CAS/GRS New Course Proposal Form

This form is to be used when proposing a new CAS or GRS course.

This form should be submitted to Senior Academic Administrator Peter Law (617-353-7243) as a PDF file to pgl@bu.edu. For further information or assistance, contact Associate Dean Susan Jackson (617-353-2410; sjackson@bu.edu) about CAS courses or Associate Dean Jeffrey Hughes (617-353-2690; hughes@bu.edu) about GRS courses.

DEPARTMENT OR PROGRAM: CAS Religion
COURSE NUMBER: RN 342

DATE SUBMITTED: 10/15/16

COURSE TITLE: Muslims in America
INSTRUCTOR(S): Kecia Ali

TO BE FIRST OFFERED: Sem./Year: Summer I/2017

SHORT TITLE: The “short title” appears in the course inventory, on the Link University Class Schedule, and on student transcripts and must be 15 characters maximum including spaces. It should be as clear as possible.

MUSLIMS IN

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This is the description that appears in the CAS and/or GRS Bulletin and The Link. It is the first guide that students have as to what the course is about. The description can contain no more than 40 words.

Surveys Muslim migration to the US, forced and voluntary, from the eighteenth century slave trade to the present. Considers integration, adaptation, and anti-Muslim prejudice. Explores how Muslims from diverse ethnic, racial, economic, and sectarian backgrounds live religious lives.

PREREQUISITES: Indicate "None" or list all elements of the prerequisites, clearly indicating "AND" or "OR" where appropriate. Here are three examples: "Junior standing or CAS ZN300 or consent of instructor"; "CAS ZN108 and CAS ZN203 and CAS PQ206; or consent of instructor"; "For SED students only."

1. State the prerequisites: None

2. Explain the need for these prerequisites: N/A

CREDITS: (check one)

☐ Half course: 2 credits
X Full course: 4 credits
☐ Variable: Please describe.
☐ Other: Please describe.
Provide a rationale for this number of credits, bearing in mind that for a CAS or GRS course to carry 4 credits, 1) it must normally be scheduled to meet at least 150 minutes/week, AND 2) combined instruction and assignments, as detailed in the attached course syllabus, must anticipate at least 12 total hours/week of student effort to achieve course objectives.

This class—structured for summer session in its initial offering—meets for the required number of minutes and carries an appropriate (adjusted) amount of reading, writing, and extracurricular site visitation.

DIVISIONAL STUDIES CREDIT: Is this course intended to fulfill Divisional Studies requirements?

☐ No.
☒ Yes. If yes, please indicate which division _______ HU_________ and explain why the course should qualify for Divisional Studies credit. Refer to criteria listed here and specify whether this course is intended for “short” or “expanded” divisional list.

In addition to meeting the basic aims of the humanities divisional requirements, the course meets our Religion-department criteria for humanities credit. It has at least ten pages of sustained, reflective, polished writing. The course involves careful attention to critical evaluation of sources.

HOW FREQUENTLY WILL THE COURSE BE OFFERED?

☐ Every semester ☐ Once a year, fall ☐ Once a year, spring ☐ Every other year
☒ Other: Explain:

This course was initially developed through a Summer Course Development grant. It will be taught during the summer in 2017 and 2018, and thereafter perhaps during the regular calendar year.

NEED FOR THE COURSE: Explain the need for the course and its intended impact. How will it strengthen your overall curriculum? Will it be required or fulfill a requirement for degrees/majors/minors offered by your department/program or for degrees in other departments/school/colleges? Which students are most likely to be served by this course? How will it contribute to program learning outcomes for those students? If you see the course as being of “possible” or “likely” interest to students in another departments/program, please consult directly with colleagues in that unit. (You must attach appropriate cognate comments using cognate comment form if this course is intended to serve students in specific other programs. See FURTHER INFORMATION below about cognate comment.)
The course, while not required for majors/minors in our department or other departments, will be of interest to our majors and minors as well as to students minoring in Muslim Studies (Humanities Track). Religion students, and those currently taking courses in religion, have expressed particular interest in those portions of courses addressing Muslims in America.

Note that for summer term, I am proposing only to offer the undergraduate portion of the course. When it is offered during the regular academic year, I would add a graduate component. This would be of interest to MTS/MDiv students focused on comparative religion, to GDRS graduate students working on religion in America, and to GDRS graduate students with interests in Islam and Muslims.

ENROLLMENT: How many undergraduate and/or graduate students do you expect to enroll in the initial offering of this course?

Summer term enrollments are difficult to predict. Perhaps 8-12.

CROSS-LISTING: Is this course to be cross-listed or taught with another course? If so, specify. Chairs/directors of all cross-listing units must co-sign this proposal on the signature line below.

OVERLAP:

1. Are there courses in the UIS Course Inventory (CC00) with the same number and/or title as this course?
   - X No.
   - □ Yes. If yes, any active course(s) with the same number or title as the proposed course will be phased out upon approval of this proposal.
    
    NOTE: A course number cannot be reused if a different course by that number has been offered in the past five years.

2. Relationship to other courses in your program or others: Is there any significant overlap between this course and others offered by your department/program or by others? (You must attach appropriate cognate comments using cognate comment form if this course might be perceived as overlapping with courses in another department/program. See FURTHER INFORMATION below.)

   My courses on Islam (RN 214) and Islam and the West (RN 344) touch on some of these same topics, and Islam and the West/Muslims in America share one book (Edward Curtis’s brief survey history). The overall perspectives, course objectives, and focus are quite different. A student could very profitably take more than one of these courses—indeed, could take all three without too much repetition.

FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT: What, if any, are the new or special facilities or equipment needs of the course (e.g., laboratory, library, instructional technology, consumables)? Are currently available facilities, equipment, and other resources adequate for the proposed course? (NOTE: Approval of proposed course does not imply commitment to new resources to support the course on the part of CAS.)

Current resources are adequate for the proposed course.
STAFFING: How will the staffing of this course, in terms of faculty and, where relevant, teaching fellows, affect staffing support for other courses? For example, are there other courses that will not be taught as often as now? Is the staffing of this course the result of recent or expected expansion of faculty? (NOTE: Approval of proposed course does not imply commitment to new resources to support the course on the part of CAS.)

I will teach this course initially as part of a Summer Term supplementary teaching role. When it becomes part of the regular course rotation, it will simply mean a rebalancing of other courses on Islam. Perhaps, for instance, we will return to offering RN 340/The Qur’an every other year instead of yearly.

BUDGET AND COST: What, if any, are the other new budgetary needs or implications related to the start-up or continued offering of this course? If start-up or continuation of the course will entail costs not already discussed, identify them and how you expect to cover them. (NOTE: Approval of proposed course does not imply commitment to new resources to support the course on the part of CAS.)

N/A

EXTERNAL PROGRAMS: If this course is being offered at an external program/campus, please provide a brief description of that program and attach a CV for the proposed instructor.

N/A

FURTHER INFORMATION THAT MUST BE ATTACHED IN ORDER FOR THIS PROPOSAL TO BE CONSIDERED:

• A complete week-by-week SYLLABUS with student learning objectives, readings, and assignments that reflects the specifications of the course described in this proposal; that is, appropriate level, credits, etc. (See guidelines on “Writing a Syllabus” on the Center for Excellence & Innovation in Teaching website.) Be sure that syllabus includes your expectations for academic honesty, with URL for pertinent undergraduate or GRS academic conduct code(s).

• Cognate comment from chairs or directors of relevant departments and/or programs. Use the form here under “Curriculum Review & Modification.” You can consult with Susan Jackson (CAS) or Jeffrey Hughes (GRS) to determine which departments or programs inside and outside of CAS would be appropriate.

DEPARTMENT CONTACT NAME AND POSITION:

DEPARTMENT CONTACT EMAIL AND PHONE:

DEPARTMENT APPROVAL: ____________________________________________ 10/18/16

Department Chair

__________________________________________

Other Department Chair(s) (for cross-listed courses)  Date
CAS/GRS CURRICULUM COMMITTEE APPROVAL:

☐ Approved Date: ________________
☐ Tabled Date: ________________
☐ Not Approved Date: ________________

Divisional Studies Credit:

☐ Endorsed
  ☐ HU
  ☐ MCS
  ☐ NS
  ☐ SS

☐ Not endorsed

______________________________
Curriculum Committee Chair Signature and Date

Comments:

PROVISIONAL APPROVAL REQUESTED for Semester/Year _______________________

______________________________
Dean of Arts & Sciences Signature and Date

Comments:

CAS FACULTY: Faculty Meeting Date: ________________ ☐ Approved ☐ Not Approved

______________________________
Curriculum Administrator Signature and Date

Comments:
Course description:

The 2016 presidential race brought the question of Muslim belonging in America, already fraught, into sharp relief: a hateful suggestion for a registry of all resident Muslims; proposals—supported by a staggering two-thirds of Republicans voters and one-third of Democrats, in some polls—to ban Muslims from entering the country; violent attacks directed against headscarf-wearing Muslim women and Sikh men presumed to be Muslim. These issues, and related ones about Muslim extremism, American racial attitudes in the era of Black Lives Matter, anti-immigrant sentiment, and religious pluralism, are on people’s minds.

Still, none of this is entirely new. Worry about a crypto-Muslim president began with Jefferson, not Obama. Muslim presence in the United States dates to the colonies that preceded it. This course aims to understand the present by exploring the past, from the eighteenth century to the twenty-first. We survey Muslim migration to the US, both forced and voluntary, from the transatlantic slave trade to early twentieth century immigrants from the collapsing Ottoman Empire and up through the influx of highly educated professionals with legal change post-1965, ending with contemporary debates over refugees. The course will consider Muslim integration, adaptation, and reception in the context of broader patterns of American history, including the treatment of other religious minorities (e.g., Mormons, Catholics, and Jews). It will introduce students to basic Muslim norms and the ways that these are lived out in diverse American contexts by Muslims from a wide array of racial, ethnic, economic, and sectarian backgrounds.

Objectives: By the end of the course, students should understand the history of Muslim presence in the United States, its connection to larger historical processes, the ways in which anti-Muslim sentiment both parallels and diverges from that experienced by other religious minority groups, and the diversity of Muslim religious practice. Students should be able to think about Islam in the categories offered by religious studies, and to write about Muslim individuals and communities in ways that bring together their own observations and analyses with relevant scholarship.

Contact details and office hour policies

Office: 145 Bay State Rd #402; phone: 617-353-4465; email: ka@bu.edu

Email is generally the best way to reach me outside of class. I typically respond within 24-48 hours. Before you email with a question:
1) check the syllabus and course website to see if the information is already there
2) consult Laura Portwood-Stacer’s basic guide “How to email your professor”
3) for significant substantive queries, plan to come to office hours

Office hours:  Mondays 11:30-1 or by appointment

You are welcome to call in during this period. I will answer the phone if I am not with another student. If I do not answer, you may leave a message or, better yet, email me giving your name and number and stating that you just tried to call. (This sort of message is an exception to the second and third email protocols described above, though a respectful salutation never goes amiss.) I will return calls if and when there is a break in the action.

Accessibility: My fourth-floor office can be reached through an elevator in 143 Bay State Rd, which has a wheelchair ramp entrance on Bay State Rd. Take the elevator to the fourth floor and come through the door separating 143/145 BSR. There is a smaller, non-wheelchair accessible elevator from 147 Bay State Rd; getting between 145/147 BSR requires navigating a few steps. If you require other accommodations, please let me know.

**Policies on religious accommodations, late work, and incompletes**

If you need accommodations for a religious observance, please notify me in writing as soon as possible so that we can make appropriate arrangements.

Late work: I am willing to grant a two-day grace period, no questions asked, for papers (except final research papers/presentations, because of grading deadlines). If you require more than this two-day extension, you will need to meet with me in person to discuss how you will complete the paper. *Please note that electronic submission of papers is not allowed.* If you anticipate difficulty in meeting deadlines due to other commitments or scheduling concerns, please contact me as far in advance of the due date as possible.

*Incompletes are never desirable but sometimes necessary.* Speak to me as early as possible if you think you may need to take an incomplete.

**Academic integrity, plagiarism, and independent work**

Every student is expected to be familiar with and comply with the BU policy on academic conduct, posted at: [http://www.bu.edu/academics/](http://www.bu.edu/academics/). *If you have any questions about how the policy applies to work for this course, please ask.* Please note that sharing your papers or work with other students without the instructor’s permission is as significant an offense as borrowing and making use of another student’s work.

The conduct code discusses plagiarism and source usage on pp. 12-17. Other helpful resources about proper use of sources can be found many places online and should be consulted before you begin work on your papers. Dartmouth College’s page on source usage is a good place to begin: [http://www.dartmouth.edu/~writing/sources/sources-citation.html](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~writing/sources/sources-citation.html) or in PDF at [http://www.dartmouth.edu/~writing/docs/FINAL%20Sources%202011-12.pdf](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~writing/docs/FINAL%20Sources%202011-12.pdf). You might also find useful Purdue University Online Writing Lab’s guide to “Quoting, Paraphrasing, and Summarizing” ([http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r_quotprsum.html](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r_quotprsum.html)).
I prefer Chicago-style citation, but notes may follow any common style so long as you are consistent.


You are welcome to make an appointment or come during office hours to discuss work in progress. If you know you will want to discuss a paper, consider making an appointment early in the term for the week before the paper is due.

**Disabilities**

In accordance with University policy (see [http://www.bu.edu/disability/policies/index.html](http://www.bu.edu/disability/policies/index.html)), a student who requires accommodation for a documented disability of any type should meet with me as soon as possible to discuss appropriate modifications to course requirements or procedures. I strive to make my classroom disability-friendly. The more clearly I understand what will be helpful, the better I can do that.

If you do not have a documented disability but know that some approaches to learning work well, or poorly, for you, please feel free to discuss with me in person, by email, or over the phone. We may be able to arrive at reasonable adjustments to standard practices.

*Note: If you wish to use a laptop to take notes during class, please see me to discuss it.*

**Reading, watching, and listening assignments**

*It is vital that you come to class having read the assigned texts, as classroom lectures and discussions will build on this material, not repeat it. Some weeks will have videos or audio for watching/listening. Please be sure to do this work in advance. On occasion, we will watch short video clips and work with primary text handouts in class.*

*Bring your books/any printouts to the class session where we’ll discuss them.*

The following books are available for purchase and on reserve or available as electronic resources at Mugar library:

**Books:**


Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad, *Becoming American? The Forging of Arab and Muslim Identity in Pluralist America* (Baylor University Press, 2011) (or online through BU library)

Supplementary readings are posted on Blackboard and/or available as online library resources. Some may wish to buy the *Cambridge Companion to American Islam* (eds. Omid Safi and Juliane Hammer [New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013]), though it can be found online via BU library ([CCAI](http://www.bu.edu/disability/policies/index.html))
ASSIGNMENTS/GRADING

Attendance, including at Friday site visits and an independent visit to a mosque, is a vital part of this course. If you miss more than two class sessions, your grade is subject to significant deduction. Participation in class discussions and exercises accounts for a significant portion of our learning. Short reading quizzes will be given once weekly or more, and figured into the participation grade. (Attendance/participation: 15%)

Other assignments include: media/source analysis project, a presentation with paper, a site visit paper, and a final exam.

Evaluating sources Evaluating print and screen media, online sources (e.g., Wikipedia) and print/scholarly sources (books, scholarly articles, and professionally written encyclopedias) is challenging, particularly around contentious topics. After we’ve devoted some in-class time to tactics and strategies, students will choose sources to analyze. A 3-4 page comparison/analysis is due on 6/7. (Source evaluation paper/presentation: 15%)

American Muslim figure presentation and report A class presentation on a Muslim-American figure, with a five-page paper setting that figure in political, historical, and/or literary/cultural context. (25%)

Site visit paper A five-page paper comparing two (or three) site visits and relating those experiences to our readings. (25%)

Final exam A cumulative exam at the scheduled university time. (20%)

Week 1

W 5/24 Intro: overview of Muslims in America
F 5/26 Muslims and slavery in the Americas


Week 2

Islam in Black America

W 5/31 Nation of Islam
Site visit paper guidelines handed out.

F 6/2 Site Visit 1 (Mosque for the Praising of Allah, Dorchester [tentative])
Note that this is a BU Monday, which may necessitate tweaking the schedule

Readings: Curtis, Muslims in America, Chapter 2; Dawn-Marie Gibson and Jamillah Karim, Women of the Nation: Between Black Protest and Sunni Islam (New York University Press,
2014), Chapter 4 (pp. 180-226). Primary text selections from Elijah Muhammad, *Message to the Black Man in America* and Soraya Tate, *Little X*.

**Week 3**

M 6/5  Migrants and migration
W 6/7  American and sectarian identity

*Source evaluation presentations/papers due*

F 6/9  Site Visit 2 (ISBCC, Roxbury [tentative])


**Week 4**

M 6/12  Family and community
W 6/14  Marriage: Case studies
F 6/16  Site Visit 3 (BUMC Friday prayer [tentative])

Readings: Curtis, Chapter 4; Selections from Kathleen M. Moore, *The Unfamiliar Abode: Islamic Law in the United States and Britain* (Oxford University Press, 2011), Chapters 1 (pp. 29-49) and 5 (pp. 129-152); Selections from Debra Majeed, *Polygyny: When African American Muslim Women Share Their Husbands* (University Press of Florida, 2015).

**Week 5**

M 6/19  Muslims and the Media

*Site visit papers due at start of class*

W 6/21  Islamophobia

F 6/23  (Virtual) Site Visit (Women’s Mosque, LA or Toronto Unity Mosque [tentative])

Readings: Curtis, *Muslims in America*, Chapter 5; Haddad, *Becoming American*, Chapter 3 (pp. 67-96); Selections from Moustafa Bayoumi, *This Muslim American Life: Dispatches from the War on Terror* (New York University Press, 2015); Nabil Echchaibi, “Muslims and the Media” (*CCAI*).

NOTE: Eid is predicted for Sunday 6/25/17

**Week 6**

M 6/26  Evaluating Eid, considering authority
W 6/28  Presentations on American Muslim figures

*Written reports on American Muslim Figures due*
F 6/30 Wrap-up


Final exam follows BU Summer Term schedule

Note: it is too early to confirm for site visits. Possible sites include the BU Muslim Students Association or BU Medical Center Friday prayers; Dorchester's Mosque for the Praising of Allah; the Islamic Society of Boston in Roxbury; the Islamic Center of Boston in Wayland; and the queer-inclusive, gender-egalitarian Unity Mosque in Toronto, which livestreams its prayer services, and with the LA Women's Mosque, which also posts its services online after a delay.