

APLS 492M
Spring 2007
Office Hours: MW 2-4, TTh 12-1
and by appointment

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ISLAMIC POLITICAL THOUGHT

TEXTS

A Brief History of Islam, Tamara Sonn
The Political Writings, al-Fārābī
Modernist and Fundamentalist Debates in Islam, Moaddel & Talattof
Additional reading, to be announced...

COURSE WEB PAGE

<http://www.usca.edu/polisci/apls492m/default.htm>

OVERVIEW

Events since September 11, 2001 and the war in Iraq have brought the Muslim world to the headlines. Yet the radical fundamentalists who have seized world attention through violence and oppression are not the heirs of the oldest Muslim political tradition. Our course aim will be to learn about that older tradition, and to understand the political forces at work in the Islamic past as well as in the Muslim world today.

From the time of the Prophet Mohammed, throughout the medieval period, and well into the modern age, Islam has been a tradition of tolerance, peace, and learning. Today the vast majority of the world's Muslims represent this tradition in the practice of their faith and their daily lives. If contemporary Islamic regimes have led us to disassociate the practice of politics from that tradition, then we are right to inquire into developments in Islamic political thought to help us to understand why.

For those reasons, this class proposes that students will gain (1) a basic understanding of the Islamic faith and its history, (2) a knowledge of the historical political forms favored in Islamic societies, (3) familiarity with the basic philosophical categories and concepts that underlie Islamic political thinking, especially as they are contrasted with more familiar Western counterparts, and (4) the ability to link contemporary political developments in the Islamic world with their historical causes.

REQUIREMENTS

Class Participation	15%
Paper #1 (8-10 pages)	15%
Exam #1	15%
Exam #2	15%
Paper #2 (8-10 pages)	15%
Final Examination	<u>25%</u>
	100%

Class Participation, Absences, and Tardiness

Your class participation grade is based solely on my impression of your contributions to our semester-long discussion, but remember: all serious questions and comments have a place in the classroom. Sometimes not knowing an answer can lead to the best participation. All questions and comments contribute to your participation grade, whether you know the answer to a question or not.

Questions about any of the requirements may be asked at any time. If you are uncertain about something, it is often better to ask a question in advance than try to solve a problem after it has happened.

This class has no attendance policy, as such. However, your regular attendance is directly related to the liveliness of our classroom discussions and to your performance on assignments and exams. Regular attendance is strongly encouraged. Further, I will accept your assignments only from you personally, in class. Exceptions will be made for absences due to documented illnesses or emergencies. (Failure to properly maintain an automobile, which leads to 'car trouble,' does not constitute a true emergency.) Please see the make-up policy below.

Please be aware that recurring tardiness or absences will inevitably affect your participation grade. You cannot be a good class participant if you are not in class. Moreover, excessive tardiness and absences inevitably will lead to a poor final grade.

Exams

Three examinations will comprise more than half of your grade for this course. The exams will consist entirely of essay questions. Each exam should take about one hour to complete. Exams **must** be completed in a blank USCA exam bluebook (available at the USCA Bookstore) provided by the student.

Exams will be offered in-class on **February 20, 2007** and on **April 12, 2007**. The final examination will be offered according to the published university schedule.

Writing Assignments

All student papers should be submitted on standard, letter-sized white paper, word-processed in Times New Roman font (no larger than 12-point size). Papers should conform to the Chicago Manual of Style (a brief overview is available online at <http://library.usca.edu/Instruction/StyleGuides>; further information is available at the Reference Desk of the USCA Library, or in the Writing Room at H&SS 112).

Students are advised to take great care with their writing, and to be very sure that the draft they submit represents work they wish to be graded. For writers of every skill level this means that the work has been through more than one draft and that at least one other person has proofread it for stylistic, spelling, and grammar errors. Any errors of these types found in a

paper will be presumed by the instructor to reflect a lack of care in preparing the assignment, and a grade will be assigned accordingly. A great deal of assistance is available to student writers in the Writing Room, and every student would be wise to take advantage of this service.

ANY words that do not reflect the student's own original work must be indicated appropriately (i.e., quotation marks or a block quote) and cited to their source – even if the quotation is only one word. **ALL** failures to cite properly the work of other authors will be dealt with in accordance with USCA policy. See the section below concerning Academic Dishonesty.

Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty in any form is the most serious offense you can commit as a student. All students are expected to observe the USCA Honor Code, as defined in the Student Handbook.

According to the 2006-2007 edition of the USCA Student Handbook, academic dishonesty includes “cheating, lying, bribery and plagiarism.” The Handbook further provides that, a student “may receive a 0 or F on the assignment or requirement for which the violation occurred,” or “may receive an F in the course or requirement for which the violation occurred.” Please refer to the USCA Student Handbook (available online at <http://www.usca.edu/studenthandbook>) for more specific information.

Students are advised that it not only better fulfills the purpose of registering and paying for a class to do their own work, but it is also easier in the long run. Accepting a slightly lower grade for not knowing an answer or submitting a poorly researched paper will spare you the consequences of disciplinary procedures, an outright failing grade, and the work that must be done to maintain a deception.

POLICIES

Grade Scale

Grades will be assigned according to the following scale:

A	100-93
B+	92-89
B	88-85
C+	84-80
C	79-76
D+	75-72
D	71-70
F	69-0

Students with Disabilities

If you have a physical, psychological, and/or learning disability which might affect your performance in this class, please contact the Office of Disability Services, 126A B&E, (803) 641-3609, as soon as possible. The Disability Services Office will determine appropriate accommodations based on medical documentation.

Make-Up Assignments and Exams

All assignments and examinations must be completed on-time. However, in rare cases when unusual and documented circumstances prevent the timely fulfillment of your responsibilities, individual exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis. Ordinarily, even in cases where exceptions are made, make-up work must be completed *before the next class meeting*.

Even in the most extreme cases, you may not have an opportunity to make up work if you do not notify me of your circumstances in a timely fashion. A short telephone call or e-mail message from you or someone on your behalf within 1-2 days of an emergency will greatly increase your chances of being given time to make up your work.

University Student E-Mail Policy

Electronic mail or "email" is considered an official method for communication to students at the University of South Carolina Aiken because it delivers information in a convenient, timely, and cost effective manner. To assure all students access to this important form of communication, USCA provides a University email account to each enrolled student. The primary purpose of these accounts is to ensure a standardized channel for faculty and staff to communicate with students of the University as needed. Official university communications sent to all students will include reminders of important dates such as deadlines to pay tuition and fees, to withdraw from a course with grade of "W," to apply for graduation, etc.

Students are responsible for reading, in a timely fashion, University-related communications sent to their official student email accounts. Students are expected to read and respond as appropriate to their USCA official email on a frequent and consistent basis. The University recommends checking email daily.

USCA Computer Services will not provide support service for personal email accounts such as AOL, Yahoo, Hotmail, etc.

For additional information, please consult the University's student e-mail policy at <http://www.usca.edu/helpdesk/student/studemailpolicy.html>.

Junior Writing Portfolio Requirement

Please remember that the written work that you produce in this class can be included in your rising junior writing portfolio. For further information on the portfolio requirement please consult your USCA Undergraduate and Graduate Studies Bulletin, or visit Dr. Lynn Rhodes, Director of Writing Assessment, or Karl Fornes, Director of the Writing Room.

Important Notes

The use of recording devices (tape, digital, etc.) or photographic equipment (i.e., cell phone cameras, etc.) is strictly forbidden without the written consent of the instructor. Students who have some documented need for recordings or photographs should take advantage of the services of the Office of Disability Services and the procedures available to them there for assistance in making the appropriate arrangements. In those cases, all reasonable steps will be taken to ensure the student's success.

Additionally, please turn **off** all pagers, cell phones, and other noisemaking devices before entering the classroom. If you receive a call or page during class, please leave the classroom *quickly and quietly* before answering. Disruptions caused by cell phones, pagers, and other noisemaking devices may count *against* your participation grade.

In the event of some *unusual* circumstance that requires you to receive telephone calls or pages during class meetings, please notify me and please sit near the door to facilitate a quick exit to the hallway. However, telephones and pagers must be turned off *without exception* during quizzes and exams.

These policies are in place to protect the integrity of the learning environment and to free your classmates from unnecessary distractions from the class time they have set time aside and paid a lot of money to receive. Because these are serious considerations, in the worst cases students should be aware that “It is the instructor’s right to remove from the classroom any student who disrupts or disturbs the proceedings of the class....If the student who has been ejected causes similar disturbances in subsequent meetings of the class, he/she may be denied admittance to the class for the remainder of the semester and assigned a grade of **F**” (*USCA Faculty Manual*, 4.1-6).

READINGS AND CLASS CALENDAR

<u>January 16</u>	Course Overview – NO READINGS
<u>January 18</u>	Lecture: Western Political Thought– NO READINGS
<u>January 22</u>	Last Day to Drop Without Record
<u>January 23</u>	The Prophet and the Qu’Ran (Sonn, 1-31) Politics, Law, and Knowledge (Sonn, 32-64)
<u>January 25</u>	Consolidation & Division of the Muslim World (Sonn, 65-103) Colonialism & Modernization (Sonn, 104-141)
<u>January 30</u>	Fundamentalism & Reform (Sonn, 142-180)
<u>February 1</u>	Lecture: Plato, Aristotle, & al-Farabi – NO READINGS The Soul (al-Farabi, 11-22)
<u>February 6</u>	Guest Speaker: Imam Omar Shaheed of Mosque Masjid as-Salaam in Columbia
<u>February 8</u>	The Soul, continued (al-Farabi, 11-22) The Political Community and Kingship (al-Farabi, 22-28)
<u>February 13</u>	The Virtues (al-Farabi, 28-37) The Virtuous City (al-Farabi, 37-44)
<u>February 15</u>	“The Book of Religion” (al-Farabi, 93-113)
<u>February 20</u>	Exam I

<u>February 22</u>	Lecture: Law and the Age of the Caliphate – NO READINGS
<u>February 27</u>	TBA
<u>March 1</u>	TBA
<u>March 6</u>	TBA
<u>March 8</u>	TBA
<u>March 9</u>	Last Day to Drop Without Receiving a WF
<u>March 20</u>	Lecture: Modernity & Islam – NO READINGS Paper #1 Due
<u>March 22</u>	“The Problem of the Caliphate” (Moaddel & Talattof, 95-100)
<u>March 27</u>	“Religion versus Science” (Moaddel & Talattof, 23-28)
<u>March 29</u>	“Islam and Civilization” (Moaddel & Talattof, 135-144)
<u>April 3</u>	“Intellectual Pluralism and Freedom of Opinion” (Moaddel & Talattof, 109-122)
<u>April 5</u>	“The Rationalistic and Philosophical Spirit of Islam” (Moaddel & Talatoff, 35-40)
<u>April 10</u>	Lecture: Fundamentalisms– NO READINGS
<u>April 12</u>	Exam II
<u>April 17</u>	“Islam as the Foundation of Knowledge” (Moaddel & Talattof, 197-206) “The Fallacy of Rationalism” (Moaddel & Talattof, 207-221)
<u>April 19</u>	“The Political Theory of Islam” (Moaddel & Talattof, 263-272)
<u>April 24</u>	“Westoxication” (Moaddel & Talattof, 343-358) “Self-Destructiveness of Western Civilization” (Moaddel & Talattof, 325-332)
<u>April 26</u>	“War, Peace, and Islamic Jihad” (Moaddel & Talattof, 223-246) Paper #2 Due

*****THE FOREGOING CALENDAR IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE***
CHANGES WILL BE ANNOUNCED IN CLASS
WITH AS MUCH ADVANCE NOTICE AS CIRCUMSTANCES WILL PERMIT**