

Being Muslim in America

REL/HIS 221
Grinnell College
#BMAGrinnell

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Muslims have been a part of American life for a very, very long time, and yet the very presence of Muslims and Muslim communities in the United States has never been more fraught than it is today. This course will explore the history and contemporary realities of Muslims in America. Of particular interest is how race, class, and gender have intersected in the history of Islam and Muslim communities in the United States—and how these intersections relate to the conditions in which Muslims have sought, or not, to live as Muslims in a non-Muslim land. To facilitate this work, we will begin with a more general consideration of religion in American life and an analysis of theoretical perspectives on the nature of public life. We will then dive into the history of Muslims, Muslim communities, and Islam in the United States, making our way into the current moment.

As you will see, much of the work of the course is built around developing research skills that will help you complete a research project that will unfold over the entire semester. We will place particular emphasis on developing a research question and staging the research process: pursuing your chosen topic, identifying and selecting different kinds of sources (reflecting the kind of project you pursue), and pr

Week 5: Identifying a theory of interest

- In your week 5 journal, please identify which theory you selected, why you selected it, and how it helped you think about your short essay topic.

Weeks 6-9: Formulating questions for (potential) further consideration

- Each week, your journal should provide an annotation of readings and synopsis of discussion and a description of one thing that captured your interest Ñ plus a translation of that area of interest into a question.

Weeks 10-11: Working on research skills and questions

- Readings during this period of the course will be particularly light.
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most out of this learning experience, please don't stay silent. You can talk to me if you're comfortable. If you'd rather speak with someone else, I recommend Chinyere Ukabiala, the College's Ombudsperson. If I'm doing something that is preventing you from getting the most out of this learning experience, please speak with the Ombudsperson and she will help you figure out next steps.

RELIGIOUS LANDSCAPES

AUGUST 30

Introductions

SEPTEMBER 2

Beal, *Religion in America*, pp. 1-57

Mapping your religious landscape (literally and figuratively): your hometown

OCTOBER 11

Curtis, Chapter Two in *MIA*, pp. 31-46.

"Satan" and "Black Muslims," in *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*. (R)

OCTOBER 14

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