

ISLAM

MEDIA



SPRING 2020

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION	Professor Iman Zawahry Contact Info: iman@jou.ufl.edu 352-281-6787 Office: 3048 Weimer Hall 352-392-0444 Office Hours: Tuesday Period 9 3:00pm-3:50pm or by appointment.
CLASS MEETING	Class: Tuesday Period 5 WEIM 3215 AHA CoLab Thursday Periods 5-6 MAEB 0211
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 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.
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. STUDENT EVALUATION OF COURSE AND INSTRUCTOR 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.



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

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!

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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" & NEGIN FARSAD

After screening the film in class and listening to the director's comments and feedback, what was your overall thought of the documentary? 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?

REACTION PAPER 2 - 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?

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. Do you think of its representation of Muslims in America. Where their problem areas? How does it overall impact the Muslim narrative and society? .

REACTION PAPER 3 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.

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 PERIOD 5- 11:45AM-12:35PM	DATE	THURSDAY PERIOD 5-6 11:45AM-1:40PM	ASSIGNMENTS (FOR FOLLOWING WEEK)
JAN 7 TH	Class Introduction.	JAN 9 TH	Screening: Muslims Are Coming	Read "How to Make White People Laugh" by Negin Farsad chapter on Canvas for 1/14
JAN 14 TH	Guest Speaker: Negin Farsad Q + A with filmmaker and author	JAN 16 TH	"Islam: What's the Fuss About?" Round Table Discussion based on reading Prepare music video song	Read "What Everyone Needs to Know about Islam" and "Orientalism" - Create key points for video -1/16
JAN 21 TH	Write Scripts for music video	JAN 23 RD	Film Music Video	Edit Video Due 1/28
JAN 28 TH	"Scrolling Frames: Storytelling through Photographs" Introduction to Photo Project Screen Videos - Video Due	JAN 30 TH	Guest Speaker: Photographer Cynthia Yanez	Photo Projects Due 2/6
FEB 4 TH	Guest Speaker:Alia Sharrief Rapper and Creator of Hijabi Monologues	FEB 6 TH	Present Photo Projects	Listen to Serial podcasts Read Article and chapter from "Adnan's Story"
FEB 11 TH	"Islam over the Airwaves: Polarized Opinions" Listen and Discuss Serial	FEB 13 TH	Guest Speaker: Rabia Chaudry Attorney/Podcast Creator/Author	Reaction Paper 2 Due 2/18
FEB 18 TH	"Storytelling through the Lens" How to tell a visual story with a unique voice Screen previous PSA's and Discuss Reaction Paper 2 Due 2/18	FEB 20 TH	Work on PSA Script/Shot Design in groups Film PSA	PSA's Due 2/29
FEB 25 ST	Film/Edit PSA's	FEB 27 ST	Screen PSA's PSA's Due	
MAR 3 RD	SPRING BREAK	MAR 5 TH	SPRING BREAK	
MAR 10	"Print: Find the Story between the Words" How to interview a subject. Discuss news article project.	MAR 12	Guest Speaker: Asma Khalid NPR Journalist covered the Trump Presidency.	News Article Due 3/17
MAR 17	"Dissecting the Small Screen: Television and the Modern Muslim" Screen and Discuss how episodic television portrays culture and religion	MAR 19	Guest Speaker: Aizzah Fatima Writer/Actor "High Maintenance", "Mr. Robot"	(Reaction 3) Due 3/24
MAR 24 TH	"Filmmaking: The Reel Narrative" Reel Bad Arabs-History of negative portrayls of Muslims in Film.	MAR 26 TH	Guest Speaker: Lexi Alexander First female director to direct a Marvel Film, Oscar nominee	News Content Analysis (Reaction 4) Due 3/31
MAR 31 ST	"Balancing between Sensation and Facts: Portrayal of Muslims in News Media" Reaction Paper 4 Due	APR 2 ND	Screen and Discuss News Media Bias News Media In Class Debate	
APR 7 TH	Round Table Discussion	APR 9 TH	No Class. Work on Final Projects.	WORK ON FINAL PROJECTS Due 5/16
APR 14 TH	No Class. Work on Final Projects.	APR 16 TH	SCREENING OF FINAL PROJECTS Final project Due	
APR 21 TH	No Class - Enjoy your Summer!			