

GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY, DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
SUMMER 2017
HIST-160 MIDDLE EAST CIVILIZATION I
M-F 3:15-4:50

Ms. Laura Frances Goffman

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Office Hours: TBD

This course is a survey of medieval and early modern Middle East history. A thematic approach aims to help students navigate the complexity entailed by studying a region stretching from Spain to Afghanistan over twelve centuries (CE 600-1800) in a single course. Together, we will explore the rise of Islam and Islamic Empires along with three thematic modules: religious minorities, women and gender, and disease, public health, and public morality.

Each week students will either write a short analytical paper that engages with the themes of the week's readings or take a reading quiz. They will also write a book review and present on a scholarly book of their choosing and take a final exam (take-home).

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

The goal of this course is to equip and empower students to sharpen their analytic reasoning, historical thinking, and writing skills by engaging deeply in questions and themes drawn from Middle East History. Students will:

- 1) Gain **broad and deep knowledge** about the Middle East and its history.
- 2) Improve their critical thinking and writing by composing short essays that distill scholarly knowledge into an accessible format.
- 3) Explain historical development by identifying multiple direct and indirect causes and their short- and long-term effects.
- 4) Listen actively and respectfully in class discussions while engaging with their classmates' viewpoints
- 5) Cultivate historical imagination and empathy—ie, the ability to conjure up an informed picture of a past situation or society for the purpose of engaging in better analysis.

ASSIGNMENTS:

Students will:

- 1) Read the assigned material and take bi-weekly reading quizzes
- 2) Write two analytical essays synthesizing the week's readings
- 3) Write a scholarly book review and give a presentation on a book of their choice
- 4) Take a final exam (take home)
- 5) Participate actively and thoughtfully in class

GRADING:

Participation (including reading quizzes): 30 %
Analytical Essays: 20%
Quizzes: 20%
Book Presentation: 10%
Book Review: 10%
Final Exam: 10%

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK:

Ansary, Tamim. *Destiny Disrupted: A History of the World through Islamic Eyes*. New York: Public Affairs, 2009.

The below represents a tentative schedule of assignments and readings and is subject to change:

WEEK 1: THE RISE OF ISLAM

Mon June 5: Introduction

Tues June 6: *Watch*: PBS Documentary “Empire of Faith,” Episodes 1,2. [youtube]

Wed June 7: *Read*: Ansary, *Destiny Disrupted*, 1-66.

Thurs June 8: **Quiz**; *Read*: Ibn Ishaq, Selections

Fri June 9: Ahmed, *Women and Gender in Islam*, Chapter 3, “Women and the Rise of Islam,” 41-63; Asma Barlas, *Believing Women in Islam: Unreading Patriarchal Interpretations of the Qur’an* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2002), Preface and Ch. 1, 1-28.

WEEK 2: ISLAMIC EMPIRES

Read: Ansary, *Destiny Disrupted*, 117-198.

Mon June 12: Discussion: The Sunni Consensus/Fragmentation

Tues June 13: Lecture: The Abbasids. *Read* Berkey, *The Formation of Islam*, 114-150.

Wed June 14: Lecture: A Reappraisal of the Islamic Expansion.
-*Read*: Nizam al-Mulk, *Siyasatnama*

Thurs June 15: Guest Lecture: The formation of Islamic law

Fri June 16: **Papers Due at 3:15 PM**

WEEK 3: MINORITIES IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Mon June 19: Berkey, *The Formation of Islam*, 91-101; 159-175.

Tues June 20: Menocal, *Ornament of the World*, 1-78.
-Lecture: Umayyad Legacies

Wed June 21: García-Arenal, *A Man of Three Worlds*, VII-52.

Thurs June 22: Lecture
-Short Video. Jews of Egypt.

Fri June 23: **Quiz.** Ghosh, *In an Antique Land*, Selections

WEEK 4: WOMEN, GENDER, AND SEX IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Mon June 26: Judith Tucker, *Gender and Islamic Law*, Introduction and Chapter 5.

Tues June 27: Leslie Peirce, *Morality Tales*, 351-374; Dagli; Wood (internet).

Wed June 28: Rouhayeb, *Before Homosexuality*, 1-51.

Thurs June 29: **Papers Due at 3:15 PM**

Fri July 30: **Book Review Presentations**

WEEK 5: DISEASE, PUBLIC HEALTH, AND PUBLIC MORALITY

Mon July 3: **Book Review Due at 3:15 PM.** Ahmed Ragab, *The Medieval Islamic Hospital: Medicine, Religion, and Charity*, selections

Tues July 4: No Class

Wed July 5: Nukhet Varlik, "Conquest, Urbanization, and the Plague Networks in the Ottoman Empire, 1453-1600"

Thurs July 6: Fariba Zarinbaf, *Crime and Punishment in Istanbul*, Chapter 5, "Prostitution and the Vice Trade"

Fri July 7: **Final Exam Due at 5 PM**