

MW: 10-11:30 AM
Office Hours: F 2-4; or by appointment
GAR 1.126
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Office Hours: Monday 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM

Dr. Samy Ayoub
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ISLAMIC ETHICS (SPRING 2017)

This course will engage in a close consideration and reading of classical and modern works on Islamic ethics. In so doing, we will examine them in light of modern ethical and legal contexts, most notably contemporary “virtue ethics” as well as current ethical theories of action such as deontology, consequentialism, and Religiously-Based Ethics, “Divine Command Theory”. Case studies will include debates about abortion, gay marriage, fundamentalism, war, organ donations, Euthanasia, religious pluralism, and suicide bombing.

GRADING

Required Assignments

Response Papers	30%
Class participation	20%
Midterm	20%
Book Review	10%
Final Paper	20% (on a topic selected in consultation with the instructor)

Final Paper: (20%) At the end of the course, you will write a **12-page** long research paper, due **May 12, 2017**. Try to come up with a theme for your paper as early in the course as possible; keep me informed regarding your progress and any problems you may be facing in writing it. You can choose a particular issue and trace it in the works of several authors, choose two authors and compare their views on several issues, or choose a particular geographical location and historical period to do your analysis. A **draft** of the final paper is due on **May 1, 2017**.

NOTE: **Plagiarism** is a very serious offense. Be sure to cite properly other people’s ideas in your papers. If any part of the paper is plagiarized, it will receive a “zero” and cannot be rewritten for credit. Please contact me if you are unsure about the proper method of citation.

Book Review: Write a 3-page review of *Nurturing Masculinities: Men, Food, and Family in Contemporary Egypt* (University of Texas Press, 2015). The review should articulate the key arguments of the book and how the author’s contribution shapes our understanding of masculinities in the modern Middle East. **DUE on March 20, 2017**

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

Participation: Students will be expected to attend the class regularly, to ask informed questions, and to respect each other, the professor, and guest lecturers. Students will also participate in regular discussions. If these discussions are to be successful, students will need to have carefully read the assigned texts. A large portion of the participation grade will be determined by the extent to which the student's participation in these discussions demonstrates his or her engagement with and understanding of the assigned texts. Students can increase their participation grade by visiting their professor in his office for informal conversation or help with/about the course.

Attendance policy: I take attendance in class. If you are absent frequently enough that I (and others) notice, your participation grade will suffer (unless those absences are caused by hospitalization or some other traumatic personal or family event). Mild illnesses and/or fatigue in general do not constitute an excusable reason for absence, so you should do what you can to avoid them, as classroom discussions are crucial to your grade. You are to read the assigned readings beforehand and be ready for classroom discussion.

Presentations: students will give presentations, 10-15 minutes long, on topics relevant to the week's readings. These presentations will continue on throughout the remainder of the course. The purpose of this exercise is twofold:

- a) To develop research skills relevant to the study of Islam.
- b) To build communication skills and effective public speaking.

With these goals in mind, presentations should aim to concisely elucidate for the rest of the class the broader significance of each given topic. Group presentations are welcome, yet each member of the group is expected to participate equally in the presentation. Students are strongly encouraged to work together in the preparation of material.

CLASSROOM RULES

1. The use of laptops, headphones, cell phones, or any electronic gadgets is not permitted in classroom. Any gadget that is considered distracting will not be permitted in class.
2. No food in classroom (drinks should have a lid or a cap on).

REQUIRED BOOKS:

Ali, Kecia. *Sexual Ethics and Islam: Feminist Reflections on Qur'an, Hadith and Jurisprudence*. Oxford: Oneworld, 2006

Brockopp, Jonathan E. *Islamic Ethics of Life: Abortion, War, and Euthanasia*. (University of South Carolina Press, 2004)

Hamdy, Sherine. *Our Bodies Belong to God*. Berkeley 2012.

Safi, Omid, ed. *Progressive Muslims: On Justice, Gender and Pluralism*. (Oneworld Publications, 2003).

Naguib, Nefissa. *Nurturing Masculinities: Men, Food, and Family in Contemporary Egypt* (University of Texas Press, 2015)

RECOMMENDED NORMATIVE ISLAMIC ETHICS WORKS:

Imam Birgivi, *The Path of Muhammad: A Book on Islamic Morals & Ethics* (World Wisdom 2005).

Al-Sulami, Muhammad. *The Book of Sufi Chivalry: Lessons to a Son of the Moment* (Inner Tradition International, 1983)

RECOMMENDED BOOKS:

Jackson, Sherman A. *Islam and the Problem of Black Suffering* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009)

Al-Attar, Mariam. *Islamic Ethics: Divine Command Theory in Arabo-Islamic Thought* (New York: Routledge, 2010).

Hourani, George F. *Reason and Tradition in Islamic Ethics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

Fakhry, Majid. *Ethical Theories in Islam* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1991).

Vasalou, Sophia. *Moral Agents and Their Deserts* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008).

RECOMMENDED ARTICLES:

Richard M. Frank, "Moral Obligation in Classical Muslim Theology," *Journal of Religious Ethics* v. 11/2 (Fall 1983): 204 – 223.

Charles E. Butterworth, "Ethics in Medieval Philosophy," *Journal of Religious Ethics* v. 11/2 (Fall 1983): 224 – 249.

Peter J. Awn, "The Ethical Concerns of Classical Sufism" *Journal of Religious Ethics* v. 11/2 (Fall 1983): 240-263.

Jackson, Sherman A. 'The Alchemy of Domination? Some Ash‘arite Responses to Mu‘tazilite Ethics', *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 31(2) (May 1999), 185-201

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

WEEK ONE

Wednesday, January 18

Introductions + Syllabus

WEEK TWO

Monday, January 23

What is Sharī'a?

A.E. Mayer, "The Shari'a: A Methodology or a Body of Substantive Rules," in *Islamic Law and Jurisprudence: Studies in Honor of Farhat Ziadeh* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1990)

Anver Emon, "Codification and Islamic Law: The Ideology Behind a Tragic Narrative," *Middle East Law and Governance* 8 (2016) 275-309.

Wednesday, January 25

A Kevin Reinhart, "Islamic Law as Islamic Ethics," 186-203.

Reinhart, "The Origin of Islamic Ethics," *The Blackwell Companion to Religious Ethics*, 244-253

Moosa, Ebrahim. "Muslim Ethics." In *Blackwell Companion to Religious Ethics*, ed. William Schweiker. Malden, MA: Blackwell 2005.

WEEK THREE (SEXUAL ETHICS IN ISLAM)

Monday, January 30

Kecia Ali, *Sexual Ethics & Islam*, 1-36.

Wednesday, February 1

Kecia Ali, *Sexual Ethics & Islam*, 39-72.

WEEK FOUR

Monday, February 6

Kecia Ali, *Sexual Ethics & Islam*, 75-109.

Wednesday, February 8

Kecia Ali, *Sexual Ethics & Islam*, 112-151.

State law, Sex, and morality (read: US Supreme Court decision on gay marriage)

Documentary: Strictly Soul mates (write a brief response)

WEEK FIVE (BIOETHICS IN ISLAM)

Monday, February 13

Jonathan Brockopp, *Islamic Ethics of Life: Abortion, War, and Euthanasia*

Introduction: Taking Life and Saving Life (1-20)

Wednesday, February 15

Jonathan Brockopp, *Islamic Ethics of Life: Abortion, War, and Euthanasia*
Abortion (21-50)

Jonathan Brockopp, *Islamic Ethics of Life: Abortion, War, and Euthanasia*
Abortion (51-96)

WEEK SIX

Monday, February 20

Jonathan Brockopp, *Islamic Ethics of Life: Abortion, War, and Euthanasia*
War (103-128)

Wednesday, February 22

Jonathan Brockopp, *Islamic Ethics of Life: Abortion, War, and Euthanasia*
War (129- 172)

Jonathan Brockopp, *Islamic Ethics of Life: Abortion, War, and Euthanasia*
Euthanasia (173-213)

WEEK SEVEN

Monday, February 27

Jonathan Brockopp, *Islamic Ethics of Life: Abortion, War, and Euthanasia*
Afterword (214-220)

Wednesday, March 1 (EGYPT AS CASE STUDY)

Sherine Hamdy, *Our Bodies Belong to God*.

Read: Bioethics Rebound

Sherine Hamdy, *Our Bodies Belong to God*. (Selections)

Read: Egypt's Crisis of Authority; Defining Death: When the Experts Disagree

WEEK EIGHT

Monday, March 6

Sherine Hamdy, *Our Bodies Belong to God*. (Selections)

Read: From Secret to Scandal; Shaykh of the People

Wednesday, March 8

Sherine Hamdy, *Our Bodies Belong to God*. (Selections)

Read: Transplanting God's Property; Only One Kidney to Give

Sherine Hamdy, *Our Bodies Belong to God*. (Selections)

Read: Principles We Can't Afford?; Conclusion

SPRING BREAK: MARCH 13-18

WEEK NINE (PROGRESSIVE MUSLIMS)

Monday, March 20

MIDTERM EXAM

BOOK REVIEW DUE

Wednesday, March 22

Omid Safi. *Progressive Muslims: On Justice, Gender and Pluralism*

Introduction: The times they are a-changin' – a Muslim quest for justice, gender equality and pluralism (1-32)

The ugly modern and the modern ugly: reclaiming the beautiful in Islam (33-77)

WEEK TEN

Monday, March 27

Omid Safi. *Progressive Muslims: On Justice, Gender and Pluralism*

In search of progressive Islam beyond 9/11 (78-97); Islam: a civilizational project in progress (98-110)

The debts and burdens of critical Islam (111- 127); On being a scholar of Islam: risks and responsibilities (128-146)

Wednesday, March 29

Omid Safi. *Progressive Muslims: On Justice, Gender and Pluralism*

Transforming feminism: Islam, women and gender justice (147-162)

Omid Safi. *Progressive Muslims: On Justice, Gender and Pluralism*

Progressive Muslims and Islamic jurisprudence: the necessity for critical engagement with marriage and divorce law (163-189)

WEEK ELEVEN

Monday, April 3

Omid Safi. *Progressive Muslims: On Justice, Gender and Pluralism*

Sexuality, diversity and ethics in the agenda of progressive Muslims (190-234)

Wednesday, April 5

Omid Safi. *Progressive Muslims: On Justice, Gender and Pluralism*

Muslims, pluralism, and interfaith dialogue (251-269);

American Muslim identity: race and ethnicity in progressive Islam (270- 285)

WEEK TWELF (VIOLENCE)

Monday, April 10

Asad, Talal. *On Suicide Bombing* (Columbia University Press)
Introduction + Terrorism (1-38)

Wednesday, April 12

Asad, Talal. *On Suicide Bombing* (Columbia University Press)
Suicide Terrorism (39- 64)

Asad, Talal. *On Suicide Bombing* (Columbia University Press)
Horror at Suicide Terrorism (65-92)

WEEK THIRTEEN (ISLAM, ETHICS, AND THE ENVIRONMENT)

Monday, April 17

Abdul-Matin, Ibrahim. *Green Deen: What Islam Teaches about Protecting the Planet*
(selections): Part I. Waste (1-44)

Wednesday, April 19

Abdul-Matin, Ibrahim. *Green Deen: What Islam Teaches about Protecting the Planet*
(selections): Part III. Water (109-129); Part IV. Food (138-172)

WEEK FOURTEEN

Monday, April 24

Natural Resource Management

Hamed, "Seeing the Environment through Islamic Eyes: Application of Shariah to
Natural Resource Planning and Management," 145-162

Animal Rights

Masri, "Animal Experimentation: The Muslim Viewpoint," 171-195

Wednesday, April 26

Business Ethics

Sauer, J.B. (2002) Metaphysics and economy – the problem of interest: A comparison of the practice and ethics of interest in Islamic and Christian cultures, *International Journal of Social Economics*, Vol. 29, pp. 97-118.

WEEK FIFTEEN (ETHICS IN PRACTICE)

Monday, May 1

Draft of the final paper due

Final paper presentations

FINAL PAPER DUE ON MAY 12, 2017