

Department of Middle Eastern Studies

Course Syllabus
Fall 2019

Shi'i Islam

Course Numbers:	MES 385, R S 390T, and HIS 388K
Unique:	39990, 42235, 38510
Instructor:	Kamran Scot Aghaie
Class Time:	Tue 3:30-6:30 PM
Class Location:	CAL 422
Office Hours:	Tue. 12:15-1:00 pm and Thurs. 12:15-2:00 pm
Office Location:	CAL 501A
Email:	Kamranaghaie@austin.utexas.edu
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Description:

This course will provide students with a comprehensive understanding of the historical development of the Shi'i branch of Islam. The course will explore historiographical debates surrounding the emergence and early development of Shi'ism, as well as Sunni-Shi'i polemics. This will be followed by an analysis of the historical evolution of popular Shi'i beliefs and ritual practices. Students will learn about the different Shi'i sectarian divisions, along with schools of law and theology. Finally, students will learn about the important changes Shi'ism has undergone during the modern period. The course will be organized partly in accordance with historical chronology and partly along thematic lines. In addition to being exposed to the secondary literature, students will be required to read original texts or primary documents, either in the original language or in translation (depending on the student's language skills).

Requirements:

Weekly reading assignments, substantial classroom discussions and presentations, a short paper, and a graduate level research paper.

Prerequisite:

Graduate student standing.

Grading:

Class participation	20%
Short Analytical paper about the readings	20%
Prospectus (due week nine)	20%
Research paper (due at end of semester)	40%

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Weekly Schedule:

Session	Date	Author	Title
Week One		No Class	No Class
Week Two	Sept. 3	Momen, Moojan	<i>An Introduction to Shi'i Islam</i>
Week Three	Sept. 10	Jafri, S. H. M.	<i>The Origins and Early Development of Shi'a Islam</i>
Week Four	Sept. 17	Amir-Moezzi, Mohammad Ali	<i>The Divine Guide in Early Shi'ism: The Sources of Esotericism in Islam</i>
Week Five	Sept. 24	Saunders, Paula	<i>Ritual, Politics, and the City in Fatimid Cairo</i>
Week Six	Oct. 1	Ayoub, Mahmoud	<i>Redemptive Suffering in Islam: A Study of the Devotional Aspects of Ashura in Twelver Shi'ism</i>
Week Seven	Oct. 1	Abisaab, Rula Jurdi	<i>Converting Persia: Religion and Power in the Safavid Empire</i>
Week Eight	Oct. 15	Cole, Juan	<i>Roots of North Indian Shi'ism in Iran and Iraq: Religion and State in Awadh, 1722-1859</i>
Week Nine	Oct. 22	Nakash, Yitzhak	<i>The Shi'is of Iraq</i>
Week Nine	Oct. 22	Prospectus is Due	Prospectus is Due
Week Ten	Oct. 29	Deeb, Lara	<i>An Enchanted Modern : Gender and Public Piety in Shi'i Lebanon</i>
Week Eleven	Nov. 5	Moosa, Matti	<i>Extremist Shi'ites: The Ghulat Sects</i>
Week Twelve	Nov. 12	Thurfjell, David	<i>Living Shi'ism</i>
Week Thirteen	Nov. 19	Brunner, Rainer	<i>Islamic Ecumenism in the 20th Century: The Azhar and Shi'ism Between Rapprochement and Restraint</i>
Week Fourteen	Nov. 26	Korom, Frank	<i>Hosay Trinidad: Muharram Performances in an Indo-Caribbean Diaspora</i>
Week Fifteen	Dec. 3	Amanat, Abbas	<i>Apocalyptic Islam and Iranian Shi'ism</i>
Week Fifteen	Dec. 3	Final Paper is Due	Final Paper is Due