This survey course aims to provide a general overview of the Islamic religion and culture from the perspectives of Muslim and non-Muslim scholars representing both traditionalist and modernist schools of thought. After introducing the Arabian settings, founding fathers, sacred texts, and primary tenets, we will second examine the communal developments from the 7th century to the present. The third part of the course is designed to explore a number of contemporary debates regarding Islam and Muslims around the world as well as Muslim interactions with non-Muslim communities. Being interdisciplinary by nature, the course combines a number of approaches, including literary, historical, political, sociological, psychological, philosophical, theological, mystical, and aesthetic ones.

PRIMARY OBJECTIVES
1) to gain basic knowledge about Islam and Muslims around the world and throughout the history of the religion;
2) interpret texts, traditions, symbols, images and other representations;
3) be able to understand diverse Islamic figures, movements, divisions, and regimes;
4) explore and articulate the Islamic contributions to human development; and
5) improve understanding and critically examine current events, conflicts, and prospects.

REQUIRED READINGS:
♦ Paul Myhre, ed., Introduction to Religious Studies (2009);
♦ Karen Armstrong, Islam: A Short History (2002);
♦ John I. Donhue and John L. Esposito, Islam in Transition: Muslim perspectives, 2nd edition (2007);
♦ J. L. Esposito and D. Mogahed, Who Speaks for Islam: what a billion Muslims really think (2007);
♦ + Several excerpts from primary texts and current short articles and reports made available on Blackboard under Course Documents.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS
♦ Three exams (20%+20%+25%= 65%): Based on lectures, discussions, visuals, course documents, and readings;
♦ Reaction paper/report (7 pages, 20%): Instructions are posted on Blackboard under Syllabus;
♦ Creative project and/or group oral exams (15%): unplanned spontaneous during class discussions.

POLICIES:
Blackboard System (www.blackboard.sdsu.edu)
The use of Blackboard is MANDATORY and you will NOT be able to get credit for the course without it. The lecture outlines, assignments, and other forums are regularly posted on Blackboard. In addition, all communications are transmitted through Blackboard. You are also encouraged to communicate with classmates on the DISCUSSION BOARD especially if you are participating in a group project or any other in-class activity. Make sure that your computer and software programs are compatible with Blackboard at all times beginning on day one.

Attendance:
You are expected to attend lectures regularly; this is not negotiable. Recurrent absences will result in an early withdrawal from the course or a final "F" for the class. In case of a single absence, please obtain lecture notes from another student in the class, but remember that the notes of someone else may not guarantee your understanding of missed lectures. Missing lectures, or being late to lectures, will certainly jeopardize your chances to participate in the in-class projects and/or group oral exams, answer exam questions, and, subsequently, obtain credit for the course.

Lecture Notes and Outlines:
Lecture notes cannot and will NOT be posted on Blackboard. This is not an on-line course. The lecture tentative outlines, on the other hand, will be available on Blackboard before the lecture; remember that they are NOT sufficient for understanding the content of lectures, let alone the spontaneous discussions and other in-class activities; all three exams will include some questions derived from such discussions and activities.

Office:
I am available ONLY during office hours and I look forward to discussing with you class requirements, topics covered, or any other concerns you may have about the class. If office hours are inconvenient, please contact me before/after class to make an appointment.

Please DO NOT leave notes/messages on/under my office door.

Note also that there will be NO office hours during final exams week.

Phone:
You are welcome to call my office phone number if necessary, but ONLY during office hours.

Please DO NOT leave voicemail or messages with colleagues or department personnel.

E-mail:
E-mails are answered in the order received and, therefore, if your e-mail necessitates a response, be patient and wait for a couple of days before you assume it went unnoticed; thus, re-send it only after two days. More importantly, in an age of spam e-mails, unidentifiable e-mails will be unopened and deleted instantly; "unidentifiable e-mails" means without full name, class number, and purpose of the e-mail in the SENDER and/or SUBJECT space. Thus, if you do not receive a response, check first to see if your e-mail had included these necessary items in the SENDER and/or SUBJECT space.

Laptops, cell phones and other electronics:
NOT ALLOWED during lectures, NO EXCEPTIONS.
LECTURE AND READING SEQUENCE:
Although I plan on a weekly basis to highlight in a statement or two some of the most important readings, I do not review the readings during the lecture. I firmly believe that lectures and in-class discussions are meant to transcend the scope of the readings and delve into issues and perspectives we come to realize and value as the semester progresses. (Also remember to consult regularly Armstrong's Chronology, pp. xiii-xxxiv; Key Figures, pp. 193-202; Glossary of Arabic terms, pp. 203-206; and the maps throughout her text.)

**PART ONE: PRIMARY FOUNDATIONS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>W-1</td>
<td>Religion, Religious Studies; Islam, Islamic Studies</td>
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</table>
| 8/28-30 | Myhre in Myhre, "What is religion?" 3-14; Majed in Myhre, "How is religion studied?" 15-26; Esposito & Mogahed, "Introduction."
| W-2  | The Pre-Islamic Setting; Muhammad and the emergence of Islam |
| 9/6-6  | Raike in Myhre, "Origin stories and religion: how are religions formed?" 27-40; Armstrong, "Preface."
| W-3  | Prophet Muhammad: messenger and statesman |
| 9/11-13 | Oliver in Myhre, "Religion as 'truth-claims'." 41-52; Armstrong, "The Prophet (570-632)."
| W-4  | The Scriptures: The Qur'an and Tafsir |
| 9/18-20 | Jacobsen in Myhre, "Sacred words, stories, writings, and books."
| W-5  | The Tradition: The Hadith and Sunna |
| 9/25-27 | Plate in Myhre, "An aesthetic approach to religion."
| W-6  | The Pillars: Beliefs and Practices |
| 10/2  | Hotz in Myhre, "Ritual studies."

**Exam I** (on lectures, readings, and discussions, W1-6, 20%): T/F, m/c, fill-in the blank, and short answer questions.

**PART TWO: SUBSEQUENT DEVELOPMENTS**

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>W-7</td>
<td>The Caliphate: Islam and politics</td>
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<td>W-8</td>
<td>The Sects: Sunni and Shi'i</td>
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<tr>
<td>W-9</td>
<td>The Sufis: ascetics, poets and artists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W-10</td>
<td>The Laws: the Shari'a and society</td>
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</table>
| 10/30 | Hill in Myhre, "Religious ethics, moral values, and standards for human conduct."

**Exam II** (on lectures, readings, and discussions, W7-10, 20%): T/F, m/c, fill-in the blank, and short answer questions.

**PART THREE: CONTEMPORARY DISCOURSES**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>W-11</td>
<td>Islam and the West; Islam and (Post)Modernity</td>
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| 11/6-8 | Adam in Myhre, "Technology and religion."
| W-12 | Islam in the West; Islam and Expansion |
| W-13 | Islam and Fundamentalism; Jihad and Violence |
| 11/20 | Weaver in Myhre, "Violence and religion."
| W-14 | Islam and Gender: Theory and Practice |
| 11/27-29 | Donohue & Esposito, "Rights and Roles of Women" to "The Changing Status of Women and the Family."
| 11/22 | Thanksgiving Holiday: NO CLASS |
| W-15 | Other Discourses: Islam and Ecology; Islam and Interfaith |
| 12/4-6 | Deffensebaugh in Myhre, "World Religions: environmentally active," 135-52; excerpts from speeches and other declarations will be available on Blackboard.

**Exam III** (on lectures, readings, and discussions, W11-15, 25%): T/F, m/c, fill-in the blank, and essay questions.