THE02930. SPECIAL TOPICS: THE BIBLE AND THE QUR’AN

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The Mission of Saint Louis University is the pursuit of truth for the greater glory of God and for the service of humanity. The University seeks excellence in the fulfillment of its corporate purposes of teaching, research, health care and service to the community. It is dedicated to leadership in the continuing quest for understanding of God’s creation and for the discovery, dissemination and integration of the values, knowledge and skills required to transform society in the spirit of the Gospels. As a Catholic, Jesuit University, this pursuit is motivated by the inspiration and values of the Judeo-Christian tradition and is guided by the spiritual and intellectual ideals of the Society of Jesus. In support of its mission, the University (…)

Course description

Islam is a fast-growing religion whose adherents make up roughly 15% of the world's population. For those raised in a traditional Western society, Islam is no longer a distant or exotic religion. Due to massive migration, in traditionally Christian societies, people live now side by side with their Muslims neighbors. Political and sometimes tragic events have also contributed to highlight the intensity of religious feelings as well as the diversity of interpretations of what the Qur'an says or demands from those who adhere to it. Despite this newly encountered familiarity with Islam, few non-Muslims in traditionally Christian societies have any knowledge at all of the Holy Book of Islam.

And by the same token, despite the fact that the Qur'an acknowledges the Jewish and Christian Scriptures as valid sources of revelation, few Muslims are familiar, let alone knowledgeable, about the diversity of Jewish and Christian beliefs and how they have shaped western culture.

The Bible and the Qur'an are two intensely related sets of scriptures. In this course, we will be exploring the theological interconnections as well as the historical and cultural background where the three traditions meet.

The main objectives for this class are:

1. To learn and appreciate the fundamental theological tenets of the biblical and quranic traditions, their commonalities and differences, as well as the evolution of the diverse theological schools within each of those traditions.
2. To explore the historical and cultural background – written and oral traditions- out of which these traditions emerged and their points of to convergence.
3. To develop the skills that will allow you to carry out a comparative theological analysis.

The textbooks for this class are the Christian Bible, which includes the Jewish Scriptures, and the Qur'an. There will not be a specific textbook where to find and memorize the answers to the questions presented in class. You will do your own research and reach your conclusions with the help of the guidelines and information offered in class lectures (and optionally any additional material from the bibliography). Prior to starting
with each topic, you will get a list of study questions to help you focus on the relevant issues when doing the assigned readings.

Grades:

Final grades will be calculated by the simple addition of four components:

- Midterm: 30%
- Final: 30%
- Final paper: 20%
- Other assignments and overall participation: 20%

Attendance and participation policy:
Class attendance and participation are important to the learning process. Attendance is obligatory for auditors. More than three unexcused absences will affect one’s grade. It is always advisable to inform the professor when one is to be absent and essential to arrange with classmates to cover any material missed.

Excessive talking and/or disengaging from class through the use of personal technology for matters unrelated to our class discussions will reduce your learning and be detrimental to the classroom environment as a whole, as they will be seen as a sign of disrespect towards your professor and classmates. Let’s seek to learn as much as possible from one another this term! Each voice is valued.

University Statement on Academic Integrity:
Academic integrity is honest, truthful and responsible conduct in all academic endeavors. The mission of Saint Louis University is "the pursuit of truth for the greater glory of God and for the service of humanity." Accordingly, all acts of falsehood demean and compromise the corporate endeavors of teaching, research, health care and community service via which SLU embodies its mission. The University strives to prepare students for lives of personal and professional integrity, and therefore regards all breaches of academic integrity as matters of serious concern.

The governing University-level Academic Integrity Policy can be accessed on the Provost's Office website. Additionally, SLU-Madrid has posted its academic integrity policy online: http://www.slu.edu/madrid/academics. As a member of the University community, you are expected to know and abide by these policies, which detail definitions of violations, processes for reporting violations, sanctions and appeals.

The professor will review these matters during the first weeks of the term. Please direct questions about any facet of academic integrity to your faculty, the chair of the department of your academic program, or the Academic Dean of the Madrid Campus.

The University is a community of learning, whose effectiveness requires an environment of mutual trust and integrity, such as would be expected at a Jesuit, Catholic institution. As members of this community, students, faculty, and staff members share the responsibility to maintain this environment. Academic dishonesty violates it. Although not all forms of academic dishonesty can be listed here, it can be said in general that soliciting, receiving, or providing any unauthorized assistance in the completion of any work submitted toward academic credit is dishonest. It not only violates the mutual trust necessary between faculty and students but also undermines the validity of the University’s evaluation of students and takes unfair advantage of fellow students. Further, it is the responsibility of any student who observes such dishonest conduct to call it to the attention of a faculty member or administrator.
Examples of academic dishonesty would be copying from another student, copying from a book or class notes during a closed-book exam, submitting materials authored by or editorially revised by another person but presented as the student’s own work, copying a passage or text directly from a published source without appropriately citing or recognizing that source, taking a test or doing an assignment or other academic work for another student, tampering with another student’s work, securing or supplying in advance a copy of an examination without the knowledge or consent of the instructor, and colluding with another student or students to engage in an act of academic dishonesty. Where there is clear indication of such dishonesty, a faculty member or administrator has the responsibility to apply appropriate sanctions. Investigations of violations will be conducted in accord with standards and procedures of the school or college through which the course or research is offered. Recommendations of sanctions to be imposed will be made to the dean of the school or college in which the student is enrolled. Possible sanctions for a violation of academic integrity include, but are not limited to, disciplinary probation, suspension, and dismissal from the University.

Assessment:
Saint Louis University - Madrid Campus is committed to excellent and innovative educational practices. In order to maintain quality academic offerings and to conform to relevant accreditation requirements, we regularly assess our teaching, services, and programs for evidence of student learning outcomes achievement. For this purpose we keep on file anonymized representative examples of student work from all courses and programs such as: assignments, papers, exams, presentations, and reflective exercises. Thus, copies of your work for this course may be kept on file for institutional research, assessment and accreditation purposes. If you prefer that Saint Louis University-Madrid Campus does not keep your work on file, you will need to communicate your decision in writing to your professor.

TITLE IX SYLLABUS STATEMENT:
Saint Louis University and its faculty are committed to supporting our students and seeking an environment that is free of bias, discrimination, and harassment. If you have encountered any form of sexual misconduct (e.g. sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, domestic or dating violence), we encourage you to report this to the University. If you speak with a faculty member about an incident of misconduct, that faculty member must notify SLU’s Title IX deputy coordinator, Marta Maruri, whose office is located on the ground floor of Padre Rubio Hall, Avenida del Valle, 28 (mmaruri@slu.edu; 915-54-5858 ext. 213) and share the basic fact of your experience with her. The Title IX deputy coordinator will then be available to assist you in understanding all of your options and in connecting you with all possible resources on and off campus.

If you wish to speak with a confidential source, you may contact the counselors at the SLUMadrid's Counseling Services on the third floor of San Ignacio Hall (counselingcentermadrid@slu.edu; 915-54-5858 ext. 230) or Sinews Multipletherapy Institute, the off-campus provider of counseling services for SLU-Madrid (www.sinews.es; 91-700-1979)
To view SLUMadrid’s sexual misconduct policy and for resources, please visit the following web address: http://www.slu.edu/Documents/Madrid/campus-life/SLUMadridSexualMisconductPolicy.pdf.

Students with Special Needs:
In recognition that people learn in a variety of ways and that learning is influenced by multiple factors (e.g., prior experience, study skills, learning disability), resources to support student success are available on campus. Students who think they might benefit from these resources can find out more about:
• Course-level support (e.g., faculty member, departmental resources, etc.) by asking your course instructor.
• University-level support (e.g., tutoring/writing services, Disability Services) by visiting the Academic Dean's Office (San Ignacio Hall) or by going to https://www.slu.edu/madrid/academics/student-resources. Students with a documented disability who wish to request academic accommodations must contact Disability Services to discuss accommodation requests and eligibility requirements. Once successfully registered, the student also must notify the course instructor that they wish to access accommodations in the course. Please contact Disability Services at disabilityservicesmadrid@slu.edu or +915 54 58 58, ext. 230 for an appointment. Confidentiality will be observed in all inquiries. Once approved, information about the student's eligibility for academic accommodations will be shared with course instructors via email from Disability Services. For more information about academic accommodations, see "Student Resources" on the SLU-Madrid webpage.

Note: Students who do not have a documented disability but who think they may have one are encouraged to contact Disability Services.

SYLLABUS

Sept. 4-6
Introduction.
What is comparative theology? What is its use?
Kinds of religions.
Central concepts in world religions.
Canonical texts.

Sept. 11-13
Torah, TaNaKh: The Hebrew Bible and Judaism
Read: Book of Genesis, chapters 1-35.

Sept. 18-20
Read: Gospel of Matthew.

Sept. 25-27
Islam: The Qur'an as literal and final revelation.
Read: Q: 2 (Qur'an: surah 2).

Oct. 2-4
The Qur'an and its biblical subtext.
Read: Genesis chapters 36-50.

Oct. 9-11
Midterm.

Oct. 16-18
Creation.
Adam (and Eve).
The angels: Challenging God.
Cain and Abel.
Read: Gen. 1:26; Q 2:30; Gen. 2:18-20; Q2:31; Q 2:33; Gen. 4:2-27; Q5:27a; Gen. 4:10; Q5:27b-32.
Oct. 23-25
Noah, Jonah.
Read: Gen. 6:5-11; Q 11:25-26; Gen. 7:1; Q 11:36-39; Gen. 6:27; Gen. 7:11-16; Q 11:40-49; Q: 10; Q 71.

Oct. 30
Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac.

Nov. 6-7
Moses
Guest lecturer: Justo Lacunza, rector emérito del Instituto Pontificio de Estudios Árabes e Islamistas.

Nov. 13-15
Mary

Nov. 20-22
Jesus

Nov. 27-29
Sin, suffering, and salvation.
Resurrection.

Dec. 4-6
Allah and the Triune God.

Dec. 11-13
Review for final

Dec. 18
Final.