

ISLAMIC STUDIES

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

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/>)

For current course information and registration go to <https://sis.jhu.edu/classes/>

Courses

AS.194.102. Islamic Pasts in the Contemporary World. 3 Credits.

This course will focus on the intellectual and cultural legacies of “Islamic pasts.” It has been argued by scholars that Islam is not only a religion but a “civilization” with identifiable sensibilities, overlapping histories, and temporalities. This civilization once spread from the Atlantic coast of Africa to the Indian subcontinent and beyond, but regimes and dynasties have changed hands in many of these places, while remaining in place in others. What remains of Islamic pasts in places where Islam once reigned supreme but has either vanished, been reduced to minority status, or repressed in ongoing political projects? This course examines lost Islamic pasts in the contemporary world, using readings from anthropology, history, literature, and poetry. As the basis of this course, we will read four texts in their entirety focusing on four different geographic points of interest—Spain, India, the Balkans, and Palestine. Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4)

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. AS Foundational Abilities: Citizens and Society (FA4), Democracy (FA4.1), Ethics and Foundations (FA5)

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.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences
AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4)
EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3), Engagement with Society (FA4)

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.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences
AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3)
EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3)

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.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4)

AS.194.256. Museums, Communities, and the Sacred. 3 Credits.

This community-engaged course is co-created by a scholar and curator with expertise in religion, art, and material culture, and taught in partnership with the Baltimore Museum of Art (BMA), and centers how museums engage with the sacred. Recognizing that museums have traditionally been under-equipped to respond to the social concerns that animate their local communities, the BMA is rethinking how a twenty-first century civic museum engages the city in which it is located. Understanding the museum as a public space in which contemporary civic and social issues can be engaged, we will explore such questions as: how can a museum represent devotional objects while honoring a diversity of religious and spiritual perspectives and avoiding homogenous narratives about belief? How can a museum create relationships with religious communities to understand and interpret the objects in its collection, and navigate differences in faith-based communities with ethical care? How can a museum engage local communities in the process of writing labels for objects and in other acts of interpretation in a way that is not extractive and is genuinely value-aligned? In short, how can a museum truly become public? As a community-engaged course, students will build practically on their learning about museums, religion and public pedagogy to create and facilitate community listening circles at the BMA. The course will include visits to the BMA and other sites, guest visits on focused topics from museum professionals in other institutions, and training in listening and facilitation.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3)

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 they in which they become interwoven into different kinds of political stakes.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Culture and Aesthetics (FA3)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3)

Writing Intensive

AS.070.328. Ethnographies Of Iran. 3 Credits.

We approach Iran through building layers of understanding through works of literature, cinema, ethnography, and take particular note of the recent uprising and of some of the central works that are being produced on matters of environment and climate change.

AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Culture and Aesthetics (FA3)

Writing Intensive

Center for Language Education**AS.375.115. First Year Arabic. 5 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 Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3), Engagement with Society (FA4)

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 Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3), Engagement with Society (FA4)

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

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3), Engagement with Society (FA4)

AS.375.216. Second Year Arabic II. 4 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. Recommended Course Background: AS.375.215 or permission required.

Prerequisite(s): AS.375.215 or instructor permission

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3), Engagement with Society (FA4)

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.375.216 or Instructor Permission

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3), Engagement with Society (FA4)

Writing Intensive

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

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4)

Writing Intensive

AS.375.402. Fourth Year Arabic II. 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. Continuation of AS.375.401. Recommended Course Background: AS.375.302 or equivalent.

Prerequisite(s): AS.375.401 or equivalent.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4)

Writing Intensive

East Asian Studies**AS.310.331. Islam in Asia. 3 Credits.**

You will learn about the efforts of ordinary, non-elite Muslims to shape the relation between their communities and the state as well as to (where applicable) the non-Muslim majority through collective organizing over the last forty years. We will read and discuss books by anthropologists, historians, and sociologists studying Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, China, Malaysia, and Indonesia.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS Foundational Abilities: Citizens and Society (FA4), Ethics and Foundations (FA5)

EN Foundational Abilities: Engagement with Society (FA4)

First Year Seminars**AS.001.183. FYS: What Does It Mean to Be Religious? Creativity, Experience, and the Individual. 3 Credits.**

What do we mean when we say that something or someone is "religious?"

Our First-Year Seminar unpacks this question through a comparative approach, and pays special attention to the ways in which this term has been applied to the study of Islamic cultures and Muslim experience.

Through an exploration of the categories of experience, creativity and the individual, we offer a less presumptuous and more open-ended way of imagining the many things it may mean to be religious.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS.001.215. FYS: Mosques, Museums, and the Mind's Eye: Discovering Islamic Art in Person. 3 Credits.

Despite its association with distant regions and time periods, Islamic art has a flourishing presence in today's America, represented by rich museum collections, modern buildings designed in historical styles, and vibrant scholarly networks. This seminar explores how we, from the vantage point of twenty-first-century Baltimore, might experience works of Islamic art in ways that are informed by their own cultural contexts while also acknowledging the challenges involved in bridging this gap. We will spend much of the course engaging with objects and architecture in person, with visits planned to the recently reinstalled Islamic galleries at the Walters Art Museum in Baltimore, the Islamic Center of Washington, DC, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. You will be invited to handle artifacts in person and to try your hand at calligraphy, one of the most distinctive and esteemed Islamic artforms. In the classroom setting, we will read and discuss translations of primary sources written by historical practitioners and consumers of Islamic art, along with examples of modern scholarship that seek to understand the Islamic tradition from a variety of perspectives. As well as learning about such perspectives, you will be encouraged to develop and share—in presentations and written assignments—your own ideas about Islamic art, building on the close, firsthand encounters that run throughout the seminar.

Distribution Area: Humanities

History**AS.100.118. Introduction to the Middle East. 3 Credits.**

Where is the Middle East? What is it exactly in the Middle of? What, if anything, defines it, and who gets to do the defining? This introductory course poses such questions. Whilst promising no easy answers, it will nevertheless introduce students who have no prior knowledge of the Middle East to the region. Emphasis will be placed on the history, geography, languages, religions, and culture of the pre-modern and modern Middle East. Students will also be exposed to different methods and approaches to the academic study of the region. The course, while at the introductory level, is reading and writing intensive.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4)

Writing Intensive

AS.100.245. Islam East of the Middle East: The Interconnected Histories of Islam in Asia. 3 Credits.

Challenging the conception that Islam is synonymous with the Middle East, this course considers Muslim populations across Asia and interrogates how Islam and these regions have shaped one another.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3)

AS.100.327. The Islamic Age of Empires: The Ottomans, the Mughals, and the Safavids. 3 Credits.

In this course, we will survey the political, social, intellectual, and cultural history of the three Islamic early modern gunpowder empires that ranged from "the Balkans to Bengal": The Ottomans (1300-1922), the Safavids (1501-1736), and the Mughals (1526-1858).

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3), Engagement with Society (FA4)

Writing Intensive

AS.100.338. Islam and Dune. 3 Credits.

In this course we will explore how religion in general and Islam in particular informs the world of Frank Herbert's sci-fi novel *Dune*, laying particular emphasis on how the messianic and mystical tradition within Islam pervades the first novel. We will also watch excerpts from the film adaption by Denis Villeneuve, and the forthcoming second part in its entirety together in a local theater. As we do so, we will also discuss questions of Orientalism, representation, adaption, and appropriation in both the books and the films.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3), Engagement with Society (FA4)

Writing Intensive

History of Art**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.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3)

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.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3)

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 exoticizing 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.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Ethics and Foundations (FA5)

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.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Culture and Aesthetics (FA3)

Writing Intensive

AS.010.359. The Symbolic Mosque: A Political History of Islamic Architecture. 3 Credits.

From the 2008 Swiss referendum banning minarets and the opposition of the 2010 proposed construction of a mosque near the site of the September 11 attacks in New York City to the more recent reconversion of the Hagia Sophia in 2020, the mosque in modern times has incited significant controversy and sentiments of hostility among various political and religious groups. The mosque as a political battleground, however, has a much longer history, and the coopting of religious buildings and architectural elements as visual symbols deserves a more comprehensive historical analysis. With a focus on the Ottoman context, this seminar will explore the political dimensions of mosque architecture since the fifteenth century and will examine its transformations both visually and symbolically across spatiotemporal contexts. The historical investigation into the symbolic significance of the mosque and Islamic architecture in the first half of this course will lead to a broader discussion in the second half about the role of architectures of nationalism in politics and diplomacy starting from the nineteenth century until today. By focusing on the mosque itself as a symbol, this course aims to spark dialogue and reflection on the role of religious monuments in contemporary political encounters across different geographic contexts. This course encourages a multi- and interdisciplinary approach to Islamic art and architecture by incorporating readings and topics from a variety of fields, such as cultural theory, political history, anthropology, and heritage studies. Case studies covered by this course include the Persianate and Byzantine influences in early Ottoman mosques, the establishment and continuation of the classical Ottoman architectural style of the sixteenth century, neo-Mamluk mosques in Egypt and the creation of architectural identities in Ottoman Arab lands, architectural afterlives of Ottoman heritage in modern Greece, and the use of neo-Ottoman architecture by the Turkish Justice and Development Party (AKP) today.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3), Engagement with Society (FA4)

Writing Intensive

AS.010.377. Modern Palestinian Art & Its Contexts. 3 Credits.

Modern Palestinian art took shape in the bourgeois salons of nineteenth-century Cairo, the Ottoman-era workshops of Jerusalem's icon painters, the militant presses of revolutionary Beirut, and the sewing circles of Amman's refugee camps. It emerged from the state-sponsored art schools of the Communist Bloc, in conversation with the Black Panther Party, through crowds of curious exhibition-goers in Tokyo and Oslo and Tehran and, of course, in defiance of the ongoing Israeli occupation. This class introduces students to art made in and around Palestine between 1880 and today, focusing on its engagement with the myriad worlds in which it has always participated. How can visual culture mediate relationships to local heritage across space and time, or negotiate nationalism in the absence of a nation? What tensions arise around the circulation of artwork inexorably linked to a liberation struggle? How have artists navigated questions of the "postcolonial" as the subjects of a contemporary colonial regime? This class will explore modern Palestinian visual art from a transnational perspective, paying particular attention to the roles of women and gender in its creation, content, and display.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3), Engagement with Society (FA4)

Writing Intensive

AS.010.421. An Empire's Diversity: Ottoman Art and Architecture beyond the Imperial Court. 3 Credits.

The established historiography of Ottoman architecture is dominated by the patronage of the sultans and their elites, particularly as it shaped the empire's third and final capital, Istanbul. While this focus on the "center" and its leadership reflects the Ottoman state's own hierarchical structure, it also obscures the larger network of places and people that enabled the imperial system to develop and acquire meaning in the first place. This course will explore Ottoman architecture and its patronage from the perspective of these neglected regions and actors, covering such examples as Christian vassal states along the empire's European borders, Arab lands with existing traditions of Islamic art, the curious persistence of Gothic models in the former Crusader kingdom of Cyprus, and the distinctive architectural practices of non-Muslim minorities within Istanbul itself. Drawn primarily from the early modern and modern periods, our case studies will be treated not as imitations of or deviations from the metropolitan mainstream, but as vital expressions of Ottoman culture that assertively engaged with, and themselves contributed to, the better-known strategies of the sultan's court. We will also go beyond issues of architecture and patronage and consider these buildings as lived spaces whose associated objects, furnishings, and social and ceremonial activities were no less constitutive of the empire's diverse architectural landscape.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Ethics and Foundations (FA5)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3)

AS.010.426. Sacred Connections: The Arts of Pilgrimage in the Islamic World, c. 1500–1900. 3 Credits.

As a central practice of the Muslim faith, pilgrimage has long animated the arts of the Islamic world, not only by generating countless monuments and objects, but also by facilitating the movement of artists, artifacts, and ideas across vast distances. This course explores the rich visual and material products of the Islamic pilgrimage tradition during the early modern and modern periods, including the architecture of the sacred sites themselves, the processions and ceremonies enacted by those who journeyed to these destinations, and proxy monuments and artworks created for those unable to perform the pilgrimage in person. Although our focus will be on the Hajj—the main annual pilgrimage to Islam’s holiest city, Mecca—we will also consider the arts associated with other pilgrimage sites, in particular the Shi’i shrines of Iraq and Iran, as well as the pilgrimage practices of non-Muslim communities in the Middle East. We will bridge the gap between these geographies and our own vantage point in Baltimore through locally housed artworks, among them a seventeenth-century Ottoman tile at the Walters Art Museum that shows the Great Mosque of Mecca and a printed Hajj certificate—probably designed by an Indian artist but published in Istanbul in 1895—recently acquired for Hopkins’ own Special Collections. Through close engagement with these objects and other materials, the course will address such themes as sacred spectacle and ritual, pilgrimage as a locus of female patronage, and the impact of modernity on the Hajj and its traditions.

Prerequisite(s): Students who have taken or are enrolled in AS.010.626 are not eligible to take AS.010.426.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Ethics and Foundations (FA5)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3)

AS.010.451. Script, Character, Scribble: Writing and Pseudo-Writing in Modern and Contemporary Art. 3 Credits.

Almost readable, but not quite: artists in the twentieth and twenty-first century played with script of all kinds, from ancient glyphs and Persian script to Roman typefaces and Korean Hangul. Artists also scribbled in ways that evoke writing without script or meaning. This course takes on the question of meaning-making in art through the form of script—flirting with that tantalizing feeling that we can almost read the work of art through the marks on its surface. We will engage with artists from around the world whose work grapples with knowledge, meaning, and script, and discuss the limits and possibilities of legibility, knowing, and language. In addition to painting and drawing, we will also discuss conceptual art, installation, video, architecture, tapestry, ceramics, graphic novel forms, book arts, and sculpture. We will have opportunities to situate these works within longer histories of script and pseudo-script and image-text relations. Our discussion-driven seminars will be guided by readings in art history and theory. The course carries no expectation that you are multi-lingual or have experience with multiple scripts. Central to our semester will be group trips to see art in person in DC and Baltimore. Assignments include an option for short, focused writing with feedback and opportunities to experiment with genre and to rewrite, or a longer seminar paper, chosen in consultation with the professor.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4)

Writing Intensive

AS.010.465. Renew, Reuse, Recycle: Afterlives of Architecture in the Ottoman Empire. 3 Credits.

Designed from the outset to be inhabited and used, works of architecture are inherently susceptible to changes in purpose, appearance, and meaning over time. This was particularly so in the Ottoman Empire (c. 1299–1922), a multiethnic and multireligious transcontinental polity whose territories were already marked by long and eventful architectural histories. Through such case studies as the Parthenon in Athens, the Hagia Sophia in Constantinople/Istanbul, the Citadel of Cairo, and the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem, this course investigates the ways in which buildings and sites have been appropriated, repurposed, transformed, and/or reconceptualized in response to changing sociopolitical and artistic conditions. Topics to be addressed include the conversion of places of worship, (re)decoration as a vehicle of ideology, and the phenomenon of spoliation—the recycling, whether for practical or symbolic reasons, of existing building materials. In addition to the monuments themselves, we will address the objects that filled them and the human activities they hosted. While our focus will be on the Ottoman context and its relationship to the past, the course will also consider comparable examples in other geographies as well as developments in the post-Ottoman era, including the current debate over the Parthenon marbles and the recent reconversion of the Hagia Sophia into a mosque.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Culture and Aesthetics (FA3)

Writing Intensive

AS.010.621. An Empire’s Diversity: Ottoman Architecture and Patronage beyond the Imperial Court. 3 Credits.

The established historiography of Ottoman architecture is dominated by the patronage of the sultans and their elites, particularly as it shaped the empire’s third and final capital, Istanbul. While this focus on the “center” and its leadership reflects the Ottoman state’s own hierarchical structure, it also obscures the larger network of places and people that enabled the imperial system to develop and acquire meaning in the first place. This course will explore Ottoman architecture and its patronage from the perspective of these neglected regions and actors, covering such examples as Christian vassal states along the empire’s European borders, Arab lands with existing traditions of Islamic art, the curious persistence of Gothic models in the former Crusader kingdom of Cyprus, and the distinctive architectural practices of non-Muslim minorities within Istanbul itself. Drawn primarily from the early modern and modern periods, our case studies will be treated not as imitations of or deviations from the metropolitan mainstream, but as vital expressions of Ottoman culture that assertively engaged with, and themselves contributed to, the better-known strategies of the sultan’s court. We will also go beyond issues of architecture and patronage and consider these buildings as lived spaces whose associated objects, furnishings, and social and ceremonial activities were no less constitutive of the empire’s diverse architectural landscape.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.010.626. Sacred Connections: The Arts of Pilgrimage in the Islamic World, c. 1500–1900. 3 Credits.

As a central practice of the Muslim faith, pilgrimage has long animated the arts of the Islamic world, not only by generating countless monuments and objects, but also by facilitating the movement of artists, artifacts, and ideas across vast distances. This course explores the rich visual and material products of the Islamic pilgrimage tradition during the early modern and modern periods, including the architecture of the sacred sites themselves, the processions and ceremonies enacted by those who journeyed to these destinations, and proxy monuments and artworks created for those unable to perform the pilgrimage in person. Although our focus will be on the Hajj—the main annual pilgrimage to Islam’s holiest city, Mecca—we will also consider the arts associated with other pilgrimage sites, in particular the Shi’i shrines of Iraq and Iran, as well as the pilgrimage practices of non-Muslim communities in the Middle East. We will bridge the gap between these geographies and our own vantage point in Baltimore through locally housed artworks, among them a seventeenth-century Ottoman tile at the Walters Art Museum that shows the Great Mosque of Mecca and a printed Hajj certificate—probably designed by an Indian artist but published in Istanbul in 1895—recently acquired for Hopkins’ own Special Collections. Through close engagement with these objects and other materials, the course will address such themes as sacred spectacle and ritual, pilgrimage as a locus of female patronage, and the impact of modernity on the Hajj and its traditions.

Prerequisite(s): Students who have taken or are enrolled in AS.010.426 are not eligible to take AS.010.626.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.010.662. Script, Character, Scribble: Writing and Pseudo-Writing in Modern and Contemporary Art. 3 Credits.

Almost readable, but not quite: artists in the twentieth and twenty-first century played with script of all kinds, from ancient glyphs and Persian script to Roman typefaces and Korean Hangul. Artists also scribbled in ways that evoke writing without script or meaning. This course takes on the question of meaning-making in art through the form of script—flirting with that tantalizing feeling that we can almost read the work of art through the marks on its surface. We will engage with artists from around the world whose work grapples with knowledge, meaning, and script, and discuss the limits and possibilities of legibility, knowing, and language. In addition to painting and drawing, we will also discuss conceptual art, installation, video, architecture, tapestry, ceramics, graphic novel forms, book arts, and sculpture. We will have opportunities to situate these works within longer histories of script and pseudo-script and image-text relations. Our discussion-driven seminars will be guided by readings in art history and theory. The course carries no expectation that you are multi-lingual or have experience with multiple scripts. Central to our semester will be group trips to see art in person in DC and Baltimore. Assignments include an option for short, focused writing with feedback and opportunities to experiment with genre and to rewrite, or a longer seminar paper, chosen in consultation with the professor.

Distribution Area: Humanities

Writing Intensive

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.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4)

Writing Intensive

AS.140.387. Islam and Medicine: Histories, Debates and Controversies. 3 Credits.

This course will analyze how “Islam” and “medicine” interacted and intersected from the medieval and into the modern and contemporary world. We will look at the rise of Islamic medicine in the medieval and early modern period, the modernization of medicine in the Islamic world, and we will also investigate questions and challenges facing Muslim physicians and patients in the US, Europe and inside and outside the Muslim-majority world. We will address questions related to modernization of medical education in the Islamic world, colonization and decolonization, questions related to gender and sexuality, issues related to Islamic bioethics from organ transplantation and clinical death to abortion, artificial fertilization among other similar questions.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4)

Near Eastern Studies

AS.130.364. Archaeology of Arabia. 3 Credits.

This course examines the archaeology of the Arabian Peninsula from the earliest Paleolithic in the region (ca. 1.5 million years ago) through the first millennium of the Islamic era (ca. AD 1600). We will review basic geology and environmental conditions, examine the development of animal herding and crop cultivating lifeways, and study the rise of ancient complex societies and civilizations.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4)

AS.130.368. Nomads and Empires: Water in the Ancient Near East. 3 Credits.

Water and its histories reveal deep similarities and pivotal differences among human societies that are critical to understanding the human past and our future. Environments are often defined by water availability and periodicity, water is a frequent theme of religious traditions and a common point of political conflict. The hydraulic hypothesis, one of the longest-standing potential explanations for the rise of the world’s earliest civilizations, claims that organizational requirements of large-scale irrigation spawned ancient political hierarchies and cities. Archaeologists now know irrigation was not the only factor responsible for the origins of ancient states, but water management was important to agriculture in every region of ancient state formation. This course explores economic and social histories of water in the ancient Near East. It examines water’s diverse roles in ancient Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Levantine and South Arabian agriculture, politics, ritual and religion, including water’s interconnected significance in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS.131.664. Archaeology of Arabia. 3 Credits.

This course examines the archaeology of the Arabian Peninsula from the earliest Paleolithic in the region (ca. 1.5 million years ago) through the first millennium of the Islamic era (ca. AD 1600). We will review basic geology and environmental conditions, examine the development of animal herding and crop cultivating lifeways, and study the rise of ancient complex societies and civilizations.

Philosophy**AS.150.333. An Iconoclast in Islamic Philosophy: Abu Bakr al-Razi. 3 Credits.**

Abu Bakr al-Raʿzī was a fascinating philosopher and physician in the golden age of Islam. He was credited with being the first to apply placebos in clinical trials and scientifically distinguishing measles from smallpox. He also applied his rigorous methodology in medicine to philosophy. He provided very original arguments for surprising conclusions on topics ranging from metaphysics to religion. In this course we will survey al-Razi's philosophy in general. We will both learn and examine al-Razi's philosophical ideas on metaphysics, ethics and religion as well as the relevant philosophical background for his philosophy. We will also compare his ideas in various fields of philosophy to contemporary approaches to these issues. Recommended Course Background: Introductory Philosophy Course.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Ethics and Foundations (FA5)

Writing Intensive

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.

Distribution Area: Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS Foundational Abilities: Citizens and Society (FA4), Ethics and Foundations (FA5)

EN Foundational Abilities: Engagement with Society (FA4)

Sociology**AS.230.367. Islamic Finance. 3 Credits.**

Today, Islamic finance is a global industry comprising nearly \$3 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 usury in Islam and other religious and philosophical traditions, 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.

Distribution Area: Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Citizens and Society (FA4)

Writing Intensive

AS.230.445. Sociology of Religion. 3 Credits.

This seminar tackles major issues in the classical and contemporary sociology of religion. We begin with Ibn Khaldun, Friedrich Nietzsche, Karl Marx, Max Weber, Émile Durkheim, and Mary Douglas, asking basic questions: What are religion and the sacred? Why do they exist? What is the relationship between religion and social structure? And what role does religion play in morality, solidarity, boundaries, exploitation, patriarchy, and macrohistorical transformations such as the rise of capitalism? Keeping this theoretical grounding (and its flaws and biases) in mind, we continue to probe the problem of religion in modernity through more-recent writings. Topics include the secularization debate (Are modernity and religion antithetical?); "religious markets" and rational-choice theories of religion; religious revivalism, evangelicalism, fundamentalism, and proselytizing movements; feminist and queer sociologies of religion; civil religion (Is standing for the national anthem a religious act?); embodiment and prayer; Orientalism and postcolonial interrogations of the secular; religious violence and nationalism; the intersectionality of religion with race, class, and caste; and religion and neoliberalism. Although dominant sociologies of religion have focused on Christianity in Western Europe and North America, this course applies a global lens, training significant focus on non-Western and non-Christian contexts.

Distribution Area: Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Citizens and Society (FA4)

Writing Intensive