Christian Encounter with Islam (2 hours)

Theology Core Requirement in MDiv program
Theology Course Elective in RTS MA programs

Course Description

An introduction to the history, culture, traditions, beliefs, and practices of Islam. 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.

Course Outline

1. Overview
   a. Christianity and World Religions
   b. Definition of Terms
   c. Life of Muhammad
   d. The Qur’an
   e. Pillars of Islam
2. History of Islam
   a. Pre-Islam Arabia
   b. Origins of Islam
   c. Islam as a Political Presence
   d. World-wide Expansion
3. Islam and the West
   a. Contributions to Western civilization
   b. Challenges to Western civilization
4. Christian witness to Islam
   a. Evangelical voices
   b. Reformed voices
5. Contemporary Diversity within Islam
   a. Sunni, Shi’ite, and Sufi Muslims
   b. Ideal Islam vs. Folk Islam
   c. A religion of peace or a religion of violence?
6. Islam in Global Perspective
   a. Europe
   b. Latin America
   c. Asia
   d. Africa
   e. North America
Course Reading

1. *Qur’an:* excerpts representing different themes
2. *Hadith:* selections
3. Choose one among the following surveys of Islam:
   


4. Choose one among the following studies of contemporary Islam


5. Collection of articles describing the variety of Christian approaches to Islam (assembled as a Class Reader)

Course Requirements

1. Class attendance and participation
2. Reports on the required reading assignments
3. Report on the experience of visiting an Islamic mosque
4. Major research paper (10-15 pages)
5. Final Examination