

CONTEMPORARY ISLAMIC STUDIES (CIS)

CIS 501 Maxims of Islamic Law (Jurisprudence) 3 Credits
Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

This course offers a thorough exploration of rules in Islamic Law, distinguishing between different types of rules and studying their authoritativeness, generality, and comprehensiveness. It covers the history of maxims in Islamic Law, major jurisprudential maxims and their inclusivity of other maxims, the rule of custom, and the public interest Islamic maxim. The course also discusses higher objectives of Shariah and jurisprudential reasoning, and their relationship with the principles of jurisprudence framework. Lastly, the course examines the higher objectives of Shariah in the constitutional field and human rights.

CIS 502 Contemporary Religious Issues 3 Credits
Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

The course is concerned with studying the Islamic faith and its features and is concerned with identifying the science of theology and its impact on the contemporary world and its place, then weighing the ideas of extremism with the balance of revelation and reason.

CIS 503 The Fiqh (Islamic Jurisprudence) of Worship and its Contemporary Developments 3 Credits
Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

This course covers the different aspects of Islamic worship, including prayer, fasting, zakat, hajj, and the philosophy of worship in Islam. The course focuses on the agreed-upon rulings of prayer, fasting, and zakat among major Islamic schools of thought, along with their significance from various perspectives. The course also delves into the provisions, status, and benefits of hajj and a comparative view of Islamic worship. Discussions on the texts of the major Islamic schools of thought provide a deeper understanding of the topics. The course also explores the educational, behavioral, and social benefits of zakat.

CIS 504 The Fiqh (Islamic Jurisprudence) of Family Law and its Contemporary Developments 3 Credits
Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

This course provides a detailed overview of family jurisprudence, where it covers its most important issues, in classical and contemporary books, such as marriage, divorce, Khul', Faskh, Rajah, Iddah, al-Ihdad, Breastfeeding, Custody, Family maintenance, etc. The course is also concerned with studying the provisions of these issues and their implication, and the difference between them, in addition to explaining their dimensions from the perspective of contemporary social studies.

CIS 505 The Histography of Islamic Law 3 Credits
Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

This course covers the basics of Islamic jurisprudence, including its sources, development, and methods of ijtihaad. Students will learn about the history and development of the science of jurisprudence, its most important books, trends, and figures. The course will also explore the principles of jurisprudence, their modern relevance, and rules of legal text interpretation. Lastly, the course will discuss attempts to renew principles of jurisprudence in the Islamic world and offer perspectives from both Islamic and Western viewpoints.

CIS 600 Foundations of Islamic Thought 3 Credits
Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

The course provides an in-depth investigation of multiple intellectual traditions and debates within Islamic Civilization before the onset of modernity. The course is based on readings of key primary texts in philosophy, theology, law, Sufism and social thought. The course identifies major trends and directions of Islamic scholarship, demonstrates connections between fields of knowledge, highlights the changing cultural assumptions that have historically shaped the discourse of Muslim scholars, and explores the contemporary relevance of their works.

CIS 601 Contemporary Quran and Hadith Studies 3 Credits
Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

This course provides a contemporary treatment of the major scriptural sources in Islam, the Quran and the Hadith, and the salient methodologies for working with them. The course examines competing epistemological approaches to the history, composition, and content of these sources, as well as the interplay between them. Contemporary methodologies for working with these sources and their function in modern Muslim societies are then analyzed.

CIS 602 Applied Research Methodologies in Islamic Studies 3 Credits
Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

The course introduces students to the field of Islamic studies and teaches them how to design and prepare a research project which makes a meaningful contribution to this field and the particular focus of this course is on research-based paper writing. After situating Islamic studies in the broader context of academic disciplines, basic research skills will be reviewed and applied in the context of a self-identified research project. Major approaches in the field of Islamic studies will be surveyed taking the case of canonical prayer and significant contributions to the ongoing debates about Orientalism will be reviewed.

CIS 607 Islamic Thought and Postcolonial Studies 3 Credits
Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

This course will focus on the development of decolonial and postcolonial studies and their applications to the study of Islamic Thought and society, including debates around orientalism and women's studies. Through the study and analysis of key texts, students will engage significant trends in traditional and modern scholarship, navigate critically through the relevant academic literature, and analyze methodological developments in Religious Studies and Islamic Studies.

CIS 608 The Media and Muslim Societies 3 Credits
Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

This course explores the surprisingly close relationships between the forces of media and religion in what is arguably a "secular" age. It will closely examine the evolution of ubiquitous religious content and examine how it relates to Muslim society. The course also considers qualitative methods in analyzing major media narratives that include such topics as the use of digital media by a variety of Muslim groups, reactions and counter-reactions to extremism and Western discourses appropriating Islam for political advantage

CIS 609 Islam and Politics in the Muslim World 3 Credits

Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

This course examines relations between Islam and politics in the contemporary Muslim world. The course surveys foundational texts, and classical theories of political order, as well as key notions of Western political thought. On this basis, the course provides a contextualized analysis of central debates about the political order, while situating them in the evolving structure of the Muslim world.

CIS 611 Scientific Thought in Muslim Societies 3 Credits

Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

This course explores the scientific tradition that developed in Islamicate societies and the complex interaction between scriptural revelation and experimental discovery. It traces the development of scientific enquiry that occurred due to interactions with the ancient traditions of learning and consequently, how the innovations that resulted may have influenced European scientific thinking. The rise of modern science in Muslim societies will be discussed and the epistemological challenges it presents will be explored through a series of subjects such as evolution and cosmology.

CIS 612 Muslim Societies in Diaspora 3 Credits

Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

Diasporic Muslim communities have existed throughout history and while diasporic communities are integral part of Islam, they have often been considered a case apart. In the context of globalization, their specificity appears more limited than before. Taking diverse cases from the past and present, this course examines the formation of diasporas and their role in the spread of Islam, changing relations to the 'homeland' and the broader Muslim community, legal problematics relating to the minority condition, and the interplay of culture and religion in the formation of their identity.

CIS 613 Modern History of the Muslim World 3 Credits

Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

The course offers an introduction into the history of the modern Muslim world with a focus on the Middle East and the Gulf region in particular. It surveys the emergence of the contemporary state-system since the early 19th century in relation to broader processes of social and cultural transformation. It retraces changes on the levels of identity and spatial organization and examines the competing visions of legitimate political order which continue to structure Muslim polities today. Looking at various nationalist and Islamic movements, the course examines the interplay between modernization policies, social change and intellectual developments, introducing students to key analytical concepts for their study.

CIS 615 Non-Textual Legal Sources 3 Credits

Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

This course provides a comprehensive treatment of the sources of Islamic law that are disputed with Islamic legal theory and clarifies their significance in contemporary ijihad. The course clarifies the need for such sources as a criterion for deducing legal rulings in a way that counters the evident errors of literalism that characterize religious extremism. Thus, the course discusses the following non-textual legal sources: the action of the Prophetic Companions, public interest and its categories, juristic preference and its types customary practice preemptive prohibition, Madinan practice and the presumption of continuance.

CIS 616 Fatwa, Family and Society 3 Credits

Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

This course discusses the fatwas related to the most significant contemporary issues concerning the family and society. It focuses on a methodological study of fatwa issuance, including the principles and modality of assessing such fatwas, while also considering the higher objectives of the shari'a and the changing practices of both families and societies. The course discusses issues such as the financial excesses of marriage expenses, divorce and spinsterhood, female employment, and the wife's rights to the family assets, from the perspective of Islamic jurisprudence and contemporary social studies.

CIS 617 Islamic jurisprudence, Politics and the State 3 Credits

Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

This course concerns the relationship between Islamic jurisprudence, politics and the state and covers three main debates: Islamic jurisprudence and political authority; politics and the law, and Islamic jurisprudence and the state. The first debate examines jurisprudential theories regarding society, the rulings related to political authority and the ruler, the effect of political change of the jurist and his understanding of his relationship with the state. It also discusses contemporary attempts to synthesize the political discourse that existed before the notion of the modern, nation state, and those that were produced consequently. The second debate concerns the difference between politics and Islamic political theory, the ethical principles that guide politics, and the application of public interest to politics. The third debate is related to differing manifestations of political authority such as the state and the caliphate, and how such concepts impact on subsequent Islamic legal rulings, whether they be in theory or in practice.

CIS 618 The Higher Objectives of Sharia and Public Interest 3 Credits

Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

This course discusses the historical development, the most important writings and the theoretical methodologies, developed regarding higher objectives of the shari'a. It also sheds light on the importance of the higher objectives and their role in facilitating ijihad as a tool to determine the scope and range of public interest. The course highlights the prerequisites required for the application of the higher objectives and elaborates how contemporary thinkers have applied these concepts. The course also discusses how the higher objectives may be applied in contemporary Muslim societies to address a range of critical issues such as: human rights, social justice, security and the preservation of human dignity.

CIS 619 Text and Context: Comparative Textual Readings 3 Credits

Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

This course discusses the relationship between text and context through a variety of jurisprudential texts that display multifarious perspectives and views. The course focusses on the methodological tools required to critically analyze the intent of the authors, engage with their thinking, and place them in their historical, social and political context. Through selected texts, the course navigates a number of legal cases disputed across the ages, elaborates the Islamic legal perspective regarding them and compares them to prior systems such as Roman law and pre-Islamic norms.

CIS 620 Nawazil and Novel Legal Issues **3 Credits**
Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

This course discusses the most significant contemporary social issues that affect both the family and society such as smoking, sexual harassment, domestic violence and suicide. The course highlights the social dimension of such issues and proposes how they may be resolved using a variety of jurisprudential methodologies. The course emphasizes a practical approach and combines current sociological studies with innovative legal applications.

CIS 621 Personal Earnings and Economics **3 Credits**
Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

This course discusses various categories of financial transactions in Islamic law and demonstrates how jurists historically dealt with such issues. The course also links the higher objectives of the shari'a to these financial cases and shows how they have been applied in a contemporary context, particularly in the financial sector and in Islamic banking. The course distinguishes the objectives and reasons for such legal rulings from the financial perspective, and provides actual examples from the contemporary context, to suggest novel solutions to innovative financial transactions that are common in the modern age.

CIS 622 Social Justice, Community Welfare and Sustainable Development **3 Credits**
Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

In a global context marked by growing inequality and precariousness, social justice has emerged as a major policy concern and popular demand around the world. This course highlights the resources available in the Islamic tradition to advance issues of social justice. The course shows how concerns about social justice were integral to classical Islamic legal scholarship, explores how Islamic concepts might improve on current practices of development and humanitarianism, and examines the challenges that modern structures (capitalism, the modern state, and globalization) pose to innovative solutions.

CIS 623 Muslim Social and Political Systems and Institutions **3 Credits**
Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

This course discusses Muslim social and political systems and institutions both in their historical contexts and in contemporary society. Such institutions have laid a heavy emphasis on both religious ethics and social values and this course engages with how they have had a positive effect on both the public sphere and social development. Islamic legal theory may be viewed as being at the core of Muslim social and political systems and institutions and the course evaluates the intrinsic relationship between this legal framework and social development in Muslim societies.

CIS 695 Master's Thesis Hours **0-6 Credits**
Grade Mode: Pass/Non Pass

This course provides students the opportunity to develop and design a research project related to their field of specialization. As part of process, the student will initially develop a research question and defend a research proposal related to their chosen topic. Then the student will undertake the research, writing a dissertation that will be defended in an oral examination. The student's work in this course will be supervised by a qualified faculty member with related expertise to the research area selected.

CIS 705 Islam and Modernity **3 Credits**
Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

This course introduces students to institutions, concepts and processes centrally associated with modernity. Focusing on the fields of knowledge, government and economy, the course investigates what is new and distinctive about modern societal contexts. It will examine fields of conflict which have emerged in these contexts. Trajectories of modernity will be investigated in a comparative perspective.

CIS 706 Islamic Law and Society **3 Credits**
Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

The course provides an interdisciplinary exploration of law and society in the Muslim world from medieval to modern times. It presents the main figures and institutions of Islamic legal authority, showing how they have adapted to changing configurations of power. The course discusses various approaches to the study of law in society through case-studies ranging from crime and punishment, marriage and divorce, and economic practice. Particular attention is paid to the study of law and society in the contemporary Muslim world.

CIS 710 Muslim Encounters with Other Societies **3 Credits**
Grade Mode: Standard Letter, Audit/Non Audit

This course proposes to introduce students to the overarching principles that have generally governed Muslim interaction with various non-Muslim societies and how diverse Muslims communities have traditionally interpreted these principles under similar and varying circumstances. The course will highlight some of the best practices that Muslims were able to develop in their interaction with other societies which might be taken into consideration by non-Muslim communities in their encounter with others. Furthermore, contemporary models of successful interaction between religious communities would be examined to see what challenges they pose to Muslim communities and to what extent Muslims can benefit from such models.