

COURSE SYLLABUS

WM509: Encountering Islam: Understanding and Sharing with Muslims

Course Description

The nature and practices of Islam draw worldwide intrigue. What do Muslims believe? Why do they defend their beliefs as they do? How do we present the gospel to them? This course examines Islam from both a Christian and a Muslim perspective, covering the history and validity of the Koran, Muslim theology, the role of women, and the places of Christ, the Bible, and the Trinity within Islam. The goal of the course is to understand the Muslim mindset, and to learn how to share Christ from within that mindset.

Course Objectives

Upon completion of the course, you should be able to:

- Prayerfully consider your responsibilities to the unreached Muslims both in the West and in the Muslim world.
- Take steps toward understanding Islam from within, as Muslims understand themselves, and from without, as Christians understand Muslims.
- Begin to learn how to share Christ with Muslims through both theory and practice.
- Become better equipped for a life of faithfully ministering to Muslims and/or better prepared as pastors and teachers for effectively supporting missions to Muslims.
- Become familiar with some of the literature dealing with Islam and Christian-Muslim relations.
- Have ignited within you an attitude of research into Islam and how to communicate the Savior with Muslims.
- Become acquainted with opportunities for witness to Muslims at home and overseas.

Course Lecturer

The lecturer for this course has taught at a number of institutions including Wheaton College, Dallas Theological Seminary, Columbia International University, Yan Fook Seminary in Hong Kong and in a number of Hispanic countries including Spain, Venezuela, Panama and Paraguay. He and his wife have ministered for four years in Iran and five in Egypt. He specializes in Christian-Muslim relations.

Education:

- Wheaton College, BA
- Dallas Theological Seminary, ThM
- Hartford Seminary, PhD

Course Texts

Required:

Pickthall, Mohammed Marmaduke. *The Meaning of the Glorious Koran*. Beltsville, MD: Amana, 1996.

****Note:** This is an explanatory translation of the Koran and may serve as the student's required Koran reading.

Farah, Caesar E. *Islam*. 7th Edition. New York: Barron, 2003.

Recommended:

One of the popular handbooks on witnessing to Muslims. Many are mentioned in the bibliography.

Woodbury, J. Dudley, ed. *Muslims and Christians on the Emmaus Road*. Monrovia, California: MARC, 1989.

Textbooks can be ordered through our online store at CUGN.org, through your local bookstore, or through your preferred eReader when available.

Course Requirements

1. **Time:** The student must complete the course requirements within a 6-month period unless the particular institution requires the completion of all work within the framework of the semester or quarter. During this time, the student is expected to devote a minimum of 120 hours to the completion of the course.
2. **Recorded Lectures:** The student is required to listen to the twenty audio-recorded lectures.
3. **Review Questions:** The student must answer the review questions at the end of this syllabus. These should be turned in at the end of the course.
4. **Field Experience:** The student is to befriend, interview and witness to at least six different Muslims. Ideally, the student should try to go through the three questionnaires, two times each and show the Jesus film once. The student will write a brief report of the witnessing situations (one paragraph on each relationship.) In your written report include whether you actually shared the gospel. Two students may interview and witness together and both will receive credit. Since men witness to men and women witness to women, if a woman and a man minister together and one observes and prays, it is equally valid. Telephone interviews do not count. Turn in the six interview sheets with your report. If there is more than one Muslim present in one interview, describe it. However, we want at least six different interviews. One on one is ideal.
5. **Reading:** The student is to read the Qur'an in the chronological order in which the surahs were first spoken. The student will turn in an annotated report of all the reading (required and supplemental) he or she has done for the course.

6. **Bibliography:** The student is to compile a bibliography of not more than three pages on a subject of interest related to the course. It should include relevant material from at least: the *New Encyclopedia of Islam*, *The Muslim World*, the *Index Islamicus*, and *Muslim Peoples* when applicable and available, as well as books. List in correct bibliographic order; for instance, articles are to be listed by the author of the article, not by the editor of the book or journal.
7. **Observation:** The student is asked to attend a mosque service. Please give preference to the preaching service, which is held just after noon on Friday.
8. **Subscription:** The student should subscribe to “Fellowship of Faith for the Muslims,” www.ffmpegna.org. A donation of at least \$10.00 brings, three times a year, a calendar of prayer needs from the Muslim world (The Prayer News Bulletin). When you ask for this prayer calendar subscription, also ask for a catalogue of their books in stock. The student will be questioned about this on the exam.
9. **Spiritual Formation Project**

RATIONALE: Ministry preparation and the Christian life require more than academic exercises. Learners also need personal, spiritual formation, which involves theological reflection and critical thinking on their current practices and assumptions. This process occurs as learners engage in self-reflection and interaction in a community of learning. With this in mind, CUGN includes in all courses a capstone project addressing these issues and facilitating interaction beyond the formal learning environment (ATS schools, note Standards 3.2.1.3; 4.1.1; 10.3.3.3).

Write a **five-to-six page reflective essay** and **interview a mentor**, discussing the spiritual impact of this course on your life. Identify your mentor early in the course, and submit the essay to your grader when you take the final exam. This last project should not be a summary of course content, but an application of course principles. Complete the following:

A. Personal Reflection and Evaluation: Reflect on the course – To integrate your academic studies with your walk of faith, reflect on the content of the course and evaluate your life in light of what you learned.

- i. Follow these steps in your reflection:

Step 1: What one theme, principle, or concept in the course is the most significant to you personally? Why is it significant?

Step 2: What portion(s) of the course brought this theme/principle/concept to light?

Step 3: Think about your past. Why is it vital now for you to deal with and apply this theme/principle/concept?

Step 4: How should this affect your thoughts and actions, and what specific steps should you take to concretely apply what you have learned?

- ii. Write your answers to the above questions in full paragraph form. (Recommended length for this reflection: approximately three pages)
- iii. Give a copy of this reflection to your mentor (see #2).

B. Community Reflection and Interaction: Interview a mentor – Since the Holy Spirit uses the input of others to guide and form His people, interview a mentor according to the following guidelines:

- i. Who should you interview? (1-3 are required; 4-6 are recommended)
 1. Someone with whom you have a reasonably close relationship.
 2. Someone who is a mature Christian ministry leader (i.e. a pastor).
 3. Someone who is not your grader or a family member.
 4. Someone who values the spiritual formation process.
 5. Someone who is familiar with and values the subject of the course.
 6. Someone who has experience using the content of the course in ministry.

NOTE: Identify your mentor early in the course, and give him/her the page entitled “Guidelines for Mentors.”

- ii. Focus of the interview – Your interview should focus on the issues and questions you raise in your essay. For example:
 - What feedback can your mentor give in response to your essay?
 - In light of the course content, are the conclusions you made appropriate? Why or why not?
 - What additional advice, deeper insights or broader applications might he/she suggest from his/her own life and ministry?

NOTE: Conduct this interview either in person (preferred) or over the phone. Do not use electronic communication (i.e. email, instant messenger, etc). Suggested length: 45 minutes.

C. Synthesis and Application: Draw your final conclusions – Having reflected on the course and the discussion with your mentor, synthesize what you have learned in these three sections:

- i. Section 1: Begin your essay with the personal reflection from #1 above. This should be exactly what you gave your mentor for the interview.
- ii. Section 2: Comment on your interview, explaining what you discussed and the insights you gained from your mentor. Include the following:
 - What were the mentor’s comments regarding your essay?
 - What advice did he/she give?
 - How did his/her comments expand or correct your application of the course?
 - Include the person’s name, occupation, and the length of the interview.
- iii. Section 3: Conclude with a synthesis of what you have learned. Answer the following:

- If your mentor corrected any thoughts in your “Personal Reflection and Evaluation”, how do you feel about these corrections? Do you agree or disagree? Why?
- Synthesizing your thoughts from section one and your mentor’s insight in section two, what final conclusions have you reached? How is this different from section one?
- In light of the interview and further reflection, what additional, specific changes need to occur in your life and what concrete steps will you take to implement them?

NOTE TO STUDENTS: Your effort in this assignment will determine its benefit. If by the end of this course you have not yet reflected critically on your life in light of what you have studied, allow this assignment to guide you in that process. The instructor for this course will not score your essay based on the amount of spiritual fruit you describe; so do not exaggerate (or trivialize) what you have learned. The primary grading criteria is that you have thoughtfully considered the principles of the course and realistically sought to apply them to your life. If you have done this and met the minimal requirements (as noted above), you will earn the full points for this assignment.

Note on confidentiality: Perhaps the Holy Spirit is dealing with you in some very personal areas of your life. Because of this, your grader will keep your essay entirely confidential and either return or discard it.

Objective: to stimulate reflection and interaction on course principles in order to enhance personal spiritual formation.

10.Exam: The student will take a cumulative exam at the end of the course.

11.Extra Credit: The student is encouraged to watch various videos on Islam and extra credit will be given for this. Write a brief paragraph on each video.

Extra credit will be given to those who exceed the minimum requirements in witnessing and/or reading, and/or video watching. Write a brief description of extra work done and include the number of pages read of each source you read and the length of the video.

Doctoral credit is given for writing a paper of at least 10 pages based upon the bibliography, in addition to the other requirements for the course.

Course Grading

Your grade for the course will be determined as follows:

Lectures and Review Questions	5% of Course Grade
Field Experience (interviews/witnessing)	25% of Course Grade
Required Reading	20% of Course Grade (Qur'an—15% and Farah—5%)
Bibliography	10% of Course Grade
Observation in Mosque	5% of Course Grade
Spiritual Formation Project	10% of Course Grade
Exam	20% of Course Grade
Total	100%

Student Name: _____ Course: _____ Date/Time: _____

Guidelines for Mentors

(Students, give this sheet to your mentor for the Spiritual Formation Project.)

Thank you for your involvement in this student's CUGN coursework. We believe the Christian life is more than an academic exercise, so we encourage students to critically reflect on their life in light of what they learn and then apply those insights to the daily life of faith.

Therefore, students taking CUGN courses are required to complete a final assignment called the "Spiritual Formation Project." This assignment involves two parts: an essay and an interview:

The ESSAY: After completing their coursework, students reflect on the content of the course, evaluate their lives, and discuss the one theme, principle or concept that is most significant to them and why. Students are to identify specific ways this theme/principle/concept should apply to their lives and what action steps they plan to take in order to make these changes a reality.

The INTERVIEW: After writing this reflection, students give a copy to their mentor and meet with him/her to discuss their thoughts and get feedback. The goal of this interview is to facilitate the student's growth through interaction with a mature believer.

NOTES ON THE INTERVIEW:

- You do not need to be familiar with the course to participate in this interview. You will primarily respond to the thoughts of the student. (However, general knowledge of the subject matter of the course and/or experience applying it to ministry is valuable.)
- Prior to meeting with the student, read his/her "Personal Reflection and Evaluation" and prepare to discuss the following:
 1. What feedback can you give the student in response to his/her essay?
 2. Are the student's conclusions from the course appropriate? Why or why not?
 3. What additional advice, deeper insights or broader applications would you suggest from your own life and ministry?
- Meet with the student either in person (preferred) or over the phone. Do not use electronic communication (i.e. email, instant messenger, etc.).
- Suggested length of the interview: 45 minutes

Thanks again for participating in this project! You have a real opportunity to guide this student in the application process and to help him/her connect academics to life – *a valuable process for all who wish to grow in Christ.*

NOTE: If the student's school makes any changes to this assignment, their requirements should replace those described here.

Review Questions

NOTE: There are thirty sub-divisions in the Outline of the course and the review questions correspond to such divisions.

Section I - The Syllabus

1. What would you like to get out of this course? (Lecture 1)

Section II - Introduction

2. Share some sources for finding Muslims in your community. (Lecture 2)
3. Share some principles to remember when visiting a mosque. (Lecture 3)
4. What practical principles would be useful to remember in witnessing to Muslims? (Lectures 2, 3, 4, 5, 24)

Section III - A Theological and Practical Overview

5. Share some basic theological principles for witnessing to Muslims. (Lecture 4) Include at least spiritual and theological needs not met by Islam and include a Christological trilogy.

Section IV - The Qur'an

6. Why should we read the Qur'an? (Lecture 5)

Section V - Jahiliyyah

7. What were some of the characteristics of the Jahiliyyah? (Lecture 5)

Section VI - The Chronological Order of the Surahs of the Qur'an

8. Give some of the content, literary style and historical events of the early Meccan period of the Qur'an. (Lecture 6)
9. Give some of the content, literary style and historical events of the middle Meccan period of the Qur'an. (Lecture 6)
10. Give some of the content, literary style and historic events of the late Meccan period. (Lecture 6)
11. Share some of the importance of the Hijra and of the contrast between Meccan and Medinan surahs. (Lecture 6)
12. Share some of the content, literary style and historical events of the Medinan surahs (Lectures 6, 7)

Section VII - Sources and Text of the Qur'an

13. What are three states of existence of the Qur'an? (Lecture 7)
14. Share some of the sources of the Qur'an. (Lecture 7)
15. What is the relationship between the Qur'an and the New Testament Apocrypha? (Lecture 7)
16. In brief, what is the history of the text of the Qur'an? (Lecture 7)
17. How does our doctrine of the New Testament fulfilling the Old Testament differ from the qur'anic doctrine of abrogation? (Lecture 8)

Section VIII - Islamic History

18. Give the dates of the birth of Muhammad, call of Muhammad, Hijra, last pilgrimage, death of Muhammad, and the battle of Rours. (Lecture 8)
19. Trace the major periods of the history of Islam. (Lectures 8 and 9)
20. What caused the Abbasid period to become the Golden Age of Islam? (Lecture 9)

Section IX - Pillars of Islam

21. State six pillars of the faith giving their Arabic name and their meaning. (Lectures 9, 10)

Section X - Muslim Theology

22. State the sources of authority within Islam, giving both the Arabic words and their meaning in English. (Lecture 10)
23. What were the two beliefs of the Mutaziites and the two beliefs of the Asharites and why did they hold these views? (Lecture 10)
24. State the six major areas of theology. (Lectures 10,11)

Section XI - Tradition—Hadith

25. How important is Hadith to Muslims? (Lecture 11)

Section XII - Islamic Law

26. On what is Islamic law based? (Lecture 11)

Section XIII - Muslim Philosophy

27. What is the significance of Ibn Sina and al Ghazali? (Lecture 11)

Section XIV - Sufism

28. What is Sufism? (Lecture 11)

Section XV - Islam in the Daily Life of a Muslim

29. State some of the holidays of Islam. (Lectures 11, 12)

30. How significant is animism within Islam? (Lecture 12)

31. Share some of the cultural distinctives within the Muslim world. (Lectures 12, 13, 14, 15)

Section XVI - Black Muslims

32. What place does the black Muslim movement have in the African-American community today? (Lecture 13)

Section XVII - Women within Islam

33. Share the place of women within the Qur'an and Hadith. (Lecture 13)

34. What would be some of the principles and strategy needed to reach women within the Muslim world? (Lecture 14)

Section XVIII - Values

35. What values do Muslims hold? (Lectures 14,15)

Section XIX - The Son of God

36. How would you explain the Son of God to Muslims? (Lecture 16)

Section XX - The Deity of Christ

37. How would you explain the Deity of Christ to Muslims? (Lectures 16, 17)

Section XXI - The Crucifixion

38. How would you explain the crucifixion to Muslims? (Lectures 18, 19)

Section XXII - The Trinity

39. Explain the Trinity to Muslims? (Lecture 20)

Section XXIII - The Bible Has Been Changed

40. How do you answer the Muslim objection that the Bible has been changed? (Lecture 21)

Section XXIV - Miscellaneous Objections

41. What was the Gospel of Barnabas? (Lecture 22)

42. Respond to the objection that Christians eat pig meat and drink booze. (Lecture 22)

43. How would you respond when a Muslim would ask you what you think of the Qur'an, Muhammad, Islam, and Israel, and why does your country support Israel? (Lecture 22)

44. How do you answer the question, why is Christianity so divided? (Lecture 22)

45. How would you answer the question that Christianity is a western religion and the sin of the western countries is the sin of Christianity? (Lecture 23)

Section XXV - The Usage of the Qur'an in Muslim Evangelism

46. What are some disadvantages of using the Qur'an in Muslim evangelism? (Lecture 23)

47. What are some advantages of using the Qur'an in Muslim evangelism? (Lecture 23)

Section XXVI - Church Planting for Muslims

48. Why should we try to plant churches from Muslim converts? (Lecture 23)

49. Suggest some principles for planting churches from Muslim converts. (Lecture 23)

Section XXVII - Summary of Principles for Muslim Evangelism

50. Summarize some of the principles needed for communicating Jesus Christ. (Lecture 24)

Section XXVIII - Joys of Working in the Muslim World

51. What are some of the joys in working within the Muslim world? (Lecture 24)

Section XXIX - Suggested Steps for Getting to the Muslim Field

52. What are some suggested steps for getting to the field? (Lecture 24)

Section XXX - Leaving Your Bones

53. Why would an African bishop desire the type of missionaries who are willing to leave their bones? (Lecture 24)