ST540 CHRISTIAN ENCOUNTER WITH ISLAM

by

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COURSE DESIGN

Master of Divinity
Reformed Theological Seminary

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EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES OF THE COURSE

This is an introduction to the history, “culture,” traditions, beliefs, and practices of Islam from a pastoral, historical, and practical perspective. Students will reflect on the ways in which Islamic faith and life have been shaped by historical and “cultural” circumstances, study the diversity of Islam both in history and in contemporary expression, and develop a deeper understanding of Islam in order to love Muslims as their neighbors and witness more effectively to them.

Our goal is to learn in order to reach. The question to keep in mind is this: What does it have to do with God’s glory, the edification (building up) of the church, and the salvation of the unconverted across the street and around the world? These “lectures” and activities have been designed to be reproduced in the context of the local churches.

FORMAT

“Lectures,” guest lecturer, small group interactions, seminars, video presentations, visit to a Mosque, and discussions.
TOPICS TO BE CONSIDERED

I. Pastoral/Biblical Motivation: Preaching

A. What is the Bible All About?
B. The Problem of Every Human Being
C. The Greatest Joy of Every Human Being
D. The Ultimate Purpose of the Christian Ministry
E. The “Preaching” to and Making Disciples of All the Nations
F. Definition of Terms: Exegeting Words in the Light of the Scriptures

II. Historical Motivation: People, Times, and Movements

A. History of Islam
   Pre-Islam Arabia
   Origins of Islam
   Islam as a Political Presence
   World-wide Expansion
   Contemporary Diversity within Islam
   Islam in Global Perspective

B. The Qur’an
   Small Group Guided Study
   Small Group Discussions
   Small Group Presentations

III. Christian Practical Motivation

A. Historical Approaches: Zwemer and Bavinck
B. Contemporary Initiatives
   The Common Word
   The Insider Movement
B. Muslims witnessing to Christians today: Case Study
C. Christians Witnessing to Muslims

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Attendance—“Classroom attendance is for the glory of God and preparation for the gospel ministry. Students therefore are expected to attend class sessions....” (RTS Catalogue).
Three reading reports—The careful reading of the assigned books and three reading reports (two pages each per book, except for the book of Acts and the Qur’an), single space, highlighting the main propositions, statements, theses, principles, etc, gathered from the reading. Check the due dates of the readings and of the written reading reports. IT IS THE STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY TO SUBMIT THESE INFORMATIONS VIA E-MAIL. DON’T WAIT FOR A REMINDER.

Participation in the classroom activities (small group study, discussion, and presentations).

Small Group study, discussion, and presentations. Choose a Facilitator to represent your group.

A “lecture” presentation in a small group setting (Sunday School, for instance) covering the three major topics of this class: pastoral/biblical, historical, and practical.

Take the initiative to talk, carry a conversation, or interview a Muslim and write one page report about your experience. Due on.

Visit an Islamic Mosque or Center on a Friday and report on the experience.

Required readings:


At least 250 pages biographical reading of a servant of God who ministered in a Muslim context. Due on.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Recommended Reading on Islam
(Each of these resources offer good bibliographical material from Christian, Muslim, and secular perspectives).


Bibliographies
http://www.muslimphilosophy.com/ip/Bibliography.htm
http://www.library.cornell.edu/colldev/mideast/corebib.htm
http://www.loc.gov/law/help/bibliography-islamic-law.php
http://www.library.illinois.edu/ias/iri/persian/islam-annotated_bibliography.html
http://www.cis-ca.org/books.php
http://www.libraries.iub.edu/index.php?pageId=1000048
http://www.evangelicalresources.org/islam.shtml
http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayAbstract?jsessionid=287E4D3861216A469E
B1B2ED23D3A8C2.journals?fromPage=online&aid=2979396

Websites in General
(There are plentiful of websites, blogs, and so forth on this subject from all kinds of perspectives. Take a time to surf the net on this subject—bibliographies, dictionaries, encyclopedias, books, articles, journals, etc. Google it)

http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/topics/i/islam/
http://www.joshuaproject.net/ (Check it out)
http://www.lausanne.org (Check it out)
http://www.ad2000.org/ (Check it out)
http://www.perspectives.org/
http://www.uscwm.org/
http://www.wholesomewords.org/missions/bioindex.html (Mission Biographies)
http://www.aims.org/ (Mission Strategies)
http://www.worldchristiandatabase.org/wcd/default.asp (Mission Statistics)
http://www.newchurches.com/ (Church Planting)
  http://www.monergism.com/thethreshold/articles/topic/missions.html
  http://www.missiology.org/
  http://www.strategicnetwork.org/ (Helps you to search 60 Christian websites)
http://www.imb.org (Biblical Basis of Missions)
http://www.ntslibrary.com/PDF%20Books.htm (Books online)

http://www.gutenberg.org/ (Research Texts online)
http://www.archive.org/ (Research Texts online)

http://www.asmweb.org (Missiology Research Sites)
http://www.bible-researcher.com/links.html
http://www.biblicalfoundations.org (Köstenberger=s webpage and blog)
http://www.gmi.org/ (Global Mapping International)
http://www.martynmission.cam.ac.uk (Henry Martyn CentreBUnited Kingdom)
http://www.missionstudies.org/ (International Association for Mission Studies)
http://www.religion-online.org/ (Full texts online)
http://www.mislinks.org/topics/theology.htm
http://www.christiananswers.net/evangelism/home.html
http://www.evangelicalresources.org/islam.shtml
http://www.rim.org/
http://www.al-islam.org/
## Course Objectives Related to MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes

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<th>Articulation (oral &amp; written)</th>
<th>Rubric</th>
<th>Mini-Justification</th>
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<td>Broadly understands and articulates knowledge, both oral and written, of essential biblical, theological, historical, and cultural/global information, including details, concepts, and frameworks.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>The research paper enables students to articulate a responsible understanding of the theological, historical, cultural, and global realities of Islam.</td>
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*As the MDiv is the core degree at RTS, the MDiv rubric will be used in this syllabus.*

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<th>Scripture</th>
<th>Rubric</th>
<th>Mini-Justification</th>
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<tr>
<td>Significant knowledge of the original meaning of Scripture. Also, the concepts for and skill to research</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Lectures and reading assignments enable students to appreciate and articulate a</td>
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- Further into the original meaning of Scripture and to apply Scripture to a variety of modern circumstances. (Includes appropriate use of original languages and hermeneutics; and integrates theological, historical, and cultural/global perspectives.)

- Reformed Theology: Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards. **Moderate** Study of the Reformed tradition insofar as it informs a response to other religions.

- Sanctification: Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student’s sanctification. **Moderate** Contributes to the shaping of the Christian mind and heart, and thus to the love of God and neighbor.

- Desire for Worldview: Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God. **Strong** Lectures, reading assignments, research paper will contribute to an integrated Christian view of Islam.

- Winsomely Reformed: Embraces a winsomely Reformed ethos. (Includes an appropriate ecumenical spirit with other Christians, especially Evangelicals; a concern to present the Gospel in a God-honoring manner to non-Christians; and a truth-in-love attitude in disagreements.) **Strong** Promotes a charitable (i.e., wise, fair, and discerningly critical) approach to engaging Islam.

- Preach: Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm. **None**

- Worship: Knowledgeable of historic and modern Christian-worship forms; and ability to construct and skill to lead a worship service. **None**

- Shepherd: Ability to shepherd the local congregation: aiding in spiritual maturity; promoting use of gifts and callings; and encouraging a concern for non-Christians, both in America and worldwide. **None**
| Church/World | Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues. | Strong | Promotes a responsible Christian engagement with Islam, one of the major cultural institutions that is shaping public discourse today. |