

**SC-526 - Foundational Sources of Islam
Hartford Seminary**

**Fall 2021
Thursdays, 7-9pm
SYNCHRONOUS COURSE**

Instructor: Suheil Laher Email: slaher@hartsem.edu Office Hours: By Appointment

Course Description

This course introduces students to the Qur'ān (the holy book/recitation believed by Muslims to have been divinely revealed to the Prophet Muhammad), and the hadith (words and actions attributed to the Prophet Muhammad himself). The first part of the course deals with Qur'ānic topics, including: the Qur'ān's collection, transmission and preservation, variant readings, the theory of abrogation, the concept of *ijāz* (inimitability / miraculousness), and approaches to exegesis. The second part of the course will focus on hadith, which are an essential source of Islamic law and normative practice based on prophetic precedent. We survey the basic foundations of hadith studies (*'ulūm al-ḥadīth*) which are essential to a well-grounded understanding of this important field of Islamic Studies, including: hadith terminology and classification, the legislative authority of the Sunna, methods of collecting and preserving hadiths, important transmitters, canonical hadith sources. The course also includes selections (in translation) from the Qur'ān and hadith, and a survey of Western academic views and contemporary issues.

Course Objectives

- Understand the history of the Qur'ān and hadiths, and how they differ, from both Muslim and Western perspectives
- Understand the nature and origin of variant readings of the Qur'ān
- Understand the theory of abrogation and controversies concerning it
- Explain the different approaches to exegesis (*tafsīr*) and understand its parameters
- Understand the doctrine of the inimitability of the Qur'ān and the belief in its miraculous nature
- Examine the role of Qur'ān and hadith as sources of theology, law and ethics
- Recognize that hadiths are of varying reliability, and understand the Muslim scholars' criteria for evaluating their authenticity
- Analyze the contents of hadiths with a view to appreciating deductions that can be made from them, and identify potentially problematic issues
- Explain some of the contemporary debates among Muslims regarding particular hadiths
- Develop a holistic view of the field of hadith, useful to personal confidence and/or assisting in pastoral advice
- Be able to list prominent books of hadith, and distinguish which of them are intended for specialists and which are intended for laymen

Program Learning Outcomes

- To demonstrate foundational and critical knowledge of one's own religion
- To demonstrate knowledge and skills for dialogical and constructive engagement with diversity.
- To demonstrate the ability to relate theory and practice in the social contexts in which a religion's communities exist.

Degree Requirements: This course fulfils the following requirements:

- MAIRS: Foundational Fields
- MAC: Elective

List of Texts

Required

- Brown, Jonathan AC. *Hadith: Muhammad's Legacy in the Medieval and Modern World*. (Oneworld, 2017)
- Mattson, Ingrid. *The Story of the Qur'an*, Second Edition, Wiley-Blackwell, 2013.
- McAuliffe, Jane Dammen. *The Cambridge Companion to the Qur'an*, Cambridge, 2006
- Nawawi. *Forty Ḥadīth Nawawi*. tr. Ezzeddin Ibrahim & Denys Johnson-Davies. (Kazi, 1982)

Recommended

- `Awwamah, Muhammad. *Influences of Ḥadīth Upon Differences of Opinion Amongst the Jurist Imams*. (Turath, 2014)
- Azami, M.M. *The History of the Qur'ānic Text*. Islamic Book Trust, 2011.
- Bewley, Aisha (tr.). *Tafsir al-Jalālayn*. Dar al-Taḳwa, 2007.
- Brown, Jonathan AC. *Misquoting Muhammad The Challenge and Choices of Interpreting the Prophet's Legacy*. (Oneworld, 2014)
- Ibn Rajab al-Ḥanbali. *The Compendium of Knowledge and Wisdom*. (Turath, 2007)
- Usmani, Justice Mufti Muhammad Taqi. *An Approach to the Quranic Sciences*. Karachi: Darul Isha'at, 2000.

Assessment

| | |
|----------------------------|-----|
| Attendance & Participation | 10% |
| In-Class Presentations | 10% |
| Forum Discussions | 30% |
| Weekly Quizzes | 20% |
| Final Examination / Paper | 30% |

- **Attendance:** Class is held weekly via Zoom. You must attend class regularly and promptly. More than two absences will reduce your grade in the course, unless there are extenuating circumstances.
- **Presentations:** Each student is required to sign up for one in-class presentation, where s/he will present on the verses / hadith(s) shown in the 'PRESENT' column in the Class Outline below. No two people are allowed to present on the same material, so if there is something you really want to present on, then sign up ASAP; it is first-come-first-served. The presentation should be 10-15mins long, and should:
 - Summarize the main points / themes addressed in the Quranic verses / hadith(s)
 - Include relevant comments from a book of Quranic / hadith commentary
 - For Quranic verses comment on the context (verses before and after the assigned passage)
 - Show that you have thought about the verses / hadith(s) for yourself, and so you should include some analysis or critique or questions raised
 - How (if at all) do the assigned verses / hadith relate to the syllabus topic for the week?
 - If the assignment includes more than one hadith, or more verses from more than one surah of the Quran, you should say something about the relationship between them, and
 - Include a slideshow (Powerpoint, Google Slides, etc). You must upload a PDF version to the Canvas course website by 7pm on the day of your presentation.
 - Presentations can be pastoral, or academic.

Rubric for Grading of Presentations:

| | |
|---|-----|
| Capable, succinct summary of material | 75% |
| Timing (You will lose points if your presentation is less than 10mins, and more than 17mins) | 5% |
| Time Management Did you cover all your material in the allotted time? | 5% |
| Visual Aesthetics | 5% |
| Critical Analysis Analysis, or critique, or questions raised | 10% |

- **Forum Discussions:** Each student will post TWO reflections per week. One reflection should be 100-250 words, to the Online Forums, and should show that the student has read and thought about the assigned readings(s) for that week. The other reflection should be 50-100 words and should be a response to another student's posts. Please note that postings that are too long, or too short, will lose points.
- **Weekly Quizzes:** will consist mostly of multiple choice and/or short-answer questions
- **Final Exam** will consist of essay questions. If a final paper is written instead, the topic must be approved by the instructor, and the paper should be 10-15 pages long.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism, the failure to give proper credit for the words and ideas of another person, whether published or unpublished, is strictly prohibited. All written material submitted by students must be their own original work; where the words and ideas of others are used they must be acknowledged. Additionally, if students receive editorial help with their writing they should also acknowledge it appropriately.

For more details on the Seminary's Plagiarism policy, see: <https://www.hartsem.edu/current-students/policies/>

CLASS OUTLINE

| CLASS # | DATE | TOPIC AND READINGS | PRESENT ¹ |
|---------|-------|--|----------------------|
| 1 | 09/09 | Introduction: Preliminaries; What is a Foundational Source? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mattson, 1-22• M.A.S. Abdel Haleem, "Quran and Hadith" in <i>Cambridge Companion to Classical Islamic Theology</i>, 19-31 (available on DTL)• Listen to Surah #95 (Saudi man): http://server9.mp3quran.net/hthfi/095.mp3 | |
| | 09/16 | NO CLASS | |
| 2 | 09/23 | History of Revelation of the Quran, Makkan and Madinian, Occasions of Revelation <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mattson, 27-74• Listen to Surah #96 (Kuwaiti man): http://server8.mp3quran.net/afs/096.mp3• (Optional): Fred Donner, "The Historical Context" in <i>Cambridge Companion to the Quran</i>, (available on DTL) | Q 10:104-109 |
| 3 | 09/30 | Compilation and Transmission of the Quran <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mattson, 79-108• Listen to Surah #1 (Malaysian lady): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3q0tDgYMQO4&t=5s• (Optional): Claude Gilliot, "Creation of a Fixed Text" in <i>Cambridge Companion to the Quran</i>, (available on DTL) | Q 17:86, 29:49 |

¹ Please note: Q=Quran, N=Nawawi Hadiths

| | | | |
|---|-------|--|--------------------------|
| 4 | 10/07 | The Oral Quran: <i>tajwid</i> and variant readings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mattson, 109-135 • Listen to Surah #55: (Sudanese man): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wmbt8a9RPrE • (Optional): William Graham, Navid Kermani, "Recitation and Aesthetic Reception" in <i>Cambridge Companion to the Quran</i>, (available on DTL) | Q 75:16-19, 73:20 |
| 5 | 10/14 | I`jaz, Form and Style <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Angelika Neuwirth, "Structural, linguistic and literary features" in <i>Cambridge Companion to the Quran</i>, 97-111 (available on DTL) • Listen to Surah 25:63 -77 (Moroccan lady): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cqXGmaj7bWA • (Optional): Daniel Madigan, "Themes and Topics" in <i>Cambridge Companion to the Quran</i>, (available on DTL) | Q 17:80, 10:38, 53:59-62 |
| 6 | 10/21 | Hermeneutics and Exegesis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mattson, 185-214 • Listen to Surah #96:1-5 (Iranian man): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z5mLJW-4Qel • (Optional): Jane McAuliffe, "The tasks and traditions of interpretation," in <i>Cambridge Companion to the Quran</i>, (available on DTL) | Q 16:44, 16:64 |
| 7 | 10/28 | History of Hadith <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brown, ch. 1 • Fueck, Jonathan. "The originality of the Arabian Prophet." <i>Studies on Islam</i>, trans. and ed. Merlin Swartz (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981) (1981): 86-98 | |
| 8 | 11/04 | The Golden Age of Hadith, and emergence of canonical books <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brown, ch. 2 • Etan Kohlberg, "Shi`i Hadith," <i>Arabic Literature to the End of the Umayyad Period</i>, 299-307 | N 5, 21, 28 |
| 9 | 11/11 | Hadith Authentication and Terminology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brown, ch. 3 • Harald Motzki, <i>Hadith: Origins and Developments</i> (Routledge, 2016), 15-33 | N 1, 7, 38 |
| | 11/18 | NO CLASS | |

| | | | |
|----|-------|--|--------------|
| 10 | 11/25 | <p>Role of Quran and Hadith in Theology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mattson, 141-146 • Brown, ch. 6 • Ibn al-Jawzi, <i>Anthropomorphist Tendencies amongst the Hanabila</i>, (tr. Merlin Swartz), http://www.marifah.net/articles/anthropomorphist-ibnjawzi.pdf • Jane Dammen McAuliffe, <i>Qur'anic Christians: an analysis of classical and modern exegesis</i> (Cambridge University Press, 2007), 1-9 • Watch Surah 19:16-35: Watch: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t8NbjNPMB9M | N 4, 19, 24 |
| 11 | 12/02 | <p>Role of Quran and Hadith in Islamic Law</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mattson, 215-242 • M. A. Draz, <i>Introduction to the Qur'an</i> (Tauris, 2011), 61-88 • Brown, ch. 5 • Listen Surah 5:44-50: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e-NDIDsY9Iw | N 8, 14 |
| 12 | 12/09 | <p>Role of Quran and Hadith in Ethics and Spirituality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mattson, 247-265 • Brown, ch. 7 • Izutsu, Toshihiko, <i>Ethico-religious Concepts in the Qur'an</i> (McGill-Queen's Press-MQUP, 2002), 184-202 • Listen Surah 2:255: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xlf70K7yPZ8 | N 11, 20, 34 |
| 13 | 12/16 | <p>Quran and Hadith in Modernity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yazicioglu, Isra. "Perhaps Their Harmony is not that Simple: Bediuzzaman Said Nursi on the Qur'an and Modern Science." <i>Theology and Science</i> 11.4 (2013): 339-355. • Brown, ch. 9 • (Optional): Daniel Brown, <i>Rethinking Tradition in Modern Islamic Thought</i>, summary at http://mypercept.co.uk/articles/PDF/Rethinking-Tradition-Islamic-Thought.pdf • (Optional): Asma Barlas, "Women's readings of the Quran" in <i>Cambridge Companion to the Quran</i>, (available on DTL) | Q 41:53-54 |