

HURON COLLEGE, FACULTY OF THEOLOGY
REL 5310 & 2310: INTERPRETING THE QUR'ĀN
WINTER 2011

COURSE DAY/TIME/LOCATION: Thursdays, 2:30 – 5:20 pm, V209

PROFESSOR: Dr. Timothy J. Gianotti, *York-Noor Fellow in Arabic & Islamic Studies*
& adjunct member of Huron College's Faculty of Theology

HC OFFICE & OFFICE HOURS: A8: Thursdays, 1:30-2:30 pm

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Giving primacy to first-hand experience in reading and interpreting the Qur'ān, this course aspires to initiate the students into a process of scriptural reasoning with the Islamic sacred text at the center. In order to achieve this, we will blend traditional methods of scriptural reading and study with more academic approaches, including an exploration of the historical contexts of revelation, hermeneutical paradigms (both traditional and contemporary), textual criticism, the relations between Qur'ānic text and community, Qur'ānic text and law, and Qur'ānic text and its sister sacred texts within the Abrahamic family. In keeping with the "Abrahamic spirit" of the course, one traditional study method that will be foundational for this course is borrowed from the rabbinical practice of "chevruta" study partnerships, in which students learn to read closely, critically and probingly with a partner who is there to challenge, question, offer alternative readings, and imagine alternative possibilities as the two comb the text together. In our academic appropriation of this traditional practice, we will keep a weekly chevruta study journal and will open at least one class with our study partner in the course of the term.

By the end of the course, students will be able to demonstrate

intimate familiarity with the Qur'ānic texts studied over the course of the term and a more general awareness of the resonance of these texts with the Hebrew Bible and New Testament;

a studied appreciation for the range of diverse approaches and interpretations employed by historical and contemporary interpreters

a solid grasp of the theological and legal implications of exegesis, including the social and legal importance of the traditional "Qur'ānic sciences";

an appreciation of the ways in which social, political, and historical factors influence the ways in which the Qur'ānic text is received and used by the community of believers;

general familiarity with some of the most important and useful research tools and books (in English) for the academic study of the Qur'ān.

REL 5310 & 2310 EVALUATION

- ◆ Attendance and class participation (incl. class presentation): 20%
- ◆ “Chevruta” Study Journal: 20%
- ◆ Research paper (due on or before Thursday, March 31): 35%
- ◆ Final exam: 25%

REQUIRED TEXTS

- ◆ ***The Qur’ān* in an approved English translation (to be acquired independently)**

Students are required to purchase (independently) an approved English translation of the Qur’an for use in the course. Some examples of acceptable translations are noted below. It is highly recommended that each member of a study pair purchase a different translation for use in study.

Abdullah Yusuf Ali
Marmaduke Pickthall
Laleh Bakhtiar
Muhammad Abdel Haleem
Ahmad Zaki Hammad

Course Texts for Sale in the HC Bookstore

- ◆ Esack, Farid. *The Qur’an: A User’s Guide* (Oneworld, 2005). • ISBN-10: 1851683542 • ISBN-13: 978-1851683543
- ◆ Rahman, Fazlur. *Major Themes of the Qur’ān*, second edition (University of Chicago Press, 2009). • ISBN-10: 0226702863 • ISBN-13: 978-0226702865

NON-REQUIRED BUT HIGHLY RECOMMENDED TEXTS (in English)

- ◆ Mattson, Ingrid. *The Story of the Qur’an: Its History and Place in Muslim Life* (Blackwell, 2007). ISBN-10: 1405122587, ISBN-13: 978-1405122580
- ◆ McAuliffe, Jane Dammon. *The Cambridge Companion to the Qur’an* (Cambridge University Press, 2006). • ISBN-10: 052153934X • ISBN-13: 978-0521539340
- ◆ Sells, Michael. *Approaching the Qur’an: The Early Revelations*, second edition (White Cloud Press, 2007). • ISBN-10: 1883991692 • ISBN-13: 978-1883991692
- ◆ Von Denffer, Ahmed. *Ulum al-Qur’an: An Introduction to the Qur’anic Sciences* (Leicestershire: The Islamic Foundation, 2000).

Appendix to Course Outlines

Prerequisite Information

Students are responsible for ensuring that they have successfully completed all course prerequisites. Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enrol in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Conduct of Students in Classes, Lectures, and Seminars

Membership in the community of Huron University College and the University of Western Ontario implies acceptance by every student of the principle of respect for the rights, responsibilities, dignity and well-being of others and a readiness to support an environment conducive to the intellectual and personal growth of all who study, work and live within it. Upon registration, students assume the responsibilities that such registration entails. The academic and social privileges granted to each student are conditional upon the fulfillment of these responsibilities.

In the classroom, students are expected to behave in a manner that supports the learning environment of others. Students can avoid any unnecessary disruption of the class by arriving in sufficient time to be seated and ready for the start of the class, by remaining silent while the professor is speaking or another student has the floor, and by taking care of personal needs prior to the start of class. If a student is late, or knows that he/she will have to leave class early, be courteous: sit in an aisle seat and enter and leave quietly.

Please see the *Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities* at:

http://www.huronuc.ca/students/student_life/student_policies

Technology

It is not appropriate to use technology (such as, but not limited to, laptops, PDAs, cell phones) in the classroom for non-classroom activities. Such activity is disruptive and is distracting to other students and to the instructor, and can inhibit learning. Students are expected to respect the classroom environment and to refrain from inappropriate use of technology and other electronic devices in class.

Academic Accommodation for Medical/Non-Medical Grounds

For UWO Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness and a downloadable SMC see:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf

[downloadable Student Medical Certificate (SMC): <https://studentservices.uwo.ca> under the Medical Documentation heading]

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation will be determined by the Dean's Office in consultation with the instructor.

For non-medical grounds or for medical grounds when work represents less than 10% of the overall grade for the course, the student must submit a request to the instructor in writing

prior to the due date of an assignment and immediately in the case of a test. (Or as soon as possible following a medical emergency.) Students are protected under the Official Student Record Information Privacy Policy and so written requests need only include a broad and general explanation of the situation and the approximate length of time off required. At the discretion of the instructor, the granting of extensions and re-scheduled tests may require the student to submit supporting medical or non-medical documentation to the Academic counselor, who will then make the determination as to whether accommodation is warranted.

Statement on Academic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf .

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is an academic offence and will be treated as such. Students who are in doubt as to the nature of this offence should consult their instructor, Department Chair or the Dean, as well as the Huron University College Statement on Plagiarism, available at the reference desk in the HUC Library and at <http://www.huronuc.ca/library/Citing/>. In addition, students may seek guidance from a variety of current style manuals available at the Reference Desk in the HUC Library. Information about these resources can be found in LibGuides on the main page:

<http://www.huronuc.ca/library>.

Students found guilty of plagiarism will suffer consequences ranging from a grade reduction to failure in the course to expulsion from the university. In addition, a formal letter documenting the offence will be filed in the Dean's Office, and this record of the offence will be retained in the Dean's Office for the duration of the student's academic career at Huron University College.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com.

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

Policy on Special Needs

Students who require special accommodation for tests and/or other course components must make the appropriate arrangements with the Student Development Centre (SDC). Further details concerning policies and procedures may be found at:

http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/ssd/?requesting_acc

Attendance Regulations for Examinations

A student is entitled to be examined in courses in which registration is maintained, subject to the following limitations:

- 1) A student may be debarred from writing the final examination for failure to maintain satisfactory academic standing throughout the year.
- 2) Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course will be reported to the Dean of the Faculty offering the course (after due warning has been given). On the recommendation of the Department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean of that Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course. The Dean of the Faculty offering the course will communicate that decision to the Dean of the Faculty of registration.

Class Cancellations

In the event of a cancellation of class, every effort will be made to post that information on the Huron website, <http://www.huronuc.ca/accessibility> (“Postings of Service Disruptions”).

Accessibility

Huron University College strives at all times to provide its goods and services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. We are also committed to giving people with disabilities the same opportunity to access our goods and services and allowing them to benefit from the same services, in the same place as, and in a similar way to, other customers. We welcome your feedback about accessibility at Huron. Information about how to provide feedback is available at: <http://www.huronuc.ca/accessibility>

Program and Academic Counselling

Religious Studies students registered at Huron who require advice about modules and courses in Religious Studies should contact Dr. Danaher, Dean, Faculty of Theology - wdanaher@huron.uwo.ca. Students should contact Academic Counselling on other academic matters. See the Academic Counselling website for information on services offered. http://www.huronuc.ca/students/service_centre/academic_counselling/