

## Muslim Public Speaking: History and Practice (AM-654)

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### Class Location and Time

Tuesday, May 26 through Saturday, May 30, 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.  
Location: TBD

### Description

This course is an exploration in contemporary and past Muslim homiletics. Our approach is both descriptive and practical. For those who are interested in Muslim oral discourses as an academic subject, the course will offer a chance to learn about the subject from historical and anthropological perspectives. Our examples will be from the United States, the Middle East, and beyond. For those who plan to be Muslim public speakers, the course will offer extensive practical exercises aimed at the development of their skills as lecturers and khatibs.

### Coursework and Assessment

- Each student will be required to read **all the assigned material before the first day** of the course.
- **By 12:00 pm on Monday, May 25**, each student will submit three documents:
  - 1) Reading notes of the assigned chapters of Richard Antoun's *Muslim Preacher in the Modern World*. The notes should be 3-4 pages long.
  - 2) A reflection on one aspect of the book that the student finds most useful for their study or their practice of public speaking. This reflection should be 3-4 pages long (Times New Roman, 12 font, double space)
  - 3) A short one paragraph statement that identifies an online video of a Muslim lecture or sermon the student would like to analyze in class. Provide the link to the material (see the way I identify such links in "Required Texts" part of the syllabus). Submit this statement as a separate document.

Please email the three documents as attachments to [yuskaev@hartsem.edu](mailto:yuskaev@hartsem.edu)

- Attendance in each class and active participation are required. Because this is an intensive class, we will have a **zero-tolerance policy towards absenteeism**. No absences will be allowed or tolerated. The failure to attend one full-day session will result in the failing grade for the course.

- Each day in the class will include opportunities for students' independent and group work. The purpose of such exercises is to prepare students for their final project
- Each student will be expected to present their analysis of texts and video/audio material discussed in class during one of the sessions. (See supplementary material assigned for each day.)
- **Each student will have a choice between two final assignments:**

1) **Final paper**, 10-12 pages in length, will be **due at 12:00 pm on June 30, 2020**. Please submit the papers by email to [yuskaev@hartsem.edu](mailto:yuskaev@hartsem.edu).

The topic of the paper, as well as procedures that will accompany it, will be discussed in class.

2) **A public speech:** deliver a sermon or lecture, record it as an audio or video, and submit the recording to me as of **June 30, 2020**. In addition, submit a 5-page reflection on the speech.

Additional parameters of this assignment, which will be significant, will be discussed in class.

Grading standards for the essays will be:

A = Excellent. Excellent presentation and analysis that demonstrates original interpretation.

B = Good. Solid command of facts and good attempt at analysis.

C+ = Adequate in the sense of doing minimal compliance with the assignment.

C = Poor; did not complete the assignment adequately but shows some effort.

F = Failing; did not complete the assignment.

- **Grading criteria for the course:**
  - Preliminary reflection (20%)
  - One class presentation (10%)
  - Class participation (20%)
  - Final essay or public speech (50%) – due at 12:00 pm on June 30, 2020.

### **Required Texts**

**Note:**

I recommend, **but do not require**, that you purchase two books:

- 1) Richard T. Antoun, *Muslim Preacher in the Modern World: a Jordanian Case Study in Comparative Perspective* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1989)

- 2) Timur R. Yuskaev, *Speaking Qur'an: An American Scripture* (University of South Carolina Press, 2017)

All of the readings we will engage in the course will be available in CANVAS. (The recommendation to purchase the two texts is for your potential future use.)

After registration, please log into the class CANVAS site and begin reading and listening to the following texts and speeches (please email [yuskaev@hartsem.edu](mailto:yuskaev@hartsem.edu) if they are not yet available for some reason):

- 1) Richard T. Antoun, *Muslim Preacher in the Modern World: a Jordanian Case Study in Comparative Perspective* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1989) – excerpts posted in CANVAS.
- 2) Wael Alkhairo, *Speaking for Change: A Guide to Making Effective Friday Sermons (Khuṭbāt)* (Beltsville, MD: Amana Publications, 1998) – available in CANVAS
- 3) Steven C. Caton, “What is an ‘Authorizing Discourse’?,” in David Scott and Charles Hirschkind, ed., *Powers of the Secular Modern: Talal Asad and His Interlocutors* (Stanford University Press, 2006) – posted in CANVAS
- 4) Timur R. Yuskaev, Chapter 3, “Redemption,” from *Speaking Qur'an: an American Scripture* (University of South Carolina Press, 2017) – posted in CANVAS
- 5) Online audio recording of Imam W.D. Mohammed, “Our Shared Freedom Space”

Part 1 – follow this link:

[http://www.newafricaradio.com/audio/wdm/november2008\\_1.ram](http://www.newafricaradio.com/audio/wdm/november2008_1.ram)

Part 2 – follow this link:

[http://www.newafricaradio.com/audio/wdm/november2008\\_2.ram](http://www.newafricaradio.com/audio/wdm/november2008_2.ram)

These files are from <http://www.newafricaradio.com/index.html>. To locate the files within the [newafricaradio.com](http://www.newafricaradio.com) site, look for “Audio & Video Lectures of Imam W. Deen Mohammed” marked as 2007-2009. Then look for “November 2008 National Broadcast: Part 1; Our Shared Freedom Space” and “November 2008 National Broadcast: Part 2; Our Shared Freedom Space.”

- 6) An excerpt from Ch. 4, “Politics,” from Yuskaev, *Speaking Qur'an* – available in CANVAS
- 7) View two online videos by Hamza Yusuf
  - a) “Making Sense of Our Past” (There are many places one can find it.

One of them is on

<http://www.aswatalislam.net/FilesList.aspx?T=Video&C=Lectures&T1=Hamza%20Yusuf>)

- b) “Give and Take for God’s Sake” (you can find this one easily on YouTube and elsewhere)

## Schedule

### Tuesday, May 26

Readings:

- a) first five chapters of Antoun’s book
- b) Steven Caton’s article
- c) Look over Wael Alkhairo’s book (no need to finish reading it; start reading it and familiarize yourself with the content)

Agenda:

- 1) Discussion of Antoun’s book and students’ reflections
- 2) Discussion of effective speeches, based on students’ findings
- 3) Preparation for the Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday workshops

### Wednesday, May 27

Reading: Wael Alkhairo, *Speaking for Change*

Agenda:

- 1) Continuation of the discussion of Antoun’s book and Caton’s article
- 2) Public speaking workshop (based, in part, on Alkhairo’s book)

### Thursday, May 28

Reading/Listening/Viewing:

- a) Chapter 3, “Redemption,” from Yuskaev, *Speaking Qur’an*
- b) Imam W.D. Mohammed, “Our Shared Freedom Space”

Agenda:

- 1) Discussion based on readings
- 2) Public speaking workshop

## **Friday, May 29**

Agenda:

- 1) Public speaking workshop
- 2) Visit to a mosque

## **Saturday, May 30**

Reading/Listening/Viewing:

- a) Excerpt from Chapter 4, “Politics,” from Yuskaev, *Speaking Qur’an*
- b) Hamza Yusuf, “Making Sense” and “Give and Take”

Agenda:

- 1) Debriefing
- 2) Discussion based on readings
- 3) Public speaking workshop
- 4) Concluding discussion