

Hartford Seminary
TH 663: Christian-Muslim Encounter: The Theological Dimension
Winter/Spring Term 2016
On-campus classroom instruction + asynchronous online instruction
Instructor: Dr. Lucinda Mosher
SYLLABUS

Instructor:

Lucinda Mosher, Th.D. Faculty Associate in Interfaith Studies
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Office Hours (including Skype or phone conversations): by appointment

Meeting Day, Dates, Time:

Face-to-face instruction at Hartford Seminary, 9:00 AM – 4:30 PM on five Thursdays:
1/21; 2/11; 3/3; 4/7; and 4/21.
Asynchronous online instruction between face-to-face sessions (approx. 10 hours)

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This hybrid course (balancing traditional, in-classroom instruction with asynchronous online learning) explores the complexity of Christian and Muslim theological interpretation of each other, and of themselves in light of the other, in various times and contexts. Students will examine the themes, genres, and strategies of Christian-Muslim theological engagement from the 7th century CE to the present, with particular attention to the 21st-century dialogue of Christian and Muslim scholars known as the *Building Bridges* seminars. Thus, this course will facilitate what Francis Clooney means by *comparative theology*: an endeavor which “combines tradition-rooted theological concerns with actual study of another tradition.” And, following John Renard, it will define *theological concerns* broadly: including, of course, understandings of God, revelation, and the divine-human economy; but also the “panoply of texts and images and the various modes of interpreting them; ways of reasoning and analysis of human ‘religious’ experience; modes of expression, whether verbal or visual, of that experience; and the host of institutional and cultural developments that have formed the settings and contexts for all such interpretation, processing, and expression.” The course’s four major units of content are:

- A. Historical dimensions of Christian-Muslim theological encounter—including sacred sources; community origins; community development and spread;
- B. Creedal dimensions and the emergence of theological disciplines;
- C. Institutional dimensions—including the conceptual foundations of, and shape of, authority and polity;
- D. Ethical, spiritual, and mystical dimensions—including the theology of popular piety.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

John Renard, *Islam and Christianity: Theological Themes in Comparative Perspective* (University of California Press, 2011) ISBN 0520266781.

John Renard, editor, *Islamic Theological Themes: A Primary Source Reader* (University of California Press, 2014) ISBN 0520281896.

Charles Tieszen, *A Textual History of Christian-Muslim Relations: Seventh – Fifteenth Centuries* (Fortress Press, 2015) ISBN 1451490267.

Douglas Pratt, et al., editors, *The Character of Christian-Muslim Encounter: Essays in Honour of David Thomas* (Leiden: Brill, 2015) ISBN 9789004257429.

NOTE: Because this book is extremely expensive, and because we will not be reading it in its entirety, students are encouraged to use the library copy.

Excerpts from proceedings of the Building Bridges Seminar (buildingbridges.georgetown.edu) or other books and journals will also be assigned. Usually, these items will be available through the dedicated website for this course.

NOTE: Students with no (or limited) background in Christianity or Islam should make use of the introductory items provided on the course website. They might wish also to read Hugh Goddard, *A History of Christian-Muslim Relations* (University of Edinburgh Press, 2000).

LEARNING GOALS

As a result of this course, students will gain:

- Appreciation for the range of, and reasons for, Christian-Muslim theological engagement;
- Ability to identify the major themes of Christian-Muslim theological engagement;
- Ability to explain the issues at stake in engagement over several of these themes.
- Knowledge of the primary sources informing the theological engagement of Christians and Muslims with each other;
- Understanding of the genres and strategies of such engagement.

ASSESSMENT

Students are expected to be present for all face-to-face instruction sessions on campus in Hartford. Students are expected to participate in all 10 hours of online instructional activities, but may do so at their own pace. Please note that “online hours” will be spent on such activities as watching or listening to a lecture, watching a documentary, posting to a discussion board, or asking and answering questions via the discussion board or email. Time necessary to complete reading and writing assignments is *in addition to* the “online instruction hours”. Students are expected to complete all reading, written, and online assignments.

Grades will be calculated as follows:

- A. Participation in face-to-face classes in Hartford (see attendance policy) [30%];
- B. Participation in online learning activities as directed by the dedicated website for this course [15%]
- C. Submission of four short reflection paper (5–10 pages)—in each case discussing learnings from a particular course-unit’s readings and activities [10% each; 40% total];
- D. Submission of a final project or paper on some aspect of Christian-Muslim theological encounter, chosen in conversation with the professor (15-20 pages or the equivalent) [15%].

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Because this class meets only five times face-to-face, missing even part of a class session will result in an automatic lowering of your final grade, unless an adequate manner of making up the time and covering the material is negotiated with the instructor. (This proviso is offered primarily to accommodate students who enroll in the course after the initial session. However, accommodation will be made for students who must miss a session because they are participating in the HartSem 2016 study tour to Iran.) Missing more than two such sessions will result in automatic failure of the course.

Participation in all online components is expected; failure to do so is considered an “absence” and will affect one’s final grade.

DETAILED COURSE OUTLINE

NOTE: Since this is a “hybrid course,” the course website is an official companion to this syllabus as a guide to this course. As the course unfolds, we may find it necessary to adjust some reading assignments. The course website will then become the most up-to-date and authoritative guide.

Preparing for the first face-to-face session

This is NOT an “Introduction to Christianity and Islam” course! Students whose knowledge of either religion is limited should plan on some preliminary learning. See “Background” folder on the course website (URL to be obtained from the professor) for some videos and other materials on the basics of Christianity and Islam *per se*.

FACE-TO-FACE SESSION #1: THURSDAY, JANUARY 21 – COURSE INTRODUCTION

Topics: Introductions (to each other; to “theology” as a discipline, and comparative theology as a discipline; to “dialogue” and “close reading”; to Renard; to the Building Bridges Seminar; to course expectations); brief history of

Christian-Muslim engagement; Scripture, Exegesis, and Tradition – foundational texts; theologies of history; defining the “insider”. Expectations for preparation for future face-to-face sessions.

Preparation for Face-to-Face Session #2 – to be accomplished 1/22 – 2/10:

In Renard, *Islam and Christianity*, read Prologue, Introduction, and Chapters 1 & 2.

In Renard, *Islamic Theological Themes*, Chapters 1 & 2.

In *The Character of Christian-Muslim Encounter*, read at least TWO of the following:

Alex Mallett, “A Neglected Piece of Evidence for Early Muslim Reactions to the Frankish Crusader Presence in the Levant,” pp. 95–110;

Charles Tieszen, “Can You Find Anything Praiseworthy in My Religion? Religious Aversion and Admiration in Medieval Christian-Muslim Relations,” pp. 126–145;

Claire Norton, “(In)Tolerant Ottomans...,” pp. 242–263;

Alan Guenther, “The Hadith in Christian-Muslim Dialogue in 19th- Century India,” pp. 264 – 287;

Peniel Rajkumar, “Christian-Muslim Engagement in Contemporary India,” pp. 326 – 342;

John Azumah, “Patterns of Christian-Muslim Encounters in Sub-Saharan Africa,” pp. 381 – 400.

In *Scriptures in Dialogue* (available on our website as a PDF), read Chapter 1 [“When, where, with whom do I read Scripture?” (read at least the first four entries)]; Chapter 2 [essays by Wright and Cornell + texts of Psalm 19 and al-Rum (30):19-30].

See website for other items related to Face-to-Face Session #2, such as:

- a. Bible and Qur’an: a review of composition and structure (narrated PPT lecture by Professor Mosher)
- b. *The Gospel According to St. Matthew* (1964) – film by Pier Paolo Pasolini
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h7ewh5k5-gY>
- c. *Max McLean recites the Gospel of Mark* (Max McLean is founder and artistic director of Fellowship for Performing Arts, a New York City-based producer of live theater from a Christian worldview.)
 - 1) Chapters 1-3: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=td3FKGN1AsM>
 - 2) Chapter 4-6: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bbp3LqIGq8Y>.
 - 3) Chapters 7-9: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wnGKueok00E>
 - 4) Chapters 10-12: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2PURAFvYt40>
 - 5) Chapters 13-16: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CbvWIBtD2rU>.
- d. *Muhammad: Legacy of a Prophet*: <http://freedocumentaries.org/documentary/pbs-muhammad-legacy-of-a-prophet>

Short reflection paper (5 10 pages) on “Historical Dimensions”: due February 10th

FACE-TO-FACE SESSION # 2: THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 11: HISTORICAL DIMENSIONS OF CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM THEOLOGICAL ENCOUNTER

Creedal dimensions of Christianity and Islam; *The Church in the Shadow of the Mosque* –early Christian-Muslim theological encounters; Discussion: “When, where, with whom do I read Scripture?” The sound of sacred texts; Dialogical engagement: Psalm 19 and al-Rum (30):19-30

Preparation for Face-to-Face Session #3 – to be accomplished 2/12 – 3/3:

In Renard, *Islam and Christianity*, finish reading Chapters 1 & 2 and related material; read Chapters 3 & 4.

See also, *Islamic Theological Themes*, Chapter 4 (through p. 125), Chapters 5 & 6.

In *The Character of Christian-Muslim Encounter*, read Mark Beaumont, “The Holy Spirit...,” pp. 42–59.

In *Bearing the Word*, read two essays: Kadi, “What is prophecy?”; Davis, “My devoted friend”.

See website for other items related to Unit II, such as: *The Community of Believers*: Gavin D’Costa on “Church”; Abdullah Saeed on “umma” - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CGajU31fHwM>.

Short reflection paper (5 10 pages) on Creedal Dimensions: Due March 2nd

THURSDAY, MARCH 3 – FACE-TO-FACE SESSION #3: CREEDAL DIMENSIONS AND THE EMERGENCE OF THEOLOGICAL DISCIPLINES

Topics: Narrative theology; narrative in scripture and postscriptural texts; pedagogical narratives; creedal formulas; systematic theologizing and the emergence of schools of theological thinking

Preparation for Face-to-Face Session #4 – to be accomplished 3/4 – 4/7:

In Renard, *Islam and Christianity*, read Chapters 5 & 6; see also, *Islamic Theological Themes*, Chapter 10, p. 371-384 (top) on theologies of governance.

Watch the following:

Online narrated PPT lectures: “The Christian Mosaic” and “The Muslim Mosaic” – the internal diversity of each community; Three-Stranded Ropes: Christian and Muslim moral theology; Mysticism; The Marrow of Worship and the Moral Vision – ethics lessons from spiritual exemplars.

Online lecture: Seyyed Hossein Nasr on *Sunnism and Shi’ism: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow* - <http://hartsem.podbean.com/2012/12/07/sunnism-and-shi%E2%80%99ism-yesterday-today-and-tomorrow-with-dr-seyyed-hossein-nasr/>

Short reflection paper (5 10 pages) on Institutional Dimensions: Due April 6th

THURSDAY, APRIL 7 – FACE-TO-FACE SESSION #4: INSTITUTIONAL DIMENSIONS—INCLUDING THE CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATIONS OF, AND SHAPE OF, AUTHORITY AND POLITY

Topics: conceptual foundations and shape of authority within community; religious polity; canon/divinely-revealed law; theologies of power; theology and politics; Christian and Muslim intentional communities; Christian and Muslim institutions of higher learning; theology of architecture; construction of cathedrals, monasteries, mosques, and schools; theology of visible structures; spatial arts

Dialogical engagement of Lord’s Prayer and Fatiha; Site Visits

Preparation for Face-to-Face Session #5 – to be accomplished 4/8 – 4/20:

In Renard, *Islam and Christianity*, read Chapters 7, 8, 9. See also, *Islamic Theological Themes*, Parts Four and Five.

In *The Character of Christian-Muslim Encounter*, read Michael Igrave, “Provocation and Resonance: Sacramental Spirituality in the Context of Islam,” pp. 492–511.

In *Bearing the Word*, read Ayoub, “Isa and Jesus”; and Madigan, “Jesus and Muhammad”.

In *Building a Better Bridge: Muslims, Christians, and the Common Good*, available on our course website, read Tariq Ramadan, “Islamic Views of the Collective,” and John Langan, “The Common Good: Catholicism, Pluralism, and Secular Society”.

See website for the following items:

Documentary: *Religions of the World: Orthodox and Roman Catholic Christianity* (narrated by Ben Kingsley). An “history of religions” approach to comparing two streams of Christian belief and practice. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p7cUuxh3CYY>. 1 hour

“Mutual Perceptions” (short papers by Caner Dagli, Daniel Madigan, Rowan Williams, in preparation for Building Bridges seminar on prayer in Christian and Muslim understanding and practice). <http://vimeo.com/26970083>.

Michael Plekon and Reza Shah-Kazemi on theology of prayer: <http://vimeo.com/26968201>

Selected chanted supplications (audio recordings), including *Jawshan al-Kabir* (Cevşen’ül Kebir), presented here with Turkish transliteration): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dVBZ6cicJAY>.

Videos of Allegories

- a. Pilgrim’s Progress: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V_c22M_Z9jc.
- b. Jamal Rahman on Attar’s allegory, “The Conference of the Birds” on <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WhINBvR0wzg>

Short reflection paper (5 10 pages) on ethical, spiritual, and mystical dimensions: Due April 20th

THURSDAY, APRIL 21 – FACE-TO-FACE SESSION #5: ETHICAL, SPIRITUAL, AND MYSTICAL DIMENSIONS

Topics: Scripture and ethics; Tradition/Hadith and ethics; moral-theological literature (and the related theme of human vs. divine agency); sources and models of spirituality; Jesus and Muhammad as paradigms of the inner life; hagiography; spiritual guidance; theological themes of devotion and prayer; popular piety; mysticism; social values in theological ethics/moral theology; faith and social responsibility.

Course wrap-up.

FINAL PAPER: DUE APRIL 25TH

No later than Saturday, 11:59 PM, April 25th, as directed by our website, post your final project or paper on some aspect of Christian-Muslim theological encounter (15-20 pages or the equivalent). If a paper, it should be written in proper academic form. (See hartsem.edu for guidelines.) If some sort of project other than an essay, see your professor for guidelines. In this paper or project, you should demonstrate your command of the material we have studied together. You may, of course, turn to other sources as well.

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Recommended reading:

A Common Word Between Us and You (2007), www.acommonword.com; and, at least one of the official Christian responses to *A Common Word*

Al Faruqi, Isma'il Ragi. *Christian Ethics: A Historical and Systematic Analysis of Its Dominant Ideas*. McGill University Press, 1967.

Ayoub, Mahmoud M. *A Muslim View of Christianity: Essays on Dialogue*, edited by Irfan A. Omar. Orbis, 2007.

Baum, Gregory. *The Theology of Tariq Ramadan: A Catholic Perspective*. University of Notre Dame Press, 2009.

Borelli, John, ed. *A Common Word and the Future of Christian-Muslim Relations*. Washington, DC: ACMU Occasional Papers, June 2009.

Cragg, Kenneth. *The Call of the Minaret*. Oneworld, 2000. (Originally published by OUP, 1964.)

Cutsinger, James S., ed. *Paths to the Heart: Sufism and the Christian East*. World Wisdom, 2002.

Esposito, John. *Pluralism in Muslim-Christian Relations*. Washington, DC: ACMCU Occasional Papers 2008.

Goddard, Hugh. *A History of Christian-Muslim Relations*. New Amsterdam Books, 2000.

Goddard, Hugh. *Christians & Muslims: From Double Standards to Mutual Understanding*. Curzon, 1995.

Goddard, Hugh. *Muslim Perceptions of Christianity*. Grey Seal, 1996.

Griffith, Sidney. *The Church in the Shadow of the Mosque: Christians and Muslims in the World of Islam*. Princeton University Press, 2008.

Haddad, Yvonne Yazbeck and Wadi Z. Haddad, eds. *Christian-Muslim Encounters*. University Press of Florida, 1995.

Igrave, Michael and David Marshall, eds. *Humanity: Texts and Contexts: Christian and Muslim Perspectives*. Georgetown University Press, 2011.

Igrave, Michael, ed. *Bearing the Word: Prophecy in Biblical and Qur'anic Perspective*. Church Publishing, 2005.

Igrave, Michael, ed. *Building a Better Bridge: Muslims, Christians, and the Common Good*. Georgetown University Press, 2008.

Igrave, Michael, ed. *Justice & Rights: Christian and Muslim Perspectives*. Georgetown University Press, 2009.

Igrave, Michael, ed. *Scriptures in Dialogue: Christians and Muslims studying the Bible and the Qur'an together*. Church House, 2004.

Igrave, Michael, ed. *The Road Ahead: A Christian-Muslim Dialogue*. Church House Publishing, 2002.

Islamica Magazine (February 2009). Special issue on *A Common Word*.

Kaltner, John. *Ishmael Instructs Isaac: An Introduction to the Qur'an for Bible Readers*. The Liturgical Press, 1999.

Lodahl, Michael. *Claiming Abraham: Reading the Bible and the Qur'an Side-by-Side*. Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2012.

- Marshall, David and Lucinda Mosher, eds. *Death, Resurrection, and Human Destiny: Christian and Muslim Perspectives*. Georgetown University Press, 2014.
- Marshall, David and Lucinda Mosher, eds. *Prayer: Christian and Muslim Perspectives*. Georgetown University Press, 2013.
- Marshall, David, ed. *Communicating the Word: Revelation, Translation, and Interpretation in Christianity and Islam*. Georgetown University Press, 2011.
- Marshall, David. *God, Muhammad and the Unbelievers: A Qur'anic Study*. Curzon, 1999.
- Michel, Thomas F., S. J. *A Christian View of Islam: Essays on Dialogue*, edited by Irfan. A. Omar. Orbis, 2010.
- Nostra Aetate* (Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions, proclaimed by His Holiness Pope Paul VI, 1965) http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decl_19651028_nostra-aetate_en.html
- Papademetriou, George C., ed. *Two Traditions, One Space: Orthodox Christians and Muslims in Dialogue*. Somerset Hall Press, 2011.
- Phipps, William E. *Muhammad and Jesus: A Comparison of the Prophets and Their Teachings*. Continuum, 1996.
- Robinson, Neal. *Christ in Islam and Christianity*. SUNY Press, 1991.
- Root, Michael and James J. Buckley, eds. *Christian Theology and Islam*. Cambridge: James Clarke & Co, 2014.
- Tolan, John. *Saint Francis and the Sultan: The Curious History of a Christian-Muslim Encounter*. Oxford, 2009.
- Volf, Miroslav, Ghazi bin Muhammad, and Melissa Yarrington. *A Common Word: Muslims and Christians on Loving God and Neighbor*. Eerdmans, 2010.
- Volf, Miroslav. *Allah: A Christian Response*. HarperOne, 2011.
- Watt, William Montgomery. *Muslim-Christian Encounters: Perceptions and Misperceptions*. Routledge, 1991.
- Zahniser, A. H. Mathias. *The Mission & Death of Jesus in Islam & Christianity*. Orbis, 2008.
- Zebiri, Kate. *Muslims and Christians Face to Face*. Oneworld, 1997.
- See also online resources such as the proceedings of the Georgetown-Campion Hall seminars on “Christian Theological Engagement with Islam”: <http://berkeleycenter.georgetown.edu/subprojects/georgetown-campion-hall-seminars>.