George Mason University
The Schar School of Policy and Government

Islam and Politics - GOVT345 Section: 001 [CRN-72482]
Days: Tuesday & Thursday  
Time: 12:00 pm (Noon) – 1:15 pm
Room: Planetary Hall room #212

Syllabus for Fall Semester 2018

WELCOME!

Instructor: Professor Heba F. El-Shazli, Ph.D.
Email: helshazl@gmu.edu
Telephone: (703) 993-2476
Office: Research Hall – room 358 (third floor)
Office Hours: Tuesday/Thursday 3:00 pm–4:00 pm and by Appointment
I will also be in class 15 minutes early and after class to respond to any questions and comments. Other times – please contact me via email and we can arrange a convenient time.

Course Description:
This course will provide an introductory study of “Islam and Politics” through a multi-faceted approach – history, ideology, and practices of key individuals, movements, political parties and institutions. A broad perspective is needed to begin to understand the post 9/11 era. We will review the following issues and questions: what is political Islam? What happens when Islam intersect with politics and how does it manifest itself in political life? Case studies of political Islam in the Middle East, Asia, Africa and the West in order to gain a better understanding of the following: the development of Islamist groups and political responses to this occurrence; the pluralist and diverse political expression in the Muslim world; the nature of democracy in political Islam and the characteristics of the Islamic state; link Islam and politics to the ongoing globalization and an increase in radicalism; and what is the future of Islam and politics after the 2011 Arab Spring? Or has the project of political Islam ended with the 2013 and thereafter events in Egypt (end of Muslim Brotherhood Morsi’s presidency)? Political Islam has faced two major shocks/challenges per the writings of Hamid and McCants (Rethinking Political Islam). “The ‘twin shocks’ of the Egyptian coup against the Muslim Brotherhood and the rise of the Islamic State (ISIS) have challenged the conventional wisdom on political Islam... particularly impacting the conventional Islamists who
follow the rules of the electoral game ... so there is a need to assess the evolution of mainstream Islamist groups since the Arab uprisings”, write McCants and Hamid.¹

Many good questions and more that we will explore on our learning journey together in this course.

**Class Goals and Objectives:**

- To examine the beliefs, norms, and values of Islam
- To provide an overview of the history of Islam and particularly how ideas of political governance and community have changed over time in Islamic tradition
- To understand diverse groups and practices that are together called “political Islam” and assess the evolution of mainstream Islamist groups
- To understand the multi-faceted nature of contemporary Islamic radicalism and militancy in a globalized world and increased transnationalism
- To provide an overview of Islam and politics in the state, outside of the state, and in fragile/failed states – varying forms/manifestations of Islam and politics in governance
- A review of who are the Islamists and who are the radical Islamists such as Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State/ISIS/ISIL (DAESH)?
- To examine the future of Islam and politics; and its role in governance especially in the Arab World after the 2011 Arab Spring and with the resurgence of extremism in the form of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) or DAESH.

**Required Books for this course:** These textbooks are available in the reserves section of our library in the Johnson Center

1. *Islam and Politics (2nd Edition)* by Peter Mandaville (I&P)
   Paperback: 456 pages Publisher: Routledge; 2nd edition (August 14, 2014)

2. *The Islamists are Coming, Who they really are* - Robin Wright (Editor) This book is available on-line and is on our Blackboard site
   Paperback: 136 pages Publisher: United States Institute of Peace (April 10, 2012)
   *Updated book chapters & website:
   [https://www.wilsoncenter.org/program/the-islamists](https://www.wilsoncenter.org/program/the-islamists)
   [https://www.wilsoncenter.org/about-the-islamists](https://www.wilsoncenter.org/about-the-islamists)


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Publisher: Oxford University Press; 1 edition (August 14, 2017)

4. Other readings: journal articles will be made available on Blackboard and other resources such as US Relations with the Islamic World Project: https://www.brookings.edu/project/u-s-relations-with-the-islamic-world/

Course Administrative Details:
You will need a laptop for this course to take tests and the final exam. Please be prepared to have a laptop with the Respondus Lockdown Browser downloaded (available via Blackboard)

Attendance and in-class participation: student attendance and participation are essential for a meaningful learning experience for all. So please attendance is mandatory (see University policy in your Student Handbook) so we can all benefit from each other’s interests, questions and knowledge. Please arrive at each class session on-time prepared and ready for an engaging discussion using the readings and other resources. If there are circumstances that arise beyond your control or an emergency, please contact me via email as soon as possible. Thank you.

Assignments: % of final grade
1. Response Papers to Discussion Questions (x3) 30%
2. Two Tests 25%
3. Final Exam 25%
4. Class Attendance, In-class presentations & Participation 20%

[All writing assignments should be double-spaced, Times New Roman font, 12 font size with 1” margins. Please put your name, date and the question you are answering at the top of the document.] Please see additional writing guidelines at the end of this syllabus.

1. Class Attendance, in-class presentations & Participation (20% divided into 10% class attendance & participation and 10% in-class presentations) Students are expected to attend each class session fully prepared to discuss the readings and other topics. Part of class participation; each student will make a presentation on the readings/discussion question for the week. Each student can be creative with how they facilitate/lead the discussion through: use of case studies, role plays, use of video/film & discussion, etc... I will give more information about this in class plus a schedule for each of you to sign up for a class date to give your presentation. It is your responsibility to ensure that you introduce
you yourself to me and that I know that you are participating fully. This way, I will be able to give you the correct participation grade. Thank you!

2. Three Response Papers (30%) 3-5 pages long. These are short essays written in response to a specific discussion question in the syllabus. Though they are short, these essays must have a clearly articulated empirical thesis (i.e., argument) and cite the assigned readings to support this contention. No outside research is necessary. **These papers are due on the following dates: 13th September, 2nd October, & 23rd October.**

   **Guidelines for Response papers**, which should be 3-5 pages long (double-spaced). They should do the following:
   a) Highlight the most significant arguments of the author(s) and
   b) Discuss/analyze them in an informed manner, i.e., informed by other readings, lecture discussions, and your own insights. You should go beyond descriptive accounts in your writing and should demonstrate analytical rigor (analyze analyze!)
   c) Be well-written and well-edited

   **Specific Guidelines**
   1. It is acceptable to be selective in discussing the argument (if the chapter is too long), but there are certain points/arguments that are clearly central to an article/chapter and should be discussed explicitly.
   2. Articles often discuss certain concepts/themes and highlight them. These are important concepts/themes that should have been part of any response paper on that article/chapter.
   3. Do include page numbers & author (in text citations) when you refer explicitly to statements, quotations. This should come in handy when preparing for exams.
   4. All response papers should have
      (a) A solid introductory sentence or two, in which you sum up the thesis/argument of the article/chapter you’re reading.
      (b) Then, proceed to fleshing the argument. Here’s where you can go into detail.
      (c) Then, offer your critique and try to relate it to the topic of the course by invoking other readings, lectures, discussions we had.
      (d) Finally, state what you have learned from the article (one or two sentences)

   **PLEASE NOTE:** please submit all written assignments listed above to Blackboard by the time class meets i.e. no later than 2:30 pm on the day they are due.
2. **Two Tests (25%)** The dates are: **16th October and 20th November**. These tests will be a mix of several types of questions and more information will be provided. There will be a study guide provided for each test.

3. **Final Exam (25%)** Date: **Thursday, 13th December 2018 starting at 10:30 am-1:15 pm**

   The final exam will be composed of a variety of questions very similar to the two previous tests, etc.... More guidance and details will be given in class one month before the final exam date.

**Grading Scale:**

A+ = 97–100; A = 94-96; A- = 90-93; B+ = 87-89; B= 84-86; B- = 80-83; C+ = 77-79; C = 74-76; C- = 70-73; D+ = 67-69; F = 0-59

**Class Communications**

I will be available 15 minutes before & after class in addition to office hours. Also, I will use e-mail as the primary form of communications with you outside of class. I will set up a class e-mail list based on your **GMU e-mail addresses**. You are welcome to call me in case of an emergency.

**Late Assignments:** Assignments (responses to discussion questions) must be submitted on time and via Blackboard. Failure to turn in an assignment on time is unacceptable except with the prior agreement of the instructor (which will be given only in exceptional circumstances, such as a documented illness or family emergency). Except in documented cases of illness or emergency, a penalty of up to a full letter grade will be assessed for each day the assignment is late. **After 7 days (one week) – the assignment will not be accepted.**

**George Mason University Honor Code:**

**Plagiarism:** It is assumed that all written work submitted is entirely your own. If you obtain ideas, data, phrases, etc. from elsewhere, you must cite the source.

A violation of the University Honor Code your final grade will become automatically an “F” and you will be reported to the student/faculty honor committee.

I take the Honor Code and its enforcement very seriously with a zero tolerance policy. The Honor Code in its entirety can be found in your Student Handbook. All violations of the honor code will be reported to the Honor Committee. [http://www.gmu.edu/academics/catalog/9798/honorcod.html](http://www.gmu.edu/academics/catalog/9798/honorcod.html)

**Academic Integrity:** It is expected that students adhere to the George Mason University Honor Code as it relates to integrity regarding coursework and grades. The Honor Code reads as follows: “To promote a stronger sense of mutual
responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the University Community have set forth this: Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal and/or lie in matters related to academic work.” More information about the Honor Code, including definitions of cheating, lying, and plagiarism, can be found at the Office of Academic Integrity website at http://oai.gmu.edu

Students with Disabilities: Students who self-identify and provide sufficient documentation of a qualifying disability are entitled to receive reasonable accommodations, such as modifications of programs, academic adjustments, or auxiliary aides as a means to participate in programs and activities. If you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at (703) 993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

Problems that may arise – Please if you are experiencing any problems that are affecting your school work and/or class attendance --- please feel free to meet with me and let us see what we can do to help. I will be glad to listen and assist to help you. There are many available resources. Please do not wait until the end of the semester to inform me that you are dealing with a problem(s) since the beginning of the semester. Let us talk and work on getting you the needed assistance early on in the semester so it does not affect your school work down the road. I am here to help you succeed!

Student Support Resources: We have several academic support and other resources to facilitate student success. Please be sure to include links to relevant student support resources (e.g., Counseling and Psychological Services, Learning Services, University Career Services, the Writing Center, etc.).

Sexual Misconduct and Interpersonal Violence
George Mason University is committed to providing a safe learning, living and working environment free from discrimination. The University’s environment is meant to be experienced as vibrant and dynamic, and one that includes ample opportunities for exploration of self, identity and independence. Sexual misconduct and incidents of interpersonal violence deeply interrupt that experience, and George Mason University is committed to a campus that is free of these types of incidents to promote community well-being and student success.

George Mason University encourages individuals who believe that they have been sexually harassed, assaulted or subjected to sexual misconduct to seek assistance and support. Confidential resources are available on campus at Counseling and Psychological Services (caps.gmu.edu), Student Health Services (shs.gmu.edu), the University Ombudsperson (ombudsman.gmu.edu), and Wellness, Alcohol and Violence Education and Services (waves.gmu.edu). All other members of the University community (except those noted above) are not considered confidential resources and are required to report incidents of sexual misconduct to the University IX Coordinator. For a full list of resources, support opportunities, and reporting options, contact the University Title IX Coordinator at integrity.gmu.edu and/or at 703-993-8730. Our goal is to create awareness of the range of options available to you and provide access to resources.
Schedule of Topics to be discussed and Reading Assignments

[Please note: this schedule is a guide and is subject to change/adjustment based on our discussion needs]

1. Tuesday, 28th August 2018 – First Day of Class

Welcome: introductions, review of class policies, syllabus, readings, expectations, class goals, and assignments. The list of weekly student presentations will be distributed in class on Thursday, 30th August.

2. Thursday, 30th August 2018


Reading assignment: Chapter one in Islam & Politics by Mandaville, pages 1-28; Introduction, page 1-13 in Rethinking Political Islam by Hamid & McCants

3. Tuesday 4th September and Thursday 6th September 2018

Topic: Islam & Politics – History & Key Concepts

Reading assignment:
2. Mandaville’s Islam & Politics, pages 28-64, Chapter Two


Shahin & Esposito: The Shar’iah pp. 7-27

Discussion question: Does Islam have a particular/peculiar relationship with politics? Why?

4. Tuesday, 11th September and Thursday, 13th September 2018

Topic: State Formation & the Making of Islamism

Reading assignment:
1. Mandaville’s Islam & Politics – pp. 64-120 – Chapter Three
Response Paper #1 DUE on Thursday, 13th September 2018:
Response Paper question: Does Islam have a particular/peculiar relationship with politics? Why? What is the Islamic revival, its attributes and why was there a revival?

4. Tuesday, 18th September and Thursday, 20th September 2018

Topic: Islam in the System: The Evolution of Islamism as Political Strategy
Case Studies -- Egypt’s Muslim Brotherhood; Tunisia’s Ennahda; and Algeria’s FIS

Reading assignment:
1. Mandaville’s Islam & Politics, chapter 4, pages : 121-161 ; & Algeria (pp.115-118 in chapter 3)
3. Rethinking Political Islam: Egypt p. 17, Tunisia p. 32, “Politics or Piety? Why the Muslim Brotherhood Engages in Social Service Provision,” p. 218; and “Ennahda from Within: Islamists or “Muslim Democrats”? p. 230

Optional reading for additional background: Rethinking Political Islam: Is the Crackdown on the Muslim Brotherhood Pushing the Group Toward Violence? P. 244

Discussion question: discuss the dilemma of dynamics and identity of political Islam as a result of expansion of western model of nation-state throughout the Muslim world.

5. Tuesday, 25th September and Thursday, 27th September 2018

Topic: Islam in the System; Case Studies -- Turkey’s AKP; Morocco’s PJD; and Jordan’s MB/Islamic Action Front (IAF)

Reading assignment:
2. Mandaville’s I&P, chapter 4: pages 162-174; 177-198
Discussion question: discuss the characteristics of the rise of “Muslim democracy” and the interaction with opposition

7. Tuesday, 2\textsuperscript{nd} October and Thursday, 4\textsuperscript{th} October 2018

**Topic:** Islam as the System: Islamic States & “Islamization” from above  
**Case Studies:** Pakistan and S.E. Asia – Malaysia and Indonesia

**Reading assignment:**
2. Mandaville’s Islam & Politics, pages 174-177 (Indonesia); pp. 229-245 (Pakistan & Malaysia)  


**Response Paper #2 due on Tuesday, 2\textsuperscript{nd} October 2018**  
**Response Paper question:** Discuss the characteristics of the rise of “Muslim democracy” and the interaction with the opposition – please give country examples (Turkey, Morocco, Jordan, Pakistan, Indonesia, Malaysia) – a minimum of two examples please.

8. Thursday, 11\textsuperscript{th} October 2018

**Topic:** Islam as the System – Islamic States and “Islamization” from above 
**Case Studies:** Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, & Yemen

**Reading assignment:**
2. Mandaville’s I&P, pages 203-229  
3. Hamid & McCants: Yemen, p. 88; Saudi Arabia, p. 118; Kuwait, p. 132

**Optional Reading:** Mohamed Ayoob, 

*The Many Faces of Political Islam, Chapter 3: “Self-proclaimed Islamic States” 2006;*
Discussion questions: Please discuss and give example of the state as the sole agent of Islamization and claims to be the only authority to define Islam? How is Islamism likely to evolve in Saudi Arabia? Please describe an example of Tribal Islamists – background, key positions & future?

9. Tuesday, 16th October 2018 - Test #1

Please bring your laptop to class so you can take Test #1 and please make sure that Respondus Lockdown Browser is downloaded on your laptop. Thank you.

Test #1 will cover the following topics:

- Topic: Islam as the system – Islamic States and “Islamization” from above -- Case Studies: Saudi Arabia; and Yemen
- Topic: Islam as the System; Case Studies: Pakistan and S.E. Asia – Malaysia and Indonesia
- Topic: Islam in the System; Case Studies -- Turkey’s AKP; Morocco’s PJD; and Jordan’s MB
- Topic: Islam in the System: The Evolution of Islamism as Political Strategy
- Case Studies -- Egypt’s Muslim Brotherhood; Tunisia’s Ennahda; and Algeria’s FIS
- Topic: Origins of Islamist Ideology and Strategy & State Formation & the Making of Islamism
- Topic: Islam & Politics in History

10. Thursday, 18th October 2018

Topic: Islam as the system – Islamic states & Islamization from above
Case study: Iran – 1979 revolution until today; the Shia Revival

Reading assignment:
1. Mandaville’s Islam & Politics, pages 245-265


Discussion question: “the political structure changed from an autocratic class system to a religious populist regime, a tyranny of the majority under the charismatic leadership of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini” – discuss Iran as a state that came about through a popular revolution (1979).
11. Tuesday, 23rd October 2018 and Thursday, 25th October 2018

**Topic:** Islam for Lack of a System – Islamism in weak & failed states  
**Case studies:** Hamas and Hizballah -- Liberation movements? (Palestine, Lebanon and Syria)  
Afghanistan and the Taliban

**Reading assignment:**
1. Mandaville’s Islam & Politics, chapter 6, pages 270-324  
2. Wright-TIAC, chapter 12, pages 109-118 [Online - Lebanon: The Shiite Dimension by Nicholas Blanford]  

**Response Paper #3 due on Tuesday, 23rd October 2018**
**Response Paper question(s):** Hamas, Hizballah and Taliban – are they political parties, charities or simply militants? And why?  
What are the set of different political opportunity structures that are presented in a weak or absent state?

11. Tuesday, 30th October 2018

**Topic:** Gender and the Politics of Islam: Women and Agency in Religio-Politics

**Reading assignment:**
3. Shahin & Esposito: "Political Islam and Gender" by Margot Badran, pages 112-123 [available on Blackboard]

**Optional Recommended Reading (if your time permits):**

**Discussion questions:** Do women retain agency when working in an Islamist organization, or are they appropriated by men?  
How does Muslim patriarchy differ from Western patriarchy? Consider the argument that women can subvert Islamist organizations by attaining membership: do you agree?  
How have women influenced Islamist politics? How are women conceived of in different streams of Islamist thinking? Is the term “Islamic feminist” an oxymoron?
13. Thursday, 1st November and Tuesday, 6th November 2018

**Topic:** Radical Islam, Militancy and Jihad – Transnational Terror: Al-Qaeda and ISIS/ISIL (Daesh)

**Reading assignment:**
1. Mandaville’s Islam & Politics, Chapter 7, pages 328-366

**Discussion questions:** 1) Is the term “Jihadism” a meaningful signifier of a particular stream of Islamism? How have al-Qaeda and DAESH/ISIS evolved ideologically since their inception? How has globalism helped the new global current of Jihadism? Why are Muslim populations in Central Asia increasingly turning to militant Islam in their efforts to challenge authoritarian rule?

14. Thursday, 8th November and Tuesday, 13th November 2018

**Topic:** Islam and Politics in Europe

**Film:** *Journey into Europe,* by world-renowned scholar Akbar Ahmed, was filmed across the European continent and explores Islam in Europe and the place of Islam in European history and civilization. Along the way, we hear from some of Europe's most prominent figures – presidents and prime ministers, archbishops, chief rabbis, grand muftis, heads of right-wing parties, and everyday people from a variety of backgrounds. Startling, challenging, and emotionally powerful, the film’s themes of identity and acceptance are critically relevant to our world today.

For more information, visit: [http://journeyintoeurope.com/](http://journeyintoeurope.com/)

**Reading assignment:**
1. The Oxford Handbook of Islam and Politics – Islam and Politics in Europe by Sam Cherribi p. 278-288 (available on Blackboard)

Discussion questions: What is the disconnect of religion, culture and politics (policies) in Europe? Has multiculturalism in Europe failed and why? What are the main challenges facing Muslims in Europe?

15. Thursday, 15th November 2018

Topic: Towards Post-Islamism? Globalization and Muslim Politics

Reading assignment:
1. Mandaville’s Islam & Politics, chapter 8, pp. 369-398
2. Muslim Voices on Democracy: A Reader, Chapter 1 - The People Are One Community, pages 1-5 by Abdulaziz Sachedina and Chapter 9 - Real Democracy Is the Answer, pages 28-30, by Mahmoud Mohammed Taha [Available on Blackboard]

Tuesday, 20th November 2018 - Test #2
Test #2 will cover the following topics: Iran; Hamas & Hizballah (Palestinian Territories, Lebanon & Syria), Afghanistan & Taliban; Gender & Politics of Islam; Radical Islam; Towards Post-Islamism? Globalization and Muslim Politics; and Islam & Politics in Europe
Please bring your laptop to class so you can take Test #2 and please make sure that Respondus Lockdown Browser is downloaded on your laptop. Thank you.

No Class on Thursday, 22nd November – Thanksgiving Holiday

16. Tuesday, 27th November 2018 and Thursday, 29th November 2018

Discussion question: Why is the Muslim world so anti-American? Who are the extremists? Is democracy something Muslims really want? What do Muslim women want?

17. Tuesday, 4th December 2018 [Last Day of Class]

Topic: Conclusion – The Arab Uprisings & Beyond; Future of Islam & Democracy?

Reading assignment:
1. Mandaville’s Islam & Politics: Chapter 9 pp. 400-418

Discussion question: Will the Arab “Spring” Uprisings bring about a failure or a success of political Islam?

**Final Exam: Thursday, 13th December 2018 10:30 am – 1:15 pm**

Please bring your laptop to class so you can take the final exam and please make sure that [Respondus Lockdown Browser](http://www.respondus.com) is downloaded on your laptop. Thank you.

Thank you! And welcome on this learning journey together into the world of Islam and Politics – ever changing, diverse, and quite multi-faceted