Empire, the course will also consider the ceremonial cultures of the various Asian and European polities with which the Ottomans interacted, investigating the points of comparison and contrast that defined these multifarious but connected interregional approaches.
Area: Humanities

History of Science, Medicine, and Technology
AS.140.301. History of Science: Antiquity To Renaissance. 3 Credits.
The first part of a three-part survey of the history of science. This course deals with the origins, practice, ideas, and cultural role of scientific thought in Graeco-Roman, Arabic/Islamic, and Medieval Latin/Christian societies. Interactions across cultures and among science, art, technology, and theology are highlighted.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

Near Eastern Studies
AS.130.138. Freshman Seminar: Jerusalem: The Holy City. 3 Credits.
This course will survey the cultural history of Jerusalem over three millennia, primarily as the symbolic focus of three faiths: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. The course content will focus on the transformation of sacred space as reflected by literary and archaeological evidence by examining the artifacts, architectural monuments, and iconography in relation to written sources. The creation of mythic Jerusalem through event and experience will be examined. Course requirements will focus on the development of advanced writing skills and critical thinking.
Area: Humanities

AS.130.364. Archaeology of Arabia. 3 Credits.
This course examines the archaeology of the Arabian Peninsula from the earliest Paleolithic in the region (c. 1.5 million years ago) through the first few centuries of the Islamic era (c. 1000 AD). We will review basic geology and environmental conditions, examine the development of animal herding and crop cultivating lifeways, and scrutinize the rise of ancient South Arabian complex societies and civilizations. Co-listed with AS.131.664.
Area: Humanities

AS.230.147. Introduction to Islam Since 1800. 3 Credits.
This course is an introduction to contemporary Islam and Muslim societies from approximately 1800 to the present. Key themes will include the colonial encounter, state formation and reform, revolution, Islamic revival, and globalization. Reflecting Islam’s status as a world religion, the course will touch on developments around the Muslim-majority world and in the West.
Area: Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.230.367. Islamic Finance. 3 Credits.
Today, Islamic finance is a global industry comprising nearly $2 trillion in assets, with hubs from Kuala Lumpur to Dubai to London. But half a century ago, nothing called “Islamic finance” existed. So where did Islamic finance come from? Why is it growing so fast? And what does it mean for finance to be Islamic? We discuss the ban on riba in the Quran and hadith, finance in early and medieval Islamic societies, petrodollars and the birth of Islamic banking in the 1970s, the rise of Islamic capital markets since 2000, contemporary shariah-compliant financial structures, and the constitution of piety through financial practice.
Area: Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.363.329. Gender and Sexuality Beyond the Global West: Gender and Sexuality in Contemporary Art in North Africa and the Middle East. 3 Credits.
This course aims to explore how gender and sexuality is situated in contemporary artistic practices in the geographical Middle East, through concepts of religion, war, revolution, resistance, nation-state, post-colonialism, and neoliberalism, especially as written and observed first-hand by artists, curators and scholars from the Middle East and North Africa region and their diasporas. Every week, under an overarching topic, notions of gender and sexuality will be questioned through works of selected artists across the region, as well as texts that provide the historical, theoretical, sociological and political background.
Area: Humanities

Political Science
AS.190.394. Comparative Politics of the Middle East and North Africa. 3 Credits.
This course examines the domestic, regional, and transnational politics of the Middle East and North Africa. The class is organized into three units. The first examines major armed conflicts—anti-colonial, intra-state, and inter-state—from 1948 through the 1990s. It uses these historical moments as windows onto key issues in Middle Eastern and North African political issues such as external intervention/occupation, human rights, sectarianism, social movements, and memory politics. Unit Two focuses on policy relevant issues such as democratization, minority populations, religion and politics, and gender. In Unit Three, students will explore the politics of the Arab Uprisings through critical reading and discussion of new (post-2011) scholarship on MENA states, organizations, and populations. Enrollment limited to Political Science and International Studies majors.
Area: Social and Behavioral Sciences

Sociology
AS.230.147. Introduction to Islam Since 1800. 3 Credits.
This course is an introduction to contemporary Islam and Muslim societies from approximately 1800 to the present. Key themes will include the colonial encounter, state formation and reform, revolution, Islamic revival, and globalization. Reflecting Islam’s status as a world religion, the course will touch on developments around the Muslim-majority world and in the West.
Area: Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.230.367. Islamic Finance. 3 Credits.
Today, Islamic finance is a global industry comprising nearly $2 trillion in assets, with hubs from Kuala Lumpur to Dubai to London. But half a century ago, nothing called “Islamic finance” existed. So where did Islamic finance come from? Why is it growing so fast? And what does it mean for finance to be Islamic? We discuss the ban on riba in the Quran and hadith, finance in early and medieval Islamic societies, petrodollars and the birth of Islamic banking in the 1970s, the rise of Islamic capital markets since 2000, contemporary shariah-compliant financial structures, and the constitution of piety through financial practice.
Area: Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.363.329. Gender and Sexuality Beyond the Global West: Gender and Sexuality in Contemporary Art in North Africa and the Middle East. 3 Credits.
This course aims to explore how gender and sexuality is situated in contemporary artistic practices in the geographical Middle East, through concepts of religion, war, revolution, resistance, nation-state, post-colonialism, and neoliberalism, especially as written and observed first-hand by artists, curators and scholars from the Middle East and North Africa region and their diasporas. Every week, under an overarching topic, notions of gender and sexuality will be questioned through works of selected artists across the region, as well as texts that provide the historical, theoretical, sociological and political background.
Area: Humanities

Writing Intensive