RELS 15 Course Outline as of Fall 2026

CATALOG INFORMATION

Dept and Nbr: RELS 15 Title: ISLAM
Full Title: Islam
Last Reviewed: 4/28/2025

Units		Course Hours per Week		Nbr of Weeks	Course Hours Total	
Maximum	3.00	Lecture Scheduled	3.00	17.5	Lecture Scheduled	52.50
Minimum	3.00	Lab Scheduled	0	6	Lab Scheduled	0
		Contact DHR	0		Contact DHR	0
		Contact Total	3.00		Contact Total	52.50
		Non-contact DHR	0		Non-contact DHR	0

Total Out of Class Hours: 105.00 Total Student Learning Hours: 157.50

Title 5 Category:	AA Degree Applicable
Grading:	Grade or P/NP
Repeatability:	00 - Two Repeats if Grade was D, F, NC, or NP
Also Listed As:	
Formerly:	HUMAN 10.5

Catalog Description:
Students will explore the origins, spread, and history of Islam, as well as its diversity and presence in the modern world. This course will give students a thorough introduction to the life of Muhammad, the Qur'an, the Hadith, Sunni/Shiite differences, Sufism, and Islamic law, philosophy, politics, and art. Students will discuss Western perceptions, portrayals, and encounters with Islam, past and present.

Prerequisites/Corequisites:

Recommended Preparation:
Eligibility for ENGL C1000 (formerly ENGL 1A) or EMLS 10 (formerly ESL 10) or equivalent or appropriate placement based on AB705 mandates

Limits on Enrollment:

Schedule of Classes Information:
Description: Students will explore the origins, spread, and history of Islam, as well as its diversity and presence in the modern world. This course will give students a thorough introduction to the life of Muhammad, the Qur'an, the Hadith, Sunni/Shiite differences, Sufism,

and Islamic law, philosophy, politics, and art. Students will discuss Western perceptions, portrayals, and encounters with Islam, past and present. (Grade or P/NP)
Prerequisites/Corequisites:
Recommended: Eligibility for ENGL C1000 (formerly ENGL 1A) or EMLS 10 (formerly ESL 10) or equivalent or appropriate placement based on AB705 mandates
Limits on Enrollment:
Transfer Credit: CSU;UC.
Repeatability: Two Repeats if Grade was D, F, NC, or NP

ARTICULATION, MAJOR, and CERTIFICATION INFORMATION:

AS Degree:	**Area**		Effective:	Inactive:
	E	Humanities	Fall 2025	
	H	Global Perspective and Environmental Literacy		
	L3	Arts and Humanities		
	E	Humanities	Fall 2011	Fall 2025
	H	Global Perspective and Environmental Literacy		
CSU GE:	**Transfer Area**		Effective:	Inactive:
	C2	Humanities	Fall 2011	
IGETC:	**Transfer Area**		Effective:	Inactive:
	3B	Humanities	Fall 2011	

CSU Transfer:	Transferable	Effective:	Fall 2011	Inactive:
UC Transfer:	Transferable	Effective:	Fall 2011	Inactive:

CID:

Certificate/Major Applicable:
Major Applicable Course

COURSE CONTENT

Student Learning Outcomes:
At the conclusion of this course, the student should be able to:
1. Describe the main sacred texts, diverse schools of thought, tenets, rituals and practices of Islam, and major religious offshoots of Islam
2. Describe the diverse global distribution of Muslims in the contemporary world
3. Examine references in contemporary media about Muslims and place these references into their historical-cultural context

Objectives:
At the conclusion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. List the major tenets and practices of Islam that are common to all sects and variants
2. Summarize and describe the persona, the career, and the historical sources for Muhammad
3. Outline the major features of the history of Islam
4. Name and describe the diverse theological and political movements and sects within Islam
5. Describe Islam's sectarian geographical distribution and trace its history

6. Give examples of and analyze Islam's portrayal in Western media
7. Describe examples of inner-Islamic conflict involving ethnic, national, linguistic and gender issues
8. Describe Islam's relationship with other World Religions, especially Judaism and Christianity
9. Give examples and assess contemporary conflicts in which Islam plays a role

Topics and Scope:

I. Religious Culture of Pre-Islamic Arabia
II. Muhammad's Profile Before 610
III. Muhammad's Meccan Prophetic Career, 610-622
IV. Muhammad's Successors--the Rashidun
V. The Qur'an
VI. The Hadith
VII. Sharia
VIII. The Five Pillars
IX. Shiite/Sunni Disputes
X. Development of Islamic Civilizations: Political and Religious
   A. Umayyads
   B. Abbasids
   C. Esoteric Movements--Sufis, etc.
XI. The Crusades
XII. The Mongols
XIII. The Pinnacle of Imperial Power
   A. The Safavid Empire
   B. The Moghul Empire
   C. The Ottoman Empire
XIV. The Arrival of the West and the Decline of Islamic Imperial Power
XV. Fundamentalist Movements such as:
   A. Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab
   B. Sayyid Qutb
   C. The Iranian Revolution
   D. Taliban
XVI. Muslims as minority immigrants
XVII. Orientalism
XVIII. Women in Islam

Assignment:

1. Weekly reading assignments of between (20-50 pages)
2. Writing assignments (2000-4000 words)
   a. Essays
   b. research projects
3. Written quizzes and/or exams (2 - 7)
4. Final examination
   a. Objective
   b. Essay
   c. Combination of objective and essay
5. Additional assignments as determined by instructor may include:
   a. Interview
   b. Museum visit(s)
   c. Field trip reports

d. Oral presentations
6. Additional in-class assignments as determined by instructor may include:
a. Analytical interpretations
b. Presentations
d. Discussions or debates

Methods of Evaluation/Basis of Grade:

Writing: Assessment tools that demonstrate writing skills and/or require students to select, organize and explain ideas in writing.

Writing assignments, essays, research projects	Writing 40 - 80%

Problem Solving: Assessment tools, other than exams, that demonstrate competence in computational or non-computational problem solving skills.

None	Problem solving 0 - 0%

Skill Demonstrations: All skill-based and physical demonstrations used for assessment purposes including skill performance exams.

None	Skill Demonstrations 0 - 0%

Exams: All forms of formal testing, other than skill performance exams.

Quizzes, exams, final	Exams 20 - 50%

Other: Includes any assessment tools that do not logically fit into the above categories.

Participation, additional assignments (if assigned)	Other Category 0 - 20%

Representative Textbooks and Materials:
Islam: The Straight Path. Esposito, John. 5th ed. Oxford University Press. 2016. (classic).
Islam and the Future of Tolerance: A Dialogue. Harris, Sam and Nawaz, Maajid. Harvard University Press. 2015. (classic).
Classical Islam: Collected Papers. Hillenbrand, Carole. Edinburgh University Press, 2021
The Historical Muhammad. Zeitlin, Irving. Polity Press. 2007. (classic).
A Manual of Hadith. 2nd Ed. Ali, Maulana Muhammad. The Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaat Lahore. 2001. (classic).
The Life of Muhammad: A Translation of Ibn Ishaq’s Sirat Rasul Allah. Guillaume, Alfred. Oxford University. 1955. (classic).
The Qur’an: A Historical-Critical Introduction. Sinai, Nicolai. Edinburgh University Press, 2017. (classic).
Covering Islam: How The Media and the Experts Determine How We See The Rest of the World. Said, Edward W. New York: Pantheon, 1981. (classic).
I Am Malala: The Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban. Yousafzai,

Malala and Lamb, Christian. New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2013. (classic).