

## USA and the Muslim World

CPM 250 REG # 20605

Mondays & Wednesdays 5:00 PM – 6:20 PM

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### Course Introduction

The course addresses the current state of the Muslim world and its relations with the West, particularly the United States. Class discussions will focus on historical, cultural and political background of the current situation in the Middle East and the greater Middle East, Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Central Asia and other parts of the Muslim world. Students will be encouraged to engage themselves as policy experts by developing and using competitive sources of information for comparisons and class discussions.

**This course helps you navigate through balancing conflicting international interests, learn to analyze international relations as policy makers and explore solutions...**

**This course answers questions and concerns like this and more...**

- ⇒ What is happening with women in the Muslim World?
- ⇒ What's happening in Syria? And what may happen in Egypt?
- ⇒ What are possible solutions to the Afghan conflict?
- ⇒ Will violence ever end in the Muslim World?
- ⇒ Will the USA and the Muslim World overcome their differences?
- ⇒ Why does the Iraq war continue to consume neighboring countries?
- ⇒ Why does Iran pursue nuclear ambitions?
- ⇒ Where did Al-Qaeda come from? Who are the Taliban?
- ⇒ Is there a solution to conflict in the Middle?

## Learning Outcomes

1. Each student should be able to understand some of the most pertinent cultural, religious, political, historical and social factors shaping the nature of the relationship between the Muslim World and the West in general and with the U.S. in particular. Each student is expected to accomplish this by applying critical thinking in focusing on one or two Muslim countries or communities throughout the semester.  
<http://undergrad-catalog.buffalo.edu/academicprograms/ams.shtml>\*
2. Each student shall be able to engage in policy discussion in regards to the particular country or Muslim community that is assigned, with his/her colleagues representing other countries and communities.
3. Students shall be able to articulate and present the interests, aspirations, and major issues that are underlining the state of affairs of the country and/or Muslim community orally and in writing. Class discussions and students sharing their country updates on a weekly basis will accomplish this.  
<http://undergrad-catalog.buffalo.edu/academicprograms/rsp.shtml>\*
4. Students will be encouraged to creatively negotiate and balance the international interests and pressures with strategic goals of the countries or communities assigned to them. This will be achieved by a position paper and end of the semester presentation. There will also be at least one mock OIC (Organization of Islamic Conference, a subgroup of the United Nations) meeting, which will be held during the semester.  
<http://undergrad-catalog.buffalo.edu/academicprograms/aas.shtml>\*
5. Students will be exposed to Multicultural Muslim communities through guest speakers, Skype meetings, visits to local community centers, and field trips.
6. Students shall be familiar with the meaning of relevant Muslim terms that are used in the media and policy discussions such as, Jihad, Sharia, Fiqh, Ijtihad, Ijma, etc.  
<http://undergrad-catalog.buffalo.edu/academicprograms/rsp.shtml>\*
7. Students will also learn about the effects of modernity and globalization in the Muslim world.
8. Students will be able to develop initial competence in comparative international news analysis and its interpretation.
9. Students shall have knowledge of American interests and involvement in different regions of the Muslim World and conversely understand the interests and history of the Muslim World's interests and involvement in the USA.  
<http://undergrad-catalog.buffalo.edu/academicprograms/aas.shtml>\*

\* References to the Humanities' general education requirements are provided for convenience.

## Course Requirements

### Text Books

1. Journey into Islam: The Crisis of Globalization by Akbar Ahmed
2. Selected articles or papers from journals, newspapers, books and online information sources.

### Videos/Documentaries/Films

1. Documentaries produced by PBS, BBC, CSPAN and other reliable sources on current and international affairs, history, culture, and lifestyle will be shown in the class to initiate substantial discussions.
2. Students will also be expected to watch feature films that are relevant to the subject matter and spark discussions in the class. Different feature films are selected each semester. This semester two movies are selected for this purpose: “Syriana” and “ In the Name of God (Khuda Ke Liye).” One more feature film may be assigned if time permits.

### Grading policy

|   |      |
|---|------|
| Class Participation/Attendance/Discussions (Participation in class discussions is expected/Each absence without probable cause will cost ½ percentage of attendance)    | 25%  |
| 1 Paper (3 to 4 pages) @ 10 %   | 10%  |
| Class Presentation @ 10 %<br>(Evaluated by your fellow students)  | 10%  |
| Paper based on presentation @ 10 %  | 10%  |
| 1 Quiz/Short Exam @ 10%   | 10%  |
| Home Work 10 @ 2 % each (researching internet for discussion points or one page quick reactions on readings or other class presentations including videos and articles. | 20%  |
| Final Quiz/Exam @ 15 %  | 15%  |
| <b>Extra Credit:</b> Extra credit projects are available for up to 10% of the grade earned. -- Total  | 100% |

**Late Assignments:** 25% within first week and 50% afterwards.

**Make-Up Work:** Must be made up as soon as possible.

## Professional Expectations

**1. Participation:** By enrolling in this course, each student makes the tacit commitment to participate. Class participation involves more than mere physical presence. Students are expected to be actively involved in the class. Students are encouraged to ask relevant questions and contribute to the over-all learning environment of this course.

**2. Attendance:** Regular attendance is expected for every class. Students are expected to come to every class meeting *on time* and *prepared to participate*. Working on an assignment for this or any other course is no excuse for missing class or arriving late.

**3. Missed Assignments:** If students miss class for any reason, they are responsible for obtaining notes and announcements from another student. The instructor may provide relevant information if the student requests and information is readily available such as handouts, etc.

**4. Penalty for Non-Attendance:** Relative percentage of attendance (please see grading policy)

**5. Penalty for Arriving Late or Leaving Early:** As long as it is rare, not repetitive or disruptive, there is no penalty otherwise penalty for non-attendance will apply.

**6. Excusable Absences:** Excusable absences that are related to personal illness or medical emergency, death or critical illness in the immediate family, jury duty, military duty, religious observances, or participating in college-related activities such as varsity sports, are allowed. Students should notify instructors prior to missing class for excusable absences or within 24 hours after the class meeting.

**7. Technology:** Students should silence cell phones during class. Texting and use of headphones is prohibited. Use of computers and other digital devices unrelated to course material or activities is prohibited.

**8. Classroom Behavior:** The instructor will not tolerate student behavior that is disruptive of the educational environment. Improper classroom behavior includes arriving late and/or leaving early; using cell phones and computers in activities unrelated to class work; any type of harassing, intimidating, belligerent, or abusive language or action; or any behavior that is distracting to the instructor or other students. Instructors may remove students who they determine are disrupting the educational process.

**9. Mutual Respect:** Students can expect to be treated with respect by the instructor and other students. Likewise, anyone enrolled in this course is expected to treat the instructor and fellow students with respect and to act in a dignified manner at all times. Class discussions are to be conducted in an environment of respect and tolerance for both people and their ideas.

## UB Policies

Please look at the following links for detailed university policies regarding these areas.

### 1. Incomplete Grade

<http://undergrad-catalog.buffalo.edu/policies/grading/explanation.shtml#incomplete>

## 2. Academic Integrity

<http://undergrad-catalog.buffalo.edu/policies/course/integrity.shtml>

## 3. Accessibility Resources Office

<http://www.student-affairs.buffalo.edu/ods/aa>

## Academic Calendar

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Monday, August 26, 2013                   | Classes Begin                                   |
| Monday, September 2, 2013                 | Labor Day Observed                              |
| Wednesday, September 4, 2013              | Rosh Hashanah (Classes cancelled after 6:00 pm) |
| Thursday, September 5, 2013               | Classes Resume at 6:00 pm                       |
| Friday, September 13, 2013                | Yom Kippur (Classes cancelled after 6:00 pm)    |
| Saturday, September 14, 2013              | Classes Resume at 6:00 pm                       |
| Wed, November 27 - Sat, November 30, 2013 | Fall Recess                                     |
| Monday, December 2, 2013                  | Classes Resume                                  |
| Friday, December 6, 2013                  | Last Day of Classes                             |
| Sat, December 7 – Sun, December 8, 2013   | Reading Days                                    |
| Mon, December 9 - Mon, December 16, 2013  | Semester Final Examinations                     |
| Tuesday, December 17, 2013                | Winter Recess Begins                            |

## Schedule

In the following you will find a tentative schedule that treats the semester as it is of fourteen weeks. There is a built-in flexibility in the schedule. It will depend on the pace of the semester and ability of the class as a whole to keep up with assignments. Specific dates will be announced in the class for assignments, quizzes and term papers.

### Week One

Introduction of Students and the Instructor.

Introduction to the course content and grading policy.

Defining the parameters of competence and semester goals.

Homework assignment no. 1: What/how do we think about the U.S. and the Muslim World?

### Week Two

Lecture: State of our world and its relationship with the Muslims and Islam.

Assignment of Muslim communities, nations, and areas.

Reading assignment: Looking up information and identifying sources.

### Week Three

Lecture: Introduction to Social, Economical, and Political Environment of Muslims around the world.

Reading assignment:

Chapter 1: An Anthropological Excursion into the Muslim World (Akbar S. Ahmed).

Homework assignment no. 2: One-page (typed) or very clearly hand-written two-page reaction on reading assignment, country updates or lectures or presentations and class

activities.

#### **Week Four**

Lecture: Current Challenges and Opportunities Faced by the Muslim World.

Homework assignment no. 3: List of Muslim challenges pertaining to assigned areas, nations, or communities.

Reading assignment: Read about assigned areas, nations and communities and prepare a shortlist of dependable comparative sources of information.

#### **Week Five**

Lecture: Reality and perception: a) Muslims and the West b) Muslim minorities in the world

Reading assignment: Chapter 2: Struggle within Islam (Akbar Ahmed).

Homework assignment no. 4: One-page (typed) or very clearly hand-written two-page reaction on reading assignment, country updates or lectures or presentations and class activities.

Discussion and debate among students on "Current Challenges and Opportunities of the Muslim World" pointed out by fellow students.

Preparation for the first OIC Meeting.

#### **Week Six**

##### **Quiz One**

Lecture: Nine Degrees of Separation: Historical Factors Contributing to the Present State of the Relationship between the West and Islam (Part One).

Reading assignment: Chapter 3: Tribes, Women and Honor in the Age of Globalization.

Homework assignment no. 5: One-page (typed) or very clearly hand-written two-page reaction on reading assignment, country updates or lectures or presentations and class activities.

Agenda for OIC Meeting.

#### **Week Seven**

Lecture: Nine Degrees of Separation: Historical Factors Contributing to the Present State of the Relationship between the West and Islam (Part Two).

Reading assignment: Chapter 4: Who is Defining Islam after 9/11 and Why? (Ahmed)

OIC Meeting is held at a local Community Center.

#### **Week Eight**

Lecture: 20th Century Movements of Islamic Revival; Mawdudi, Syed Qutb, Ayatullah Khomeini, and Muslim Scholars in the West (Part One).

Reading assignment: Chapter 4: Who is Defining Islam after 9/11 and Why? (Ahmed)

#### **Week Nine**

Lecture: 20th Century Movements of Islamic Revival; Mawdudi, Syed Qutb, Ayatullah Khomeini, and Muslim scholars in the West (Part Two).

Reading assignment: Chapter 4: Who is Defining Islam after 9/11 and Why? (Ahmed)

Homework assignment no. 6: One-page (typed) or very clearly hand-written two-page

reaction on reading assignment, country updates or lectures or presentations and class activities.

### **Week Ten**

Lecture: Language and Expressions: Defining the Terms of Engagement.

Reading assignment: Chapter 5: The Clash of Civilizations (Ahmed).

Homework assignment no. 7: One-page (typed) or very clearly hand-written two-page reaction on reading assignment, country updates or lectures or presentations and class activities.

### **Week Eleven**

Lecture: Forming a New Narrative: Shaping the Future.

Reading assignment: Chapter 6: Lifting the Veil and Epilogue.

Homework assignment no. 8: One-page (typed) or very clearly hand-written two-page reaction on reading assignment, country updates or lectures or presentations and class activities.

### **Week Twelve**

Lecture: Comparing Text with Ground Realities.

Homework assignment no. 9: One-page (typed) or very clearly hand-written two-page reaction on reading assignment, country updates or lectures or presentations and class activities.

### **Week Thirteen**

Student Presentations and Evaluations.

Homework assignment no. 10: One page (typed) or very clearly hand-written two page reaction on reading assignment, country updates or lectures or presentations and class activities.

### **Week Fourteen**

Student Presentations and Evaluations.

End of the semester optional social gathering if time and energy permits.