



Islam and the West: Historical Encounters and Contemporary Challenges
Summer Program 2025 - Rabat, Morocco
June 2 - July 11, 2025

The class meets Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.

I- Course Description

This intensive 6-week course examines the complex historical, cultural, and political relationship between the Islamic world and the West. Through lectures, discussions, readings, and field trips, students will explore key periods of interaction, conflict, and exchange from the rise of Islam to contemporary issues. The course aims to provide a nuanced understanding of Islam, challenge common misconceptions, and analyze current dynamics between Muslim-majority societies and Western nations.

Study trips are an essential components of the course. Students will visits Marrakech, Fes and Tangier, in Morocco. In Spain, they will visit Granada, Cordoba and Malaga.

II- Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Understand the basic tenets of Islam and its historical development
2. Analyze key periods of interaction between Islamic and Western civilizations
3. Critically examine Western perceptions of Islam and vice versa
4. Discuss contemporary issues affecting Muslim-Western relations
5. Develop a more nuanced understanding of Islam's diversity and its role in the modern world

III- Course Structure

The course meets four times a week for 1.45 hours each session, combining lectures and discussions. Additionally short traveling seminars will be organized to Fes, Marrakech, Tangier, Granada and Cordoba.

IV- Instructional Methods and Activities

- a. Site visits
- b. Seminars and lectures
- c. Discussions/reading assignments for each place visited

V- Assignments and Grading

1. Class participation and attendance (20%)
2. Weekly reflection papers (20%)
3. Midterm exam (20%)
4. Final research paper (30%)
5. Final presentation (10%)

VI- Required Readings

- John L. Esposito, "Islam: The Straight Path" (selected chapters)
- Edward Said, "Orientalism" (selected chapters)
- María Rosa Menocal, "The Ornament of the World"
- Amin Maalouf, "The Crusades Through Arab Eyes" (selected chapters)
- Charrad, Mounira. "Morocco Palace, Tribe, and Preservation of Islamic Law in States and Women's Rights The Making of Postcolonial Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco" University of California Press 2001
- Saadoun, Haim. "*The Jews of the middle east and North Africa in Modern Times*" Columbia University Press 2002 New York
- Newly, Gordon. "Introduction to Islam" in *A concise encyclopedia of Islam* pp. 1-12 One World Publications 2002
- Ayoob, Mohammed. in *The Many Faces of Political Islam* The University of Michigan Press 2007
- Additional articles and primary sources will be provided weekly

VII- Attendance

One of the primary requirements this semester is that you attend class. This is not a lecture class; it's essential that you come to class on time, be prepared for the lesson, and be ready to participate in discussions and activities. Attendance will be part of your final grade. Any absences can harm your final grade. It will be up to the student to manage and communicate with professors about their absences. For every absence, your final grade may be lowered by one half-letter grade (B+ to become a B, B to become B-, and so on). ACM-IAU professors are empowered to impose academic sanctions (including a lowered grade or even failure) upon students for unexcused absences, frequent tardiness, work submitted late, or any other actions or behaviors that violate ACM's academic standards and policies. What happens if a student has unjustified absences for a class? If a student has three (3) unjustified absences for class of 1.45 hours, it will result in an automatic 3% reduction of the final grade (for example: an A- [92] will become a B+ [89]). For every additional absence, the student will receive an added 3% reduction of the final grade (for example: for a fourth absence, a B+ [89] will become a B [86]), and so on). If a student has six (6) unjustified absences for a class, it will result in automatic failure of the course ("F" grade) regardless of their performance in the class. A pattern of more than two unjustified absences in more than one course can result in dismissal from the program.

How can you justify an absence?

If you have missed your class and need to justify your absence, you must fill out the IAU Madrid Absence Form that the ACM-IAU Madrid Center Team provides in student orientation. Students are prompted to upload a doctor's note on the form. After you fill out the absence form, the IAU Madrid staff will determine if the absence is justified or not. Submitting this form does not mean an automatic justified absence. Students have the obligation to communicate with their faculty and IAU Madrid staff about any course absences.

VIII- Academic Policies

All students are responsible for reading, knowing, and understanding the information pertinent to their areas of study available in the ACM Catalog. The catalog contains requirements for all degree programs, course descriptions, academic policies, and regulations that govern ACM. All parts of the catalog are subject to annual changes as university rules, policies, and curricula change. It is your responsibility to keep informed of such changes; failure to do so will not exempt you from whatever penalties you may incur. Catalogs are published from August through July.

Review the latest catalog at: <https://www.acmfrance.org/academics/catalog>

IX- Weekly Schedule

Week 1: Foundations of Islam and Early Encounters

- Introduction to Islam: basic beliefs, practices, and early history
- The expansion of Islam and early encounters with the Christian world
- Field trip: Visit to Hassan II Mosque in Casablanca

Week 2: The Crusades and the Golden Age of Islam

- The Crusades: causes, events, and lasting impact

- Islamic contributions to science, philosophy, and the arts
- Cultural and intellectual exchange between Islam and the West
- Field trip: Granada (Alhambra), Cordoba (Mesquita)

Week 3: Colonialism and the Muslim World

- The Ottoman Empire and its relations with Europe
- European colonialism in Muslim lands
- Islamic reformist movements and responses to Western dominance
- Field trip: Marrakesh (Koutoubia Mosque, Bahia Palace, Jardin Majorelle, Medersa Ben Youssef,..)

Week 4: The Modern Middle East and the West

- The fall of the Ottoman Empire and the creation of modern nation-states
- Oil, geopolitics, and Western involvement in the Middle East
- The Israeli-Palestinian conflict and its impact on Muslim-Western relations
- Guest lecture: Contemporary Moroccan politics and its relationship with the West

Week 5: Islam in the West and Contemporary Challenges

- Muslim immigration to Europe and North America
- Islamophobia and the "clash of civilizations" debate
- Islamic fundamentalism and terrorism
- Field trip: Fes (Medersa Al Qarawiyyin, Batha Museum, Medina cultural visit)

Week 6: Bridging the Divide: Dialogue and Coexistence

- Interfaith initiatives and cross-cultural dialogue
- Islam and democracy: compatibility and challenges
- The role of media in shaping perceptions of Islam and the West
- Course wrap-up and final presentations