

**COURSE SPECIFICATION DOCUMENT**

<b>Academic School / Department:</b>	CASS
<b>Programme:</b>	BA Political Science
<b>FHEQ Level:</b>	5
<b>Course Title:</b>	Islam in Global Politics (TP)
<b>Course Code:</b>	PLT 5700
<b>Course Leader:</b>	Dominic Alessio
<b>Student Engagement Hours:</b>	120 (standard 3- credit BA course)
Lectures:	22.5
Seminar / Tutorials:	22.5
Independent / Guided Learning:	75
<b>Semester:</b>	Summer
<b>Credits:</b>	12 UK CATS credits 6 ECTS credits 3 US credits

**Course Description:**

The aim of this special travelling course is to focus on the historical, political and religious role played by 'Islam' in global politics. Particularly since the events of September 11, attention has been turned to the "clash of civilizations" with a particular focus on Islam and its neighbours. The rise of globalization has also created an interdependency of faiths which requires greater co-operation, understanding, and dialogue. A recurrent theme of this course, which will make use of key historical sites, guest speakers and special collections/archives/ museums in parts of the Muslim world, will be whether Islam really is a monolithic entity which can be separated from the rest of the world. As many non-Islamic state now have significant Muslim minorities, is this notion of Islam as a discrete civilization any longer tenable (if it was ever tenable)? Another theme will be the relations between religion and state in Islam. Is Islam inherently resistant to secularization and incompatible with democratisation, as some scholars believe? Special note: site visits and guest lectures may change subject to availability and faculty expertise.

**Prerequisites:**

PLT 3100 or PLT 3105 or INR 4100 or INR 4105 or HST 3100 or HST 3105

**Aims and Objectives:**

- Give students a critical perspective on debates surrounding 'Orientalism' and the 'clash of civilisations' thesis
- Give students a comparative perspective on Islam and its relationship with other 'civilizations', particularly in the 'Judeo-Christian' tradition, both theologically and historically
- Throw light on the diversity of contemporary Islamic movements and their attitude to various aspects of 'Western modernity', such as democracy, human rights, feminism and secularism

**Programme Outcomes:**

5A(iii); 5B(i); 5B(ii); 5B(iii); 5C(i); 5C(ii); 5C(iii); 5D(ii)

A detailed list of the programme outcomes are found in the Programme Specification.

This is located at the archive maintained by Registry Services and found at:

<http://www.richmond.ac.uk/programme-and-course-specifications/>

**Learning Outcomes:**

By the end of this course, successful students should be able to:

- Demonstrate a critical engagement with major thinkers and intellectual paradigms in the study of 'Islam' in global politics
- Demonstrate a detailed understanding of the political implications of religious institutions, practices and systems as they affect relations between 'Islam' and non-Islamic states and societies
- Demonstrate a critical and theoretical engagement with core problems and issues faced in the study of 'Islam' in global politics
- Demonstrate a detailed understanding of the continuities and transformations evident in the relations between 'Islam' and 'the West'
- Complete assigned work with a degree of clarity, technical competence and critical thinking, and a degree of independence and capacity for self-evaluation, appropriate for a 5000-level course

**Indicative Content:**

- An understanding of debates surrounding Orientalism and the 'clash of civilisations' thesis
- An introduction to some of the key issues in Islamic theology and jurisprudence and the relationship between Islam and the 'Judeo-Christian Tradition'
- An exploration of some of the key episodes in medieval Islamic history and their impact on the Christian West especially the Crusades and 'Islamic Science'
- An introduction to the Arab-Israeli conflict and its implications for global politics

- An analysis of contemporary 'Islamism' and 'Islamic fundamentalism' and the attitude of these movements to various aspects of 'Western modernity': secularism, human rights, democracy etc...
- An introduction to debates surrounding Islam and Gender.
- An exploration of some of the central issues surrounding Islamic minority groups in non-Islamic states

**Assessment:**

This course conforms to the Richmond University *Travelling Programme Assessment Norms* approved at Academic Board (formerly Learning & Teaching Policy Committee and located at: <http://www.richmond.ac.uk/admitted-students/>

**Teaching Methodology:**

This course will be taught through a combination of lectures and seminar-type activities, including group work, sub-group activities, classroom discussion and the showing of documentaries, as well as on-site visits as part of the extended travel programme.

The general approach to classes is informal, and discussion is viewed as an essential part of an interactive and participatory learning program. Audio-visual aids, study materials and electronic learning resources will be used as appropriate. Lectures provide a framework for the course, and are designed to ensure students have an overview of main issues and concerns on a particular topic, receive clarification on the major points of debate understand the broad dimensions of core problems, and are aware of relevant literature in the specific area of concern. It is essential that lectures are supplemented with assigned readings; together, the readings and the lectures are designed to provide guidance for seminar discussion.

Seminar classes are based on the principle of active and student-directed learning, and are designed to be Safe, Enjoyable, Managed, Inclusive, Necessary, Academic, Respectful & Stimulating. The seminars provide an opportunity for discussion of contentious issues, addressing questions and exploring academic debates in more depth, group and sub-group discussion. They are encouraged to share their opinions freely, but must also maintain respect for the opinions of others. It is expected that students will participate regularly in discussions in a creative, competent and critical way, as the formulation of their own thoughts and clarification of their assumptions, often in contradiction to other students' thoughts and assumptions, form a crucial part of the learning process. Students are expected to come to seminar classes prepared.

**Bibliography:**

See syllabus for complete reading list

**Indicative Text(s):**

- Malise Ruthven: 'Islam: A Very Short Introduction' (OUP, 2000)

