

# ISLAM

# MEDIA

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RTV 4930/REL 4936

SPRING 2021

<b>INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION</b>	Professor Iman Zawahry Contact Info: iman@jou.ufl.edu   352-281-6787   Office: 3048 Weimer Hall   352-392-0444 Office Hours: Thursday Period 7   1:55pm-2:45pm or by appointment.
<b>CLASS MEETING</b>	Class: Tuesday Period 5 WEIM G030 Thursday Periods 5-6
<b>COURSE OBJECTIVE</b>	Islam, Media and Pop Culture will explore the use of media, including utilizing news, television, print media, radio, film and its impact on our society. The world has seen a dramatic shift of coverage of Islam in the media, which seemingly dominates the daily headlines. Through broadcast news, print media, radio, film, and other entertainment media, the manner the news is delivered drastically alters the mindset of the viewer. In a recent YouGov/ Huffington Post poll, 55% of Americans have an unfavorable view of Islam, while 68% have never met a Muslim. This course is designed to engage informed dialogue among students about the representation of Islam in the media and to explore whether said representations shape the public opinion of Islam. If so, how so, and if not, why not? Are some representations overly balanced to dispel Islamophobia while others are deliberately framed to propagate stereotypes?
<b>STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES</b>	<b>Knowledge</b> --Students will gain an understanding for the basic tenants that form the construct of the religion in order to analytically dissect the application of those principles to stories portrayed in the media. <b>Understanding</b> --Upon completion of this course, students will develop a heightened appreciation for the portrayal of Islam and Muslims in the media with sensitivity toward analytical consumption of cultural and religious entrepreneurship. <b>Skills</b> --Students will endure firsthand experience reporting on Islam in the media through print media, digital media and video production exposing students to fact-based, non-bias reporting and storytelling, which forms the pedigree of informative journalism.
<b>EQUIPMENT ROOM POLICIES</b>	Students will sign an equipment room contract Failure to adhere to the contract can result in a student having a grade point deduction and/or receiving an incomplete or failing grade in the class. Late returns will result in equipment privileges being revoked. Parking for the equipment room is limited to ten minutes. Failure to adhere to this policy can result in a point deduction from a student's final grade.
<b>TEXTBOOK</b>	All reading and visual materials will be posted on Canvas. The instructor will assign chapters and visuals for students to review the week before class.
<b>ATTENDANCE, TARDINESS, AND LATE ASSIGNMENT POLICIES</b>	Students are allowed one unexcused absence for Tuesday class and one unexcused absence for Thursday class per semester. Each additional absence will result in a two-point deduction. Students are allowed to be tardy twice during the semester. Each additional tardiness will result in a half-point reduction from a student's final grade. Please contact me if you are going to be absent or tardy. Any unexcused late assignment will be lowered 1 point each day the assignment is late. Any assignment turned in over a week late will be lowered 10 points.
<b>UNIVERSITY POLICIES</b>	<b>STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES</b> Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation.  <b>STUDENT EVALUATION OF COURSE AND INSTRUCTOR</b> Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online on Canvas. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available.

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## COVID-19 UNIVERSITY POLICIES

### FACE TO FACE CLASSES

We will have face-to-face instructional sessions to accomplish the student learning objectives of this course. In response to COVID-19, the following policies and requirements are in place to maintain your learning environment and to enhance the safety of our in-classroom interactions.

- You are required to wear approved face coverings at all times during class and within buildings. Following and enforcing these policies and requirements are all of our responsibility. Failure to do so will lead to a report to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution.
- This course has been assigned a physical classroom with enough capacity to maintain physical distancing (6 feet between individuals) requirements. Please utilize designated seats and maintain appropriate spacing between students. Please do not move desks or stations.
- Sanitizing supplies are available in the classroom if you wish to wipe down your desks prior to sitting down and at the end of the class.
- Follow your instructor's guidance on how to enter and exit the classroom. Practice physical distancing to the extent possible when entering and exiting the classroom.
- If you are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms (Check the CDC website for guidance on symptoms of coronavirus), please use the UF Health screening system and follow the instructions on whether you are able to attend class. Go to <https://coronavirus.ufhealth.org/> for UF Health guidance on what to do if you have been exposed to or are experiencing Covid-19 symptoms.
- Course materials will be provided to you with an excused absence, and you will be given a reasonable amount of time to make up work. Find more information in the university attendance policies.



**UNIVERSITY POLICIES**

**UF HONOR CODE**

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."

The Honor Code (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel.

**HELP WITH COPING**

The UF Counseling and Wellness Center is a terrific, free resource for any student who could use help managing stress or coping with life. The center, at 3190 Radio Road on campus, is open for appointments and emergency walk-ins from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. To make an appointment or receive after-hours assistance, call 352-392-1575.

**ASSIGNMENTS, PROJECTS & GRADING**

**CLASS**

Attendance and punctuality .....	10 PTS
Reaction Papers (4- 8.75 PTS each).....	35 PTS
Islam 101 Video.....	10 PTS
News Article.....	10 PTS
PSA.....	10 PTS
Photo project.....	10 PTS
Final Project .....	15 PTS

<b>GRADING SCALE</b>	
94% or higher	= A
90%-93%	= A-
88%-89%	= B+
84%-87%	= B
80%-83%	= B-
78%-79%	= C+
74%-77%	= C
70%-73%	= C-
65%-69%	= D

**FORMAT OF CLASS**

Islam, Media, and Pop Culture will have a series of classes and projects designed to have you think outside of the box, express ideas and images through visual storytelling. You will have the unique opportunity to tell stories through interacting and writing about a Muslim subject.

From week to week the schedule changes. Students need to pay specific attention to the syllabus in order to see what topic we are discussing and what projects are due.

This class is designed to be a fun, interactive and creative class with a light atmosphere. Feel free to contact me anytime with concerns and questions.

**REACTION PAPERS & PROJECTS**

**ISLAM 101 MUSIC VIDEO**

After reading "What Everyone Needs to Know About Islam" by John Esposito and "Orientalism" by Edward Saeed students will create a 1:00 minute music video giving the introduction to Islam. You will be broken up into groups of 4 and each group will focus on one topic in the video. Examples can be from the chapters of the book or topics you group chooses. Some suggestions: Orientalism, Women in Islam, Stereotypes (and corrections), Tenants of Islam (5 pillars), Introduction to Islam, etc. Learning outcome is to learn about the basics of Islam and history of Orientalism and ofcourse be creative!

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### REACTION PAPERS & PROJECTS

#### REACTION PAPERS

We will be watching and listening to films, news and podcasts. Students will be required to write a one to two page personal reaction to how they viewed and understood the material. What stood out? What were the problems? How would you solve the problem? How does this impact the world and society?

#### REACTION PAPER 1 - DOCUMENTARY "MUSLIMS ARE COMING" & COMEDY SPECIAL "LOVE SUPREME"

After screening the film in class, what was your overall thought of the documentary and comedy special? Do you think that it portrayed Muslims in a good light? What about the American population? North and South? What did you like and what did you not like? How would you do it differently? What were your thoughts of the conversation with Preacher Moss?

#### REACTION PAPER 2 NEWS CONTENT ANALYSIS

You are to analyze and time each news segment in one evening newscast. You will examine the content for bias, relevance with the overall news of the day, the advertisers in the newscast and also the audience you think the network is hoping to attract. Specifically, networks have attempted to attract younger audiences in recent years, and you will draw conclusions on how successful (or not) you believe that newscast would be in attracting the 18-35 age group. You will watch and compare three channels- ABC, CBS, NBC, CNN News, FOX News, and MSNBC evening news. If you do not have access to cable television you may watch news sources online.

#### REACTION PAPER 3 - TV SHOW - RAMY

After watching the First American Muslim TV Show Ramy in class what was your overall thought of the episode and show. What do you think of it's representation of Muslims in America. Were there problem areas? How does it overall impact the Muslim narrative and society? .

#### REACTION PAPER 4 - PODCAST - "Serial" and "Undisclosed"

You are to listen and review the podcasts posted on Canvas. Listen carefully on how the subject is portrayed and how it effects you as the audience. How are the stories told and how did it effect you? Were you swayed one way or another? Were the biases on how the story was portrayed?

#### PROJECTS

##### PHOTO PROJECT

Students will take 4-5 still photographs of a Muslim subject that tells their story and who they are. Keep in mind the frame and rule of thirds. The subject should NOT look at the camera. Examples will be discussed in class and posted on canvas.

##### NEWS ARTICLE

Students will interview a Muslim member of the community. They will create a 750 word article about this Muslim. Students need to find what is interesting about this subject and be able to tell their personal story through their article. Extra credit will be given if the article is published.

##### PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT PARODY

Students will be broken up into groups of 4. Students will created a :30-1:00 second commercial, satire or comedy, about Muslims in the media today. Think about the College Humor "Muslim-Meet" that we viewed in class. The concept is to dispel stereotypes through humor and possibly adding knowledge at the same time. Projects must be clean and appropriate. Projects will be filmed and edited in class. Scripts will be reviewed by me before filming.

##### FINAL PROJECT

Final projects can be worked on individually or in a group. You have three options for a final project. 1) Film a 1:30-2:00 min narrative story with a Muslim character.(proper mics and sound if you choose dialogue story) 2) Create a photo-journalism project of a Muslim individual with a minimum of 15 pictures. 3) Write a 1000 word essay on how media influences opinion about Muslims in the western world.Include your personal experiences and thoughts. Please provide a minimum of 3 references. You may also pitch a topic to Iman to write about.

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DATE	TUESDAY CLASS WEIM G030 PERIOD 5- 11:45AM-12:35PM	DATE	THURSDAY WEIM G030 PERIOD 5-6 11:45AM-1:40PM	ASSIGNMENTS (FOR FOLLOWING WEEK)
JAN 12 <sup>TH</sup>	<b>Class Introduction.</b> Screening: Love Supreme (comedy special)	JAN 14 <sup>TH</sup>	<b>Screening: Muslims Are Coming</b>	Read "What Everyone Needs to Know about Islam" and "Orientalism" - Create key points for video -1/19
JAN 19 <sup>TH</sup>	<b>Guest Speaker: Preacher Moss</b> Q + A with comedian	JAN 21 <sup>ST</sup>	<b>"Islam: What's the Fuss About?"</b> Round Table Discussion based on reading Getting into groups for Music video	Reaction Paper 1 Due 1/26
JAN 26 <sup>TH</sup>	Write Scripts for music video <b>Reaction Paper 1</b>	JAN 28 <sup>TH</sup>	Film Music Video	Edit Video Due 2/2
FEB 2 <sup>ND</sup>	<b>"Scrolling Frames: Storytelling through Photographs"</b> Introduction to Photo Project Screen Videos - <b>Video Due</b>	FEB 4 <sup>TH</sup>	<b>Guest Speaker: Photographer Cynthia Yanez</b>	Photo Projects Due 2/9-2/11
FEB 9 <sup>TH</sup>	Present Photo Projects	FEB 11 <sup>TH</sup>	Present Photo Projects	
FEB 16 <sup>TH</sup>	<b>"Print: Find the Story between the Words"</b> How to interview a subject. Discuss news article project.	FEB 18 <sup>TH</sup>	<b>Guest Speaker: Gina Massa</b> First Hijab Wearing News Anchor in North America	Reaction Paper 2 Due 2/23 Print Story Due 2/25
FEB 23 <sup>RD</sup>	<b>"Balancing between Sensation and Facts: Portrayal of Muslims in News Media"</b> Screen Videos <b>Reaction Paper 2 Due</b>	FEB 25 <sup>TH</sup>	Present News Articles	
MAR 2 <sup>ND</sup>	<b>MID SEMESTER BREAK</b>	MAR 4 <sup>TH</sup>	<b>MID SEMESTER BREAK</b>	
MAR 9 <sup>TH</sup>	<b>"Storytelling through the Lens"</b> How to tell a visual story with a unique voice Screen previous PSA's and Discuss	MAR 11 <sup>TH</sup>	Work on PSA Script/Shot Design in groups	PSA's Due 2/18
MAR 16 <sup>TH</sup>	<b>"Filmmaking: The Reel Narrative"</b> Reel Bad Arabs-History of negative portrayals of Muslims in Film.	MAR 18 <sup>TH</sup>	<b>Guest Speaker: Aizzah Fatima</b> Writer/Actor/Filmmaker Screen PSA's <b>PSA's Due</b>	
MAR 23 <sup>RD</sup>	<b>"Islam &amp; Hip-Hop"</b> Discuss News Articles. Introduction to Islam's place in Hip-Hop	MAR 25 <sup>TH</sup>	<b>Guest Speaker: Amirah Sackett</b> Hip-Hop Dancer and creator of "We're Muslims Don't Panic"	
MAR 30 <sup>TH</sup>	<b>"Dissecting the Small Screen: Television and the Modern Muslim"</b> Screen and Discuss how episodic television portrays culture and religion	APR 1 <sup>ST</sup>	<b>Guest Speaker: Sahar Jahani</b> Writer "Ramy", "13 Reasons Why"	Reaction 3 Due 4/6
APR 6 <sup>TH</sup>	<b>"Islam over the Airwaves: Polarized Opinions"</b> Listen and Discuss Serial <b>Reaction 3 Due 4/6</b>	APR 8 <sup>TH</sup>	<b>Guest Speaker: Rabia Chaudry</b> Attorney/Podcast Creator/Author	Reaction 4 Due 4/13 <b>WORK ON FINAL PROJECTS</b> Due 4/15
APR 13 <sup>TH</sup>	No Class. Work on Final Projects	APR 15 <sup>TH</sup>	SCREENING OF FINAL PROJECTS <b>Final project Due</b>	
APR 20 <sup>TH</sup>	No Class. Have a great summer!			