George Mason University
The Schar School of Policy and Government

Islam and Politics - GOVT345 Section: 001

Days: Tuesday & Thursday  
Time: 1:30 pm – 2:45 pm  
Room: Art & Design Bldg. Room 2003

Syllabus for Spring Semester 2017

WELCOME!

Instructor: Professor Heba F. El-Shazli, Ph.D.
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Telephone: (703) 993-2476
Office: Robinson A242
Office Hours: Tuesday/Thursday 12:00 pm-1:00 pm and Wednesdays: 1:30 pm – 2:30 pm

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. So we will review the following issues and questions: what is political Islam? 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 diversity of political expression in the Muslim world; the nature of democracy in 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)? 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
- 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 of Islam and politics in governance
- A review of who really 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 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:**

1. **Islam and Politics (2nd Edition) - Peter Mandaville (Author) = I&P**

2. **The Islamists are Coming, Who they really are - Robin Wright (Editor)**
   - This book is available on-line and is on our Blackboard site

3. **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/](https://www.brookings.edu/project/u-s-relations-with-the-islamic-world/)

**Highly Recommended:**

1. **Political Islam: A Critical Reader - Frederic Volpi (Editor) = PICR**

2. **Princeton Readings in Islamist Thought – Texts and Contexts from Al-Banna to Bin Laden - Roxanne L. Euben and Muhammad Qasim Zaman (editors)**
   - Series: Princeton Studies in Muslim Politics
Course Administrative Details:

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 (x4)  
   20%

2. Two Tests  
   30%

3. Final Exam  
   25%

4. Class Attendance, In-class presentations & Participation  
   25%

[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 (25% divided into 15% 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 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. Four Response Papers (20%) 4-5 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: 9th February, 28th February, 30th March, and 11th April.

Guidelines for Response papers, which should be 4-5 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 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 Noon on the day they are due.

2. Two Tests (30%) The dates are: 9th March & 25th April. 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: TBD
   The final exam will be composed of essay questions and short answers to identification of terms/names/groups, 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.

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

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 a number of 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 in order 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]

Guide to readings from main books: Mandaville = I&P; Wright =TIAC; recommended/optional: Euben & Zaman = PRIT; Volpi = PICR

1. Tuesday, 24th January 2017 – 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.

2. Thursday, 26th January 2017


   Reading assignment: Islam & Politics by Mandaville, pages 1-28

3. Tuesday 31st January and Thursday 2nd February 2017

   Topic: Islam & Politics – History & Key Concepts

   Reading assignment:

   3. Mandaville’s Islam & Politics, pages 28-64

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

4. Tuesday, 7th February and Thursday, 9th February 2017

   Topic: State Formation & the Making of Islamism

   Reading assignment:

   1. Mandaville’s Islam & Politics – pp. 64-120

**Recommended/Optional Readings:**

3. Volpi’s PICR, pages 44-80  
4. Euben & Zaman Chapter 2 – Hasan al-Banna (recommended)  
5. Euben & Zaman Chapter 3 – Sayyid Abu’l A’la Mawdudi (recommended)  
6. Euben & Zaman Chapter 5 – Sayyid Qutb (recommended)

**Response Paper #1 DUE on Thursday, 9th February 2017:**
Discussion/Critique Paper question: what is the Islamic revival, its attributes and why was there a revival?

5. Tuesday, 14th February and Thursday, 16th February 2017

**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  

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.

**Optional/Recommended Readings:** Volpi’s PICR, pages 81-94

6. Tuesday, 21st February and Thursday, 23rd February 2017

**Topic:** Islam in the System; Case Studies -- Turkey’s AKP; Morocco’s PJD; and Jordan’s MB

**Reading assignment:**

2. Mandaville’s I&P, chapter 4: pages 162-174; 177-198
Recommended readings (optional) Volpi’s PICR: “The End of Islamism? Turkey’s Muslimhood Model” by Jenny White pp.446-466

Omer Taspinar (2014) The End of the Turkish Model, Survival, 56:2, 49-64

Discussion question: discuss the characteristics of the rise of “Muslim democracy” and the interaction with opposition

7. Tuesday, 28th February and Thursday, 2nd March 2017

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, 28th February 2017

Response Paper question: How has the state incorporated Islam in national identity in respectively the Malaysian and Indonesian cases? In which sense is Pakistan an “Islamic Republic”?

8. Tuesday, 7th March 2017

Topic: Islam as the system – Islamic States and “Islamization” from above

Case Studies: Saudi Arabia; Iraq; Yemen and the rest of the Gulf Countries

Reading assignment:

2. Mandaville’s I&P, pages 203-229

**Recommended Optional Readings:** PICR - Piscatori, “Religion and Realpolitik, Islamic responses to the Gulf war”, pages 95-108.

**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. **Thursday, 9th March 2017 - Test #1**

Test #1 will cover the following topics:

- Topic: Islam as the system – Islamic States and "Islamization" from above -- Case Studies: Saudi Arabia; Iraq; Yemen and the rest of the Gulf Countries
- 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

**Spring Break: 13-19 March 2017**

10. **Tuesday, 21st March and Thursday, 23rd March, 2017**

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
Recommended/Optional Readings: Euben & Zaman: Chapter 6 pp. 155-181

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, 28th March and Thursday, 30th March 2017

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]

Recommended/Optional Readings:

Response Paper #3 due on Thursday, 30th March 2017

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?

12. Tuesday, 4th April and Thursday, 6th April, 2017

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

Reading assignment:
Optional Recommended Reading (if your time permits):
6. Euben & Zaman: Chapters 10, 11 & 12 (recommended)

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. Tuesday, 11th April and Thursday, 13th April 2017

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

3. Optional/Suggested Reading: Euben & Zaman: The Taliban - Chapter 17 p.409-418
5. Optional/Suggested Readings: Volpi’s PICR, sections 6.2, 6.3, 6.4 = pages 271-326

Response Paper #4 due on Tuesday, 11th April

Response Paper questions: 1) Is the term “Jihadism” a meaningful signifier of a particular stream of Islamism? How has al-Qaeda evolved ideologically since its 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. Tuesday, 18th April and Thursday, 20th April 2017

**Topic:** Islam and Politics in Europe

**Reading assignment:**


3. **Recommended/Optional Readings:** Volpi’s PICR, section 5.5, pages 244-249, Olivier Roy, “Islam in the West or Western Islam?"

**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?

**Tuesday, 25th April 2017 - Test #2**

**Test #2** will cover the following topics: Iran; Hamas & Hizballah (Palestinian Territories, Lebanon & Syria), Afghanistan & Taliban; Gender & Politics of Islam; Radical Islam; and Islam & Politics in Europe

15. Thursday, 27th April 2017

**Topic:** Towards Post-Islamism? Globalization and Muslim Politics

**Reading assignment:**

1. Mandaville’s Islam & Politics, chapter 8, pp. 369-398


**Optional/Suggested:** Volpi’s PICR, section four; pages 135-194

16. Tuesday, 2nd May 2017

**Film:** Who speaks for Islam: What a Billion Muslims Really Think?

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. Thursday, 4th May 2017 [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

Recommended/Optional readings: Volpi’s PICR, pages 409-27 – The Future of Political Islam

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

Final Exam: TBD

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


Beinin, Joel and Joe Stork, (editors), *Political Islam*, University of CA, Berkeley, 1997


Jadaliyya - [http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/about](http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/about)

MERIP - [http://www.merip.org/](http://www.merip.org/)

Encyclopedia of Islam and the Muslim World – available through library

Oxford Islamic Studies Online database: [http://www.oxfordislamicstudies.com](http://www.oxfordislamicstudies.com)

GMU’s Ali Vural Ak Center for Islamic Studies: [http://islamicstudiescenter.gmu.edu](http://islamicstudiescenter.gmu.edu)
Scholarly, Peer Reviewed Journals in Islamic Studies
(http://islam.uga.edu/MESCenters.html#islamic_studies)

“For scholars in all fields of study in the Western world, peer reviewed journals are those of higher quality. While there are numerous journals dealing with Islam, many of these are not peer reviewed and often represent the views of the organization that publishes the journal, and so the overall scholarly quality of the articles in such journals may be quite low. In contrast, peer reviewed journals have a board of editors consisting of established scholars who in principle accept or reject articles on the basis of their scholarly merits. Although of course the biases of the members of the editorial board play a certain role in determining which articles are accepted for publication, nevertheless the criteria for the inclusion of such articles are generally those of the academic field itself. Hence articles published in peer reviewed journals are regarded more highly by the scholarly community, especially in the West. Consequently, important research in any field of study is published in peer reviewed journals. This is important for scholars who wish to call scholarly attention to their work or impact the field and is especially significant for younger scholars who need to establish their credibility for the simple practical reason of obtaining a teaching/research position and later tenure (a secured position) at a university. What follows is a preliminary list of such journals that have websites:

- **Journal of Arabic and Islamic Studies** Edited by Joseph N. Bell, et al.
- **Journal of Islamic Studies** Edited by Farhan Ahmed Nizami, Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies.
- **Der Islam** covering the history and culture of the Islamic Orient. The scholarly journal of the German Orientalist Society, edited by Jürgen Paul, comprised of articles in German and English.
- **Die Welt des Islams** (link fixed 18 August 2005): International journal for the study of modern Islam (from the 18th century on), edited by Stefan Wild, Werner Ende, and Michael Ursinus, published by Brill, and comprised of articles in English, French, and German. Unfortunately the web page for this journal is limited and does not include important information such as where prospective contributors should send their articles.
- **American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences (AJISS)** (link fixed 18 August 2005) published by the Association of Muslim Social Sciences (AMSS) and the International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT), this journal endeavors to link Muslim intellectuals and scholars worldwide.
- **Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations**, edited by John Esposito and David Thomas.
A large list of scholarly journals (some of which have websites) dealing with Islamic law, the Middle East, and Islam is located at the website of CIMEL (Centre of Islamic and Middle Eastern Law).

**Academic Islamic Studies Websites:** In addition to the Islam and Islamic Studies Resources website of Prof. Godlas (at the University of Georgia), there are a number of other academic web sites for the study of Islam:

- **Islamic Area Studies Project** at the University of Tokyo.
- **Islamic Studies Pathways**, compiled by Prof. Gary R. Bunt of the University of Wales, Lampeter, this site briefly describes and evaluates sites useful for students of Islam.
- **IslamWeb** a project of professors Carl Ernst and Charles Kurzman at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. (As of 2 April 2006, this page was last updated in April 2001.)
- **Carolina, Duke, Emory Institute for the Study of Islam** (CDEKISI) is a cooperative project sponsoring, among other things, seminar presentations at each of the participating institutions. (As of 2 April 2006, this site does not appear to have been updated since 2003.)
- **Yale University Islamic Studies Program**

**WRITING Guidelines:**

- The George Mason University Writing Center: [http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/](http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/)
  Offers both in-person and online writing assistance for students, including online writing guides, reference guides, and style manuals. Additionally, the Writing Center provides assistance to faculty who are interested in holding in-class writing workshops, developing effective writing assignments, or evaluating students’ writing.

- Tips & Handouts: [http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/?page_id=1240](http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/?page_id=1240)
- It is not acceptable to cite Wikipedia as an academic source for your response papers.
- Please use the Chicago citation Style (or MLA), with in-text citations and an accompanying list of references at the end of your response paper. A quick guide to this system is available at: [http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html](http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html)