



# *Islamic Civilization*

Fall 2019 | Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University

**Course Code:** ISLA 200  
**Hours:** WF 2:35 PM-3:55 PM  
**Lecture classroom:** Stewart Biology Room N2/2

**Instructor:** Prof. Pasha M. Khan  
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**Office Hours:** W 11:30 AM-12:30 PM, F 4 PM-5 PM by appointment  
(please [schedule an appointment online](#))

## **Teaching Assistants/Medium Group Leaders:**

<i>Name</i>	<i>Email</i>	<i>Medium Group Classroom</i>
Heather Porter (Hā)	<a href="mailto:heather.porter@mail.mcgill.ca">heather.porter@mail.mcgill.ca</a>	Wilson 110
Fariduddin Attar (Fā)	<a href="mailto:fariduddin.rifai@mail.mcgill.ca">fariduddin.rifai@mail.mcgill.ca</a>	Arts W-20
Hassan Syed Zaidi (Zā)	<a href="mailto:hassan.syedzaidi@mail.mcgill.ca">hassan.syedzaidi@mail.mcgill.ca</a>	Wilson 103

TA office hours and office hour locations to be announced.

**Official Course Description:** An introduction to, and survey of, the religious, literary, artistic, legal, philosophical and scientific traditions that constituted Islamic civilization from the 7th century until the mid-19th century.

## **Required Texts:**

The following books are available at The Word Bookstore (469 Milton Street between Aylmer and Durocher).

Lapidus, Ira M. *Islamic Societies to the Nineteenth Century: A Global History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

Badcott, Nicholas. *Pocket Timeline of Islamic Civilizations*. Northampton, MA: Interlink Books, 2009.

All other readings (listed in the class schedule) will be made available to you via myCourses. If you do NOT have access to the myCourses page for this class, please notify me A.S.A.P.! Note as well that the list of readings is tentative, and texts may be added or subtracted according to the needs of the course as it develops. Please pay attention to announcements in class and to class emails. The fact that this is a lecture course does not mean that the instructors will give you all of the information you need to know. You are expected to do the readings, use your knowledge of them in discussions, and be prepared to be quizzed on them each week

**Announcements:** While some announcements will be made in class or via email, the most important announcements will be made on myCourses. Announcements on myCourses can be viewed on the home page for the course. You should please [subscribe to the myCourses announcements](#) to make sure that you are receiving all announcements via email. I recommend that you also [sign up for notifications](#) of approaching assignment due dates and changes or additions to course content.

**Electronic Devices:** Please **do not** use electronic devices such as laptops, tablets, or mobile phones in the classroom. The use of such devices will result in a lowered participation mark.

To each lecture, you **should bring:**

- a paper notebook for notetaking
- pens and pencils
- a sheet of the QR code stickers bearing your name that I will give you after the add/drop period has passed – please stick these on any in-class written assignments before handing them in
- your alert brain

This policy is not meant to inconvenience students with legitimate reasons to use electronic devices; exceptions will be made if you request and obtain an accommodation from me, preferably via the Office for Students with Disabilities (see Accommodations below).

Note that TAs may have different policies on electronic devices in the medium group sessions.

**QR Code Stickers:** After the add/drop period each of you will receive several sheets of QR code stickers with your name on them. You will stick these on quizzes before handing in such assignments. We use QR code sorcery to help us grade these assignments. It is very important that you do so; otherwise your quiz may not be graded. **If you run out of stickers** or lose your stickers at any point, please email me immediately so that I can print out new ones for you.

If you do not affix your QR code to your quiz, you will receive a grade of 0 on your quiz, and possibly on your attendance and participation. In an emergency you can write your name, the date, and your student number on the quiz. However, this is no absolute guarantee that you will receive a grade, no matter what the instructor or the TAs say.

**Accommodations:** To request **temporary** accommodations, for instance if you need to be absent from or late to class for a legitimate reason like the flu or a family emergency, you may [use the online Authorized Absence Request form](#) (documentation is normally required). You do not have to use the form before the class in question; you may use it afterwards as well. You may also use this form to explain a legitimate and necessary use of an electronic device on a particular day. Note that I may need to share your accommodation requests with teaching assistants or others in order to evaluate or implement them, so if you wish for any part of your request to remain confidential, please state that explicitly in the request.

If you have a **disability, whether physical or mental** (anxiety, depression, etc.) please do not hesitate to let me know in person or via email as soon as you can, at any time during the course, and we will plan a course of action. I recommend getting in touch with the [Office of Students with Disabilities](#). Please note that mark-based accommodations can only be made if they are requested via email by you (or via the OSD). Do speak to me in person if you need to, but a follow-up via email will be necessary in order for accommodations to be made. I will also make note of any reasons for accommodation that you disclose via the [Student Questionnaire](#). I will keep the *reasons* for the accommodation confidential and will ask you before reporting these reasons to the teaching assistants. I may however share information on the *kind* of accommodation requested with the TAs and, with your permission, possibly with others.

Students affected by **sexual violence, harassment, or misconduct** may obtain accommodations via several routes, depending upon their situation. Survivors are not required to make an official report if they do not wish to do so. However, they are encouraged to consult the resources provided by the [Students' Society of McGill University](#), the [Sexual Assault Centre of the McGill Students' Society](#), and the [McGill Office for Sexual Violence Response, Support and Education](#). They may also directly contact the [Dean of Students](#), the [Director of the Institute of Islamic Studies](#), or me. Students who make a disclosure to me should know that I will not report their disclosure unless they explicitly ask me to do so.

In our personal interactions, I value your comfort, and appreciate open communication. During any meeting in my office, all students have the right to leave the door open. If a student feels uneasy meeting in my office, they may specify an alternative location with which they would be more comfortable, or request to schedule a chat on myCourses or a telephone conversation instead. Should any student ever feel that I have made them uncomfortable by my words or actions, even without intention, I ask that they please notify me as soon as possible. I wish to create a learning environment in which students feel comfortable speaking their minds regarding any matter, so that they can be confident and successful in their interactions with me.

**Trigger Warnings:** At certain points in this course, we may discuss various forms of violence. Learning about these forms of violence may be one of the course's goals. That said, some content might be disturbing to students given their particular life experiences. Therefore I have provided trigger warnings in the class schedule below (beneath each heading). If you suspect that specific material is likely to be disturbing for you, I would be happy to discuss any concerns you may have before the subject comes up in class. Likewise, if you ever wish to discuss your personal reactions to course material with the class or with me individually afterwards, I welcome such discussions as an appropriate part of our classwork. If you ever feel the need to

step outside during a class discussion you may always do so without academic penalty. You will, however, be responsible for any material you miss. If you do leave the room for a significant time, please arrange to get notes from another student or see/email me individually to discuss the situation.

### **Grading Scheme**

Note that the professor or your TA will subtract marks for time management on any assignment that you submit late without an accommodation. Grades will also be subtracted for issues of spelling, grammar, and style, as well as time management. Group assignments will include a confidential self/peer evaluation component. Not all members of a group will necessarily receive the same grade for an assignment. See the rubrics for each assignment on myCourses for further details.

Attendance	5%	<p>If you attend class on time and are not disruptive, you will normally receive a full attendance grade. I do not prohibit you from leaving the classroom, but prolonged unexplained absences of this kind will have an impact on your grade.</p> <p>If the number of students in the course is more than 40, quizzes help me to keep track of attendance. Therefore, not affixing your QR codes to your quizzes will likely create problems with your participation and attendance grades as well as your quiz grades. Note that your quiz grades, use of QR codes, attendance grades, and participation grades are all interlinked. Obviously, you cannot receive a participation grade without attending class, unless you have received an accommodation.</p> <p>If you have a legitimate, documented reason for absence or lateness you may <a href="#">request an authorized or explained absence using the online form</a> (a doctor's note is usually required).</p>
Participation	25%	<p>Participation in lectures and medium group sessions makes up a significant portion of your grade.</p> <p>Please participate actively, especially in your medium groups, but also in lectures. Give the instructor your attention and respect. The instructor who is faced with inattentive or disrespectful students who are in it just for the credit is unlikely to teach with much enthusiasm. Students in large classes like this one should not think that they are invisible – far from it. Pro tip: Students who sit unnecessarily far at the back or off to the side should not expect a good participation grade. Students who sit directly in the instructor's line of vision at the front or middle of the class are more likely to learn well and get good grades.</p>

Class participation will be normally be assessed according to a rubric incorporating the following criteria:

**Alertness:** giving the instructor your attention, not sitting unnecessarily far away from the instructor, refraining from chatting with your classmates needlessly and continuously, avoiding napping, avoiding intoxication (yes, that's happened), etc. /5

**Preparedness** in having done the readings for each class before coming, and not restricting yourself to reading the textbook. /5

**Activeness** in participating in in-class assignments and group work, etc., and when possible, answering, commenting, or asking questions on the material. /5

**Violation of the electronic devices policy** during the lecture may result in a reduction of your participation grade by up to 75%. TAs may have their own policy in this regard for their medium groups. **Disruptive behaviour** will result in a reduction of your participation grade up to 100%.

Course Outline Quiz and Questionnaire 3%

Your first assignment will be a [Course Outline Quiz and Questionnaire](#) (Google form) that you should complete as soon as possible, before **September 20 at 11:59 PM**. This quiz will familiarize you with the course outline and policies, and ensure that you are properly set up. The questionnaire portions will allow you to specify a preferred pronoun, tell me confidentially about any ongoing accommodations you would like to request, tell me why you are taking the course, and anything else you wish, such as the name and favourite food of each of your pet ferrets.

Seeing Yourself Seeing Islam 6%

Write a short paper reflecting upon your position vis-à-vis Islam and/or "Islamic Civilization." The paper should not reflect only upon the Islamicate present, but should consider the past. Ideally, this exercise ought to make you better aware of the lenses through which your understanding of Islamic Civilization is filtered. This personal reflection paper should be correctly formatted, with proper citations, grammar, and spelling, and around 500-800 words in length. Don't worry excessively about upper word limits, but please try not to go overboard (or under-board). See the rubric for grading criteria. Due **September 29 at 11:59 PM**.

Reading Quizzes	3%	By <b>2 hours before each lecture</b> , you will complete a brief multiple-choice quiz on myCourses testing your comprehension of the readings for the lecture. Reading quizzes prior to the add/drop deadline are optional.
Index Card Responses	7%	Using index cards provided in class, and a pen, you will write assignments that will usually take the form of 5-minute reflection essays written, but may include think-pair-share activities, study question creation, brainstorming, etc. Index card responses are <b>in-class assignments</b> . You will be required to stick your QR code sticker on your index card before handing it in. Index card responses must be legible. They will not be handed back to you unless you ask for them. This assignment will normally be graded by TAs.
Short Essays	20%	On myCourses you will find short essay questions under each content module for classes after the add/drop deadline. You will answer 4 of these essay questions throughout the course. Short essays should be submitted via myCourses, be around 500-800 words in length, have proper paragraph breaks and citations, etc. (see the rubric for grading criteria). Don't worry excessively about upper word limits, but please try not to go overboard (or underboard). This assignment will normally be graded by TAs. Short essays are due <b>2 weeks after the relevant lecture</b> .
Group Scavenger Hunt	6%	Your small group's first assignment, due <b>October 6 at 11:59 PM</b> , will be a scavenger hunt in which group members will coordinate with one another to perform tasks that will familiarize them with the Institute of Islamic Studies, the Islamic Studies Library, the World Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies Students' Association, and the bookstore where you are to buy the required books for the course. At each location you will be given a letter (or 2) of the Urdu alphabet. The letters together will spell the secret name of your group. This group assignment will include a confidential self/peer evaluation component which must be completed before the group's assignment is graded.
Group Timeline of Islamic Civilization	25%	You will work throughout the term on producing a "revised" (or "revisionist") timeline of Islamic civilization. You will use our class's assigned timeline book as a baseline to begin with ( <i>Badcott's Pocket Timeline of Islamic Civilization</i> ). You should be creative with the presentation of your group's timeline, and not restrict yourself to a straightforward representation of a line in a written document. Feel free to tell a story, use art, video, audio, role-play, performance, electronic means, etc. The point of the assignment is to be creative while being revisionary and showing what you have learned throughout the course. <i>Failure to achieve a</i>

*passing grade for this assignment will prevent you from passing the course.* The assignment is divided into 4 parts, graded separately and with separate due dates:

**Statement:** Work with your group to develop a ½- to 1-page written statement of what you think needs to be revised, re-envisioned and rethought about traditional timelines. Here you can write a critique/defence of timelines in general and of how they relate to Islamic civilization specifically. You can begin to outline where your intervention as a group might be. You are not committed to this specific intervention if you change your mind as the semester continues. This assignment will normally be graded by TAs. **3%, due October 20 at 11:59 PM.**

**Concept:** Provide a written explanation of the concept of your timeline, justifying elements like its scope, focus, temporal/geographic/social organization, and the medium you intend to use. Ideally you would present this as a draft version of the final timeline with an explanation of the concept, or you might simply present the concept itself. A standalone write-up of the concept should be about 750-1000 words. If you submit a draft timeline along with the explanation, the explanation itself can be 500 words, and there is no page limit on the timeline draft (please be reasonable). This assignment will normally be graded by TAs. **5%, due November 10 at 11:59 PM.**

**Presentation:** At the end of the term, your small group will have the opportunity to present your timeline-in-development and your argument to the medium group, your TA, and the professor (if possible, I will be present for that medium group session). Your presentation can be relatively informal, but must make a case for your timeline within 10 minutes or less. This group assignment will include a confidential self/peer evaluation component which must be completed before the group's assignment is graded. **7%, November 15, November 22, November 29.**

**Final Version:** The final timeline that you produce should demonstrate what you have learned over the course of the term, not only in terms of "facts" or "dates" important to Islam, Islamic cultures and so on, but also the way in which history and stories are produced and reproduced. You must show in this timeline how you are re-thinking "Islamic Civilization." You can challenge the overall concept, you can revise it and represent it differently, you can challenge and revise dates, the focus of a traditional timeline. Issues to think about include geography, gender, sources, texts, etc. Your timeline will need to include some way to make clear the

conceptual work you have done and the timeline itself is doing. You also should give some indication of what your group's final opinion on "timelines" is. This group assignment will include a confidential self/peer evaluation component which must be completed before the group's assignment is graded. This assignment will normally be graded by TAs. **10%, due December 15 at 11:59 PM.**

### **Group Work**

Working in groups is an expectation and requirement of this course. Some of the work for your mark in this course will be completed in group assignments. Therefore you should take the challenges and opportunities connected to working in groups seriously.

There will be three **medium groups**. Each group will be coordinated by a TA/medium group leader: Hassan Syed Zaidi (Medium Group Zā), Fariduddin Attar (Medium Group Fā), and Heather Porter (Medium Group Hā). On Fridays after add/drop medium groups will meet with their medium group leader in the assigned classroom (see above).

Within each medium group there will be **small groups** of approximately 4-5 students. These will be finalized after the add/drop period.

Working in groups can be challenging but is also rewarding and develops different skills than working individually does. It not only will present you with different challenges but also will give you different opportunities for learning. How your group works together and how you assign and divide tasks will not be legislated—this is up to each group of five to organize themselves. After the add/drop period, groups will not change and will be permanent, based loosely on alphabetical order and the order of enrolment. You will be working with people whom you may or may not know ahead of time or agree with about everything. This is one of the challenges of group work.

What we expect from you is that you will work in your group to foster an inclusive and mutually respectful atmosphere that allows you to talk, think and share together and also to produce the work that is assigned. This may mean assigning different tasks to different people in the group. It may mean shifting and rotating these roles. For example, in a meeting you might decide together that one person takes on the role of the facilitator, one the note-taker, one the presenter and so on. It is crucial that in practice all students participate. You should show this in your assignments and presentations, in a way that you all agree upon. All students should be actively involved in the development of projects/assignments and their presentation/s. All voices should be heard, including those that may have a more difficult time doing so.

Because you will be working closely together, you should from the beginning of the semester exchange emails and phone numbers and find a way to be in touch. It is not acceptable to miss or skip group meetings any more than this is true for class, because it puts your groups' projects at risk. Some group assignments will include a confidential self/peer evaluation component which

must be completed before the group's assignments are graded. Not all members of a group will necessarily receive the same grade for an assignment.

Any specific concerns about group work should be addressed to me soon after the beginning of the add/drop period.

**Class Schedule:**

Subject to change! Please follow the list of readings on the myCourses site and pay attention to announcements on myCourses, email, and in class.

September 4      INTRODUCTION: CIVILIZATION?

Readings:

Appiah, Kwame Anthony. "There Is No Such Thing as Western Civilisation." 1-2

Lewis, Bernard. "The Roots of Muslim Rage." 17-26

September 6      WHITE MAN'S BURDEN: ORIENTALISM AND COLONIALISM

**TW: References to rape and terrorism (Mamdani)**

Readings:

Lapidus 649-654

Said, Edward. "Introduction" in Orientalism. 1-28

Kipling, Rudyard. "The White Man's Burden"

Mamdani, Mahmood. "Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: A Political Perspective on Culture and Terrorism." 766-775

Davis, Kathleen. "Time Behind the Veil: The Media, the Middle Ages, and Orientalism Now" in The Postcolonial Middle Ages. 105-122

September 11      THE MEANING AND END OF ISLAM

**TW: Racial oppression (Diouf)**

Readings:

Lapidus 146-167

Smith, Wilfred Cantwell. "Is the Concept Adequate?" in *The Meaning and End of Religion*. 119-153

Hodgson, Marshall. "Islamdom, Islamicate" in *The Venture of Islam*. 57-60

Diouf, Sylvaine. "Upholding the Pillars of Islam in a Hostile World" in *Servants of Allah: African Muslims Enslaved in the Americas*. 71-98

September 13 THE PROPHET

Readings:

Lapidus 26-55

Lapidus 80-91

Ibn Ishaq. *The Life of Muhammad*. 104-121

Ibn Ishaq. *The Life of Muhammad*. 221-233

*The Malay Hikayat Mi'raj Nabi Muhammad*. 113-119

Recommended: Ma'mar b. Rashid. "The Story of the Slander" in *The Expeditions*. 92-98

September 18 SHI'ISM: THE MARTYRS OF KARBALA  
**Guest lecture: Hassan Syed Zaidi**

Readings:

Lapidus 174-179

Lapidus 274-280

Haider, Najam. "Imamate" in *Shi'i Islam: An Introduction*. 2-49

Abisaab, Rula J. "Sufi Regalia and Legal Banners" in *Converting Persia*. 7-22

September 20 MEDIUM GROUPS

September 25    SUFISM: COOL ISLAM

Readings:

Lapidus 167-174

Lapidus 302-330

Ghazzali, Abu Hamid. *The Deliverance from Error*. 54-63

Schimmel, Annemarie. *Mystical Dimensions of Islam*. 62-77

Rumi, Jalaluddin. "Moses and the Shepherd" in *The Masnavi*. 101-103

Wang Tai-Yu. "The Great Learning of the Pure and Real" in *Chinese Gleams of Sufi Light*. 89-91

September 27    MEDIUM GROUPS

October 2        PHILOSOPHY AND SCIENCE  
**Guest lecture: Fariduddin Attar**

Readings:

TBA

October 4        MEDIUM GROUPS

October 9           ARTS I: LITERATURE AND LIES

**TW: Gendered violence (Ghalib Lakhnavi)**

Readings:

Cantarino, Vicente. "Poetry: Lie or Truth" in Arabic Poetics in the Golden Age. 27-40

Ghalib Lakhnavi. The Adventures of Amir Hamza. 37-60

Mamadou Kouyaté. Sundiata: An Epic of Old Mali. 15-45

Ibn Quzman, Abu Bakr. Zajal 21 in The Mischievous Muse. 141-147

Ibn Quzman, Abu Bakr. Zajal 49 in The Mischievous Muse. 304-307

October 11         MEDIUM GROUPS

October 16         ARTS II: SHAITAAN AND SHIRK

Readings:

Lewisohn, Leonard. "The Sacred Music of Islam." 1-29

Grabar, Oleg. "Seeing and Believing." 33-37

Flood, Finbarr Barry. "Between Cult and Culture." 641-659

Visual and musical materials TBA

October 18         MEDIUM GROUPS

October 23      VEILED PASTS I: WOMEN AND GENDER  
**Guest lecture: Heather Porter**

Readings:

Lapidus 19-22

Lapidus 181-190

Lapidus 264-271

Other readings TBA

October 25      MEDIUM GROUPS

October 30      VEILED PASTS II: BEFORE HOMOSEXUALITY

**TW: Discussion of heterosexism and references to rape (El-Rouayheb)**

Readings:

El-Rouayheb, Khaled. Before Homosexuality in the Arab-Islamic World, 1500-1800. 25-33

Kugle, Scott. When Sun Meets Moon: Gender, Eros, and Ecstasy in Urdu Poetry. 71-99

Jur'at, Qalandar Bakhsh. Chaptinamas. 220-225

Najmabadi, Afsaneh. Women with Mustaches and Men without Beards. 11-25

November 1      MEDIUM GROUPS

November 6      **THE AGE OF EMPIRES: OTTOMANS, SAFAVIDS, MUGHALS**  
**Guest lectures: TBA**

Readings:

Lapidus 425-468

Lapidus 490-543

November 8      **MEDIUM GROUPS**

November 13     **CONVERSIONS: SYNCRETISM AND JIHAD**

**TW: Violence**

Readings:

Lapidus 561-578

Lapidus 581-619

Stewart, Tony and Carl Ernst. "Syncretism." 1-3

Dangana, Muhammad. "The Intellectual Contribution of Nana Asma'u to Women's Education." 285-289

"Sari Saltik Becomes a Friend of God" in Tales of God's Friends.  
136-143

November 15     **MEDIUM GROUPS**  
**Timeline presentations: Group Fā**

November 20     **REFORM AND THE CRISIS OF SUFISM**

Readings:

Buehler, Arthur. "Ahmad Sirhindi." 141-156

Riddel, Peter. Islam and the Malay-Indonesian World. 116-125

Ahmad, Aziz. "Sayyid Ahmad Khan and the Aligarh Movement" in Islamic Modernism in India and Pakistan, 1857-1964. 31-54

Commins, David. "Contestation and Authority in Wahhabi Polemics" in Religion and Politics in Saudi Arabia. 39-50

November 22 MEDIUM GROUPS  
**Timeline presentations: Group Hā**

November 27 RACE: FROM ANDALUS AND AFRICA TO THE AMERICAS

**TW: Racial oppression (Diouf)**

Readings:

Lapidus 382-406

GhaneaBassiri, Kambiz. "Islam in the 'New World'" in A History of Islam in America. 9-58

November 29 MEDIUM GROUPS  
**Timeline presentations: Group Zā**

*McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see [www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/](http://www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/) for more information).*

*In accord with McGill University's Charter of Students' Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded. / Conformément à la Charte des*

*droits de l'étudiant de l'Université McGill, chaque étudiant a le droit de soumettre en français ou en anglais tout travail écrit devant être noté (sauf dans le cas des cours dont l'un des objets est la maîtrise d'une langue).*

*Instructor generated course materials (e.g., handouts, notes, summaries, exam questions, etc.) are protected by law and may not be copied or distributed in any form or in any medium without explicit permission of the instructor. Note that infringements of copyright can be subject to follow up by the University under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures.*

*If you have a disability please contact the instructor to arrange a time to discuss your situation. It would be helpful if you contact the Office for Students with Disabilities at 514-398-6009 before you do this.*