

Pol 4090: Islamic Political Thought

Tu-Th: 900am-1020am

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Content and Objectives:

This course examines the history of Islamic political thought, from the scattered political statements of the Quran to the often virulent contemporary debates over the meaning of Islam. It focuses mainly but not exclusively on three pivotal figures: Alfarabi (870-950), the founder of political philosophy within medieval Islam, Muhammad Iqbal (1877-1938), an Indian philosopher-poet who may have been the most articulate Muslim modernist, and Ibn Khaldun (1338-1406), a philosophic historian who bridges the medieval and modern period. The great medieval philosophers Avicenna and Averroes, as well as modern activists such as Jamal al-Din al-Afghani and Sayyid Qutb, will also be included.

The course aims to convey both the great variety of thinking about politics that has taken place within the Islamic world and a sense of how that thinking has evolved in response to different historical influences and challenges. It also aims to inform us in our frequent interactions with Islam, at home and abroad.

Bibliography:

Medieval Political Thought: A Sourcebook. 2nd Edition. Eds. Joshua Parens and Joseph C. Macfarland. Cornell University Press: 2011.

Ibn Khaldun. *Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History*. Trans. Franz Rosenthal, ed. N.J. Dawoud. Princeton University Press, 2015.

Afghani, Jamal al-Din. *A Muslim Response to Imperialism: The Political and Religious Writings of Jamal al-Din Afghani*. Ed. Nikkie Keddie. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968.

Iqbal, Muhammad. *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*. Ed. M Saeed Sheikh. Stanford University Press, 2012.

-*Speeches, Writings, and Statements of Iqbal*. Ed. Muhammad Latif Sherwani. Lahore: Iqbal Academy, 2005.

Abd al-Raziq. *Islam and the Foundations of Political Power*. Edinburgh University Press, 2013.

Mawdudi, Sayyid Abu Ala. *Towards Understanding Islam*. Trans. Khurshid Ahmad. Ukim Dawah Center. Birmingham, U.K.: 1980.

-Qutb, Sayyid. *Milestones*. New Delhi: Islamic Book Service, 2002.

Syllabus

Jan. 10: Introduction: How does Islam affect political thought, and why should we care?

Jan. 15: Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, *An Islamic Response to Colonialism*, pp. 101-29, 181-87

Jan. 17: Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, pp. 130-80

Jan. 22: Abd-el-Raziq, 21-65

Jan. 24: Abd al-Raziq, 67-118

Jan. 29: Muhammad Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, pp. 1-22, 99-115

Jan. 31: Iqbal, pp. 116-42

Feb. 5: Iqbal, *Speeches, Writings, and Statements*, pp. 97-118, 121-23, 138-54

Feb. 7: Iqbal, pp. 224-40, 300-13

Feb. 12: Abu Ala Mawdudi, *Toward Understanding Islam*, pp. 1-39

Feb. 14: Mawdudi, 40-86

Feb. 19: Sayyid Qutb, *Milestones*, pp. 7-22, 45-77.

Feb.21: Qutb, 77-105, 149-160

Feb. 26: Alfarabi, *Political Regime*, pp. 37-46 in Sourcebook.

Feb. 28: Alfarabi, *Political Regime*, pp. 46-55

Mar. 5: Study Islam during Mardi Gras

Mar. 7: Alfarabi, *Attainment of Happiness*, pp. 56-63 in Sourcebook

Mar. 12: Alfarabi, *Attainment of Happiness*, pp. 63-71

Mar. 14: Alfarabi, *Enumeration of the Sciences and Book of Religion*, pp. 19-27 in Sourcebook

Mar 19.: Alfarabi, *Book of Religion*, pp. 27-35

Mar. 21: Avicenna, *On the Divisions of Rational Science and Healing: Metaphysics 10*, pp. 75-82 in Sourcebook

Mar. 26: Avicenna, *Healing: Metaphysics 10*, pp. 82-88

Mar. 28: Ibn Tufayl, *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan*, pp. 106-112 in the Sourcebook

Apr. 2: Ibn Tufayl, *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan*, pp. 112-22

Apr. 4: Ibn Khaldun, *Muqaddima*, pp. 5-43

Apr. 9: Ibn Khaldun, pp. 45-48, 58-64, 70-89

Apr. 11: Ibn Khaldun, pp. 91-122

Apr. 23: Ibn Khaldun, pp. 123-54

Apr. 25: Ibn Khaldun, pp. 154-88

Grading

20%: Attendance (15%)/Participation (5%)

Attendance is essential to overall success in the course, so all enrolled students are expected to sign in every class. Attendance will be required after the final drop date has passed. Only one unexcused absence is permitted for each student. Every additional absence will cost one attendance mark. At the 4000 level, a modest amount of class participation is expected.

35%: Midterm Exam

45%: Final Exam

Further details about the grading of exams will be discussed, in speech and in writing, as the time approaches.

Grading scale:

90-100: A 97-100: A+ 93-96: A 90-92: A-

80-89: B 87-90: B+ 83-86: B 80-82: B-

70-79: C 77-80: C+ 73-76: C 70-72: C-

60-69: D 67-70: D+ 63-66: D 60-62: D-

Under 60: F

Class Rules:

For attendance, see the official policy at <https://sites01.lsu.edu/wp/policiesprocedures/policies-procedures/22/>

Please turn off all electronic devices in class. Exceptions may be granted in certain circumstances: please feel free to ask.

Please do not eat during class: however, drinking non-alcoholic beverages is permitted. Do not leave during class except for an emergency.