

ISLAM

MEDIA

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RTV 4930/REL 4936

SPRING 2023

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Professor Iman Zawahry

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Office Hours: By appointment.

CLASS MEETING

Class: Tuesday Period 5 WEIM 2056

Thursday Periods 5-6 WEIM 3024

COURSE OBJECTIVE

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?

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Knowledge--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.

Understanding--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.

Skills--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.

EQUIPMENT ROOM POLICIES

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.

TEXTBOOK

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.

ATTENDANCE, TARDINESS, AND LATE ASSIGNMENT POLICIES

Students are allowed one class absence per semester. Each additional absence will result in a two-point deduction from a student's final grade for each occurrence. Students are allowed to be tardy once during the semester in each class. Each additional tardy will result in a one-point reduction from a student's final grade. Students are counted present when they arrive and remain in class. Students are marked tardy one minute after class begins. Any unexcused late assignment will be lowered 20% of the total possible points. Any assignment turned in over a week late will be lowered 50% of the possible points.

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

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.

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STUDENT EVALUATION OF COURSE AND INSTRUCTOR

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluer.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

IN CLASS RECORDING

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor. A "class lecture" is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session. Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To "publish" means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code

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 (3- 10 PTS each).....	30 PTS
Islam 101 Video.....	10 PTS
News Article.....	10 PTS
PSA.....	10 PTS
Photo project.....	10 PTS
Final Project	20 PTS

GRADING SCALE

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!



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 & WE ARE LADY PARTS

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? .

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 2056 PERIOD 5- 11:45AM-12:35PM	DATE	THURSDAY WEIM 3024 PERIOD 5-6 11:45AM-1:40PM	ASSIGNMENTS (FOR FOLLOWING WEEK)
JAN 10 TH	Class Introduction. Islam 1010	JAN 12 TH	“Islam: What’s the Fuss About?” Screen “Muslims Are Coming” Screening: Love Supreme Preacher Moss	Read “What Everyone Needs to Know about Islam” and “Orientalism” - Create key points for video -1/19
JAN 17 TH	Guest Speaker: Preacher Moss Q + A with comedian	JAN 19 TH	No formal class Film Music Video Reaction Paper 1 Due	Reaction Paper 1 Due 1/19
JAN 24 TH	“Scrolling Frames: Storytelling through Photographs” Introduction to Photo Project Screen Videos - Video Due	JAN 26 TH	Guest Speaker: Photographer Cynthia Yanez	Music Video Due 1/24
JAN 31 ST	Present Photo Projects	FEB 2 ND	Present Photo Projects	Photo Projects Due 2/1-3
FEB 7 TH	Guest Speaker: Kausar Mohamed Writer/Actor/Filmmaker in Actor in The Flash	FEB 9 TH	“Filmmaking: The Reel Narrative” Reel Bad Arabs-History of negative portrayals of Muslims in Film.	
FEB 14 TH	“Islam and Comedy” Discuss and watch comedy specials/shows	FEB 16 TH	Guest Speaker: Yasmin Elhady Comedian/Attorney	
FEB 21 ND	“Storytelling through the Lens” How to tell a visual story with a unique voice	FEB 23 TH	Work on PSA Script/Shot Design in groups	PSA's Due 2/28
FEB 28 TH	“Print: Find the Story between the Words” How to interview a subject. Discuss news article project. PSA's Due	MAR 2 ND	Guest Speaker: Mehdi Hassan Journalist on MSNBC show “The Mehdi Hassan Show”	Print Story Due 3/7
MAR 7 TH	Present Print Story	MAR 9 TH	Present Print Story	
MAR 14 TH	SPRING BREAK	MAR 16 TH	SPRING BREAK	
MAR 21 ND	“Balancing between Sensation and Facts: Portrayal of Muslims in News Media”	MAR 23 TH	Round Table Discussion	Reaction Paper 2 Due 3/28
MAR 28 TH	“Islam & Hip-Hop” Discuss News Articles. Introduction to Islam’s place in Hip-Hop Reaction Paper 2 Due	MAR 30 TH	Guest Speaker: The Reminders Hip-Hop Dancer Duo and Musicians	
APR 4 TH	“Dissecting the Small Screen: Television and the Modern Muslim” Screen and Discuss how episodic television portrays culture and religion “Ramy”	APR 6 TH	“Dissecting the Small Screen: Television and the Modern Muslim” Screen and Discuss how episodic television “We are Lady Parts”	Reaction 3 Due 4/11
APR 11 TH	Guest Speaker: Sahar Jahani Writer “Ramy”, “13 Reasons Why” Reaction 3 Due	APR 13 TH	“Dissecting the Small Screen: Television and the Modern Muslim” Screen and Discuss how episodic television “Little Mosque on The Praire” “Zarqa”	
APR 18 TH	Guest Speaker: Zarqa Nawaz Writer “Little Mosque”, “Zarqa”	APR 20 TH	Documentary Screening: “The Feeling of Being Watched”	WORK ON FINAL PROJECTS Due 4/25
APR 25 TH	SCREENING OF FINAL PROJECTS Final project Due			