

Bergen Community College  
Division of Arts and Humanities  
Department of Philosophy and Religion

**Course Syllabus**

**PHR-126 The Islamic Scriptures**

**Basic Information about Course and Instructor**

|   |
|---|
| Semester and year:<br>Section Number:<br>Meeting Times and Locations:<br><br>Instructor:<br>Office Location:<br>Phone:<br>Departmental Secretary: [optional]<br>Office Hours:<br>Email Address: |
|---|

**Course Description**

**PHR-126 The Islamic Scriptures** is an introductory study of the origins, content, and meaning of the primary sacred text of Islam, the Koran (*Qur'an*). The relationship between the Koran and the Hadith (a record of the sayings and actions of Muhammad) will also be discussed.

3 lectures, 3 credits

General Education Course – Humanities Elective

**Student Learning Objectives:** As a result of meeting the requirements in this course, students will be able to

1. identify and discuss, both orally and in writing, the historical, cultural, and religious background and development of Islam;
2. identify the major teachings and themes in the Koran (*Qur'an*) and Hadith and explain their historical and theological significance;
3. identify the various Islamic traditions (e.g., Sunnism, Shiism, Sufism, and others) and explain the differences between them;
4. identify and explain the major differences between Islam and other major religions;
5. identify and explain the ways in which Islam has shaped the development of social, political, literary, and cultural institutions in the Islamic world;
6. locate, evaluate, and use effectively information from a variety of relevant sources;
7. state and support in clear, logical, and concise writing their own views on issues in Islamic studies; and
8. participate actively in discussions of ideas and issues in Islamic studies (re: SLOs 1-5).

In pursuit of the foregoing objectives, the course is based on the reading and discussion of both primary and secondary texts on Islam; the basic principles and methods of critical thinking are introduced; students are

encouraged to participate actively in class discussions; and students are required to do substantial expository and critical writing in response to the material presented in the course.

### Learning Assessment

The Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) in this course are intended to be aligned with as many of the college's General Education Goals as possible. They are also correlated with the overall Learning Goals of the Philosophy Program. In addition, student progress in reaching the course's SLOs is to be assessed through various means of assessment, such as the "Suggested Means of Assessment" listed below.

| Student Learning Objective   | Suggested Means of Assessment  |
|--|--|
| 1. identify and discuss, both orally and in writing, the historical, cultural, and religious background and development of Islam;                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essay examinations</li> <li>• Quizzes and objective tests</li> <li>• Writing assignments</li> </ul>                                       |
| 2. identify the major teachings and themes in the Koran ( <i>Qur'an</i> ) and Hadith and explain their historical and theological significance;            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essay examinations</li> <li>• Quizzes and objective tests</li> <li>• Writing assignments</li> <li>• Graded class presentations</li> </ul> |
| 3. identify the various Islamic traditions (e.g., Sunnism, Shiism, Sufism, and others) and explain the differences between them;                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essay examinations</li> <li>• Quizzes and objective tests</li> <li>• Writing assignments</li> <li>• Graded class presentations</li> </ul> |
| 4. identify and explain the major differences between Islam and other major religions;   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essay examinations</li> <li>• Quizzes and objective tests</li> <li>• Writing assignments</li> <li>• Graded class presentations</li> </ul> |
| 5. identify and explain the ways in which Islam has shaped the development of social, political, literary, and cultural institutions in the Islamic world; | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essay examinations</li> <li>• Quizzes and objective tests</li> <li>• Writing assignments</li> <li>• Graded class presentations</li> </ul> |
| 6. locate, evaluate, and use effectively information from a variety of relevant sources;   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essay examinations</li> <li>• Writing assignments</li> </ul>  |
| 7. state and support in clear, logical, and concise writing their own views on issues in Islamic studies; and  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essay examinations</li> <li>• Writing assignments</li> </ul>  |
| 8. participate actively in discussions of ideas and issues in Islamic studies (re: SLOs 1-5).  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Graded class discussions</li> </ul>   |

\*Writing assignments for the purpose of assessing student success on SLO 5 will include research and writing projects, possibly including term papers, in which a student identifies an information need, accesses and evaluates appropriate resources, and uses the information effectively and ethically for a specific purpose.

### Course Content

As with all BCC religion courses, "The Islamic Scriptures" (PHR-126) is designed to be an academic study of its subject matter and not to advocate particular sectarian views. The course should survey current scholarly opinion on the Koran (*Qur'an*) and the Hadith, as well as various ways in which diverse traditions construe the authority and meaning of these sacred texts.

The instructor need not hesitate to challenge the preconceptions of students in the course, especially since many such tend to cluster about the Koran (*Qur'an*). By the same token, however, care should be taken never needlessly to affront the sensitivities of students, since such sensitivities may be keen and deeply held. If all goes well, the course will furnish students with many new tools and much information to enrich any interest they may already have (or may gain) in the study of the Koran (*Qur'an*) and the Hadith. Just as

important, the course ought to impart a firm sense of the plurality of perspectives and a new understanding and tolerance of perspectives other than one's own.

**Special Features of the Course** (if any) [to be designated by the instructor]

E.g., the use of learning technologies in the course (Internet, PowerPoint, etc.); the inclusion of technological literacy and/or information literacy learning in the course; etc.

**Course Texts and/or Other Study Materials**

The **required texts** for this course are the Koran (*Qur'an*) and selections from the Hadith, both in English translation. Specific editions are to be designated by the instructor.

**Recommended Editions of the Koran (Qur'an):**

Dawood, N.J. *The Koran*.

Fakhry, Majid. *The Qur'an: A Modern English Version*.

Irving, T.B. *The Qur'an: The Noble Reading*.

Pickthall, Marmaduke. *The Meaning of the Glorious Koran* (highly recommended).

Yusuf Ali, Abdullah. *The Holy Qur'an: Translation and Commentary*.

**Recommended Collections of Hadith:**

Ali, M. Muhammad (ed.). *A Manual of Hadith*.

An-Nawawi, Yahia bin Sharaful-Deen. *Forty Hadith*. [current course text]

Cleary, Thomas F. (trans. and ed.). *The Wisdom of the Prophet: The Sayings of Muhammad*.

Doi, A. Rahman. *Hadith: An Introduction*.

Johnson-Davies (trans.). *An-Nawawi's Forty Hadith*.

Robinson, Neal (trans. and ed.). *The Sayings of Muhammad*.

**Useful Secondary Sources:**

Abdel Haleem, Muhammad. *Understanding the Quran: Themes and Style*.

Ayoub, Mahmoud. *The Qur'an and its Interpreters*.

Azami, Muhammad M. *Studies in Hadith Methodology and Literature*.

Cook, Michael. *The Koran: A Very Short Introduction*.

Crone, Patricia. *God's Caliph*

Emerick, Yahiya. *Understanding Islam* (currently *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Understanding Islam*).

Gatje, Helmut. *The Qur'an and Its Exegesis*

Hawting, G. R., and Abdul-Kader Shareef. *Approaches to the Qur'ân*.

Juynboll, G.H.A. *Studies in the Origins and Uses of Islamic Hadith*.

Rahman, Fazlur. *Major Themes of the Quran*.

Rippin, Andrew. *Approaches to the History of the Interpretation of the Qur'an*.

Sells, Michael. *Approaching the Qur'an: The Early Revelations*.

Wadud, Amina. *Qur'an and Woman: Rereading the Sacred Text from a Woman's Perspective*.

**Writing and Critical Thinking Requirement(s)**

Because PHR-126 is a General Education course, it requires students to complete a variety of critical thinking and writing assignments. These assignments may include class discussions and debates requiring the application of critical thinking skills, short in-class essays, out-of-class writing projects (journals, research papers, argument-analysis papers, book reviews, etc.), tests and examinations containing essay components, and so forth. Instructors will respond to and comment on students' writing in detail.

### **Grading Policy**

A student's final grade for the course is based primarily on his or her performance on the required work for the course (writing assignments, examinations, class presentations, etc.) and on his or her overall mastery of the material covered in the course. A student's class participation may also be evaluated, and the grade thereon may be used as a factor in determining the student's final grade for the course; but a class participation grade will count for no more than twenty percent (20%) of the final grade. A student's research and writing work will count at least fifty percent (50%) of the final grade.

### **Attendance Policy**

#### **BCC Attendance Policy:**

All students are expected to attend punctually every scheduled meeting of each course in which they are registered. Attendance and lateness policies and sanctions are to be determined by the instructor for each section of each course. These will be established in writing on the individual course outline. Attendance will be kept by the instructor for administrative and counseling purposes.

#### **Philosophy and Religion Departmental Attendance Policy:**

Students are expected to attend class regularly and punctually. Attendance will be taken at each class session. It is expected that class will be conducted such that students will benefit in their written work by the lectures and class discussion. If students occasionally arrive late, they should be encouraged to enter quietly, not disturbing the class. If students miss class, they should be encouraged to use the course calendar to stay abreast of material. It is probably a good idea for students to find study partners and to exchange telephone numbers. Make-ups for examinations should be allowed by the instructor if, in the instructor's judgment, the student has presented a good excuse for missing the work. Instructors may penalize work which is late; however, the instructor's policies for make-ups and late work must be clearly specified on the student guide.

#### **Attendance Policy in this Course:**

[To be designated by the instructor]

### **Other College, Divisional, and/or Departmental Policy Statements [optional but recommended]**

|  |
|--|
| <p><u>Examples:</u><br/>Statement on plagiarism and/or academic dishonesty.<br/>ADA statement.<br/>Sexual Harassment statement.<br/>Statement on acceptable use of BCC technology.<br/>Statement on the purpose and value of faculty office hours.</p> |
|--|

### **Student and Faculty Support Services [optional but recommended]**

List support services, e.g., the Writing Center, the Math Lab, the Tutorial Center, Online Writing Lab (OWL), Office of Specialized Services, etc. Include information on the BCC Library.

Example:

**Student and Faculty Support Services**

|  |             |   |
|--|-------------|---|
| The Distance Learning Office – for any problems you may have accessing your online courses | Room C-334  | 201-612-5581<br><a href="mailto:psimms@bergen.edu">psimms@bergen.edu</a>  |
| Smarthinking Tutorial Service  | On Line at: | <a href="http://www.bergen.edu/pages1/Pages/4787.aspx">http://www.bergen.edu/pages1/Pages/4787.aspx</a>                 |
| The Tutoring Center  | Room L-125  | 201-447-7908<br><a href="http://www.bergen.edu/pages1/pages/2192.aspx">http://www.bergen.edu/pages1/pages/2192.aspx</a> |
| The Writing Center   | Room L-125  | 201-447-7908<br><a href="http://www.bergen.edu/pages1/Pages/1795.aspx">http://www.bergen.edu/pages1/Pages/1795.aspx</a> |
| The Office of Specialized Services (for Students with Disabilities)                        | Room S-131  | 201-612-5270<br><a href="http://www.bergen.edu/oss">http://www.bergen.edu/oss</a>                                       |
| BCC Library – Reference Desk   | Room L-226  | 201-447-7436  |

**Special Note on the Tutoring Center**

**The Henry and Edith Cerullo Learning Assistance Center** encompasses the Tutoring Center, the English Language Resource Center, and the Writing Center. The website of the Learning Assistance Center is located at [www.bergen.edu/pages/2192.asp](http://www.bergen.edu/pages/2192.asp). Tutoring services are available for this course in the Tutoring Center. I strongly recommend that you make use of those services as we progress through the course. As listed above, the Tutoring Center is located in Room L-125, and its phone number is 201-447-7908.

**Include the following statement on Logos – The BCC Philosophy Club**

**Logos – The BCC Philosophy & Religion Club**

Logos usually meets on Tuesdays during the Activities Period, 12:30-1:25 PM, but sometimes also on different days and at different times. I encourage you to join the club. Since you are interested in the study of philosophy, you should find the meetings and other activities of the Philosophy & Religion club very interesting. For further information, check the Philosophy & Religion bulletin board adjacent to Room L-325A or contact LOGOS Advisor, Professor Jennifer Lyden (L-326, 201-493-3540, [jlyden@bergen.edu](mailto:jlyden@bergen.edu)). (LOGOS does not hold regular meetings during the summer.)

**Include a Course Outline and Calendar [can be combined in a single syllabus section]**

The Course Outline and Calendar must include all of the following elements:

- A daily or (at least) weekly schedule of topics to be covered.
- Dates for exams, quizzes, or other means of assessment. (This does not mean that all evaluation of students must be in groups and at the same time. Exams and other means of assessment can be listed as "to be scheduled individually.")
- Due dates for major assignments – e.g., when is a paper due; if the topic has to be approved, when; if an outline or draft is an interim step, when it is due.
- Any required special events must be included in the outline/calendar, e.g., a lecture by a visiting speaker, a dramatic or musical performance, a field trip.
- Designation of Student Learning Objectives – by number – for each topic (see sample below).
- A note to students stating that the course outline and calendar is tentative and subject to change, depending upon the progress of the class.

**Sample Course Outline**

- I. Introduction
  - A. The Historical, Cultural, and Religious Background and Development of Islam.
  - B. The Life and Work of Muhammad.
  
- II. The Koran (Qur'an)
  - A. The Formation of the Koran (Qur'an).
  - B. Major Themes and Teachings in the Koran (Qur'an).
  
- III. The Hadith
  - A. The Formation of the Hadith and their Relationship to the Koran (Qur'an).
  - B. Major Themes and Teachings in the Hadith.
  
- IV. Islamic Thought and Culture
  - A. The Institutional and Legal Development of Islamic Society.
  - B. Varieties of Islam: Sunnis, Shi'ites, Sufis, and others.
  - C. The Development of Islamic Thought and Scholarship.

**SAMPLE COURSE OUTLINE AND CALENDAR**

[with designation of Student Learning Objectives – by number – for each topic]

**Note to Students:** The following Course Outline and Calendar is tentative and subject to change, depending upon the progress of the class.

| Week | Date(s) | Topic/Activity/Assignments  | Learning Objectives | Required Reading           |
|------|---------|---|---------------------|----------------------------|
| 1    |         | The Historical, Cultural, and Religious Background and Development of Islam | 1, 3-8              | TBA                        |
| 2    |         | The Life and Work of Muhammad   | 1, 4-8              | TBA                        |
| 3    |         | The Formation of the Qur'an   | 1-2                 | TBA                        |
| 4    |         | Major Themes and Teachings in the Qur'an                                    | 2, 4                | Selections from the Qur'an |
| 5    |         | Major Themes and Teachings in the Qur'an, continued                         | 2, 4                | Selections from the Qur'an |
| 6    |         | Major Themes and Teachings in the Qur'an, continued                         | 2, 4                | Selections from the Qur'an |
| 7    |         | Major Themes and Teachings in the Qur'an, continued                         | 2, 4                | Selections from the Qur'an |
| 8    |         | Mid-Term Examination  | 1-5, 7              |                            |
| 10   |         | The Formation of the Hadith and their Relationship to the Qur'an            | 1-3                 | TBA                        |
| 11   |         | Major Themes and Teachings in the Hadith                                    | 2-4                 | Selections from the Hadith |
| 12   |         | The Institutional and Legal Development of Islamic Society                  | 5-6                 | TBA                        |
| 13   |         | Varieties of Islam: Sunnis, Shi'ites, Sufis, and others                     | 3                   | TBA                        |
| 14   |         | The Development of Islamic Thought and Scholarship                          | 1, 8                | TBA                        |
| 15   |         | Final Examination   | 1-5, 7              |                            |