

JESUS & MUHAMMAD

(Lives, Images & Legacies)

REL 273 (Fall 2021)

TTH 2:45-4:00pm (Library Studio D)

Course Description

A comparative study of the ways that both Jesus and Muhammad have been conceptualized and memorialized in the Christian, Muslim, and secular traditions. Sources examined will include the Christian New Testament, the Qu'ran, writings from later Christian and Muslim traditions, film, and literature.

THE ROADMAP

(SEE MOODLE FOR CALENDAR OF READINGS & ASSIGNMENTS)

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Accommodation

The college welcomes requests for accommodations related to disability and will grant those that are determined to be reasonable and maintain the integrity of a program or curriculum. To make such a request or to begin a conversation about a possible request, please contact the Office of Academic Access and Disability Resources, which is located in the Center for Teaching and Learning in the E.H. Little Library: Beth Bleil, Director, bebleil@davidson.edu, 704-894-2129; or Alysén Beaty, Assistant Director, albeaty@davidson.edu, 704-894-2939. It is best to submit accommodation requests within the drop/add period; however, requests can be made at any time in the semester. Please keep in mind that accommodations are not retroactive.

Let us know if you feel like you're falling behind or encountering difficulties that affect your performance. Davidson can be a high-stress environment; if you think you're getting in an unhealthy place and not able to function up to your normal level, please seek out one of your professors (Foley or Zamir, that is).

Textbooks – all other readings will be posted on Moodle.

Werner H. Kelber, [*Mark's Story of Jesus*](#) (Philadelphia, Fortress P, 1979)

Course Requirements

- **READING REVIEW** (10%) – due Sep 18 (see Moodle for details)
- **MIDTERM** (15%) – Oct 7
- **FINAL EXAM** (30%) – Though encompassing of themes persistent throughout the semester, it will focus primarily on the second half of our study.
- **DIALOG Exercise** (Paper 10%, 4-5 pages, Recorded Dialog with a classmate 5%) – You may turn in the paper anytime during the semester, but no later than Nov 23. A 10-minute recorded dialog will be due on Dec 1. On Dec 2nd and 3rd you and your dialog partner will have a scheduled Zoom conference with the instructors on this assignment. Time to be determined later.
- **PARTICIPATION**
 - MOODLE FORUM Entries (20%): Each Moodle Forum entry will receive a completion grade instead of an evaluative grade. If, however, your forum entry is minimalist, it will not earn the “complete” status.
 - IN-CLASS CONTRIBUTION throughout the semester (10%)

Learning Outcomes

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

1. give a general account of the life of Jesus from a non-sectarian or secular perspective.
2. articulate the major ways in which the Christian tradition—in its different historical contexts—has understood and given expression to the meaning of Jesus' life and ministry.
3. articulate the major ways in which the Muslim tradition—in its different historical contexts—has understood and given expression to the Prophet's life and his teachings.
4. explain the various ways in which the Christian tradition, after the 7th century, understood the Prophet and his significance for Christian understandings of faith and history.
5. explain the various ways in which the Muslim tradition, from its inception, understood Jesus and his significance for Muslim understandings of its faith and history.
6. describe the various issues that have arisen for both Christian and Muslim believers during the post-Enlightenment period in using modern secular discourses to describe and assess the significance of Jesus and the Prophet, respectively.
7. highlight how the two figures and their images compare and contrast with each other and identify and reflect upon questions that emerge when these two figures are juxtaposed.
8. articulate the shifting understandings of these two figures in the contemporary west and the Muslim world and explain the historical and intellectual trends that undergird these shifts.

REL 273: Schedule of Classes and Assignments (unless otherwise designated, daily class materials can be found on Moodle)

<i>Date</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Focus</i>	<i>Readings</i>	<i>Assignment Due</i>
T, 8/24	Intro	—	—	
Th, 8/26	Abraham	Abraham in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam	• Judaism: Gen. 11:27–12:20; 15:1–18:15; 21:1–20; 22:1–19; 24:1–25:27 • Christianity: Gal. 4:21–31; Romans 4:1–25 • Who Was (And Is) Abraham?	Moodle Study Questions (if there are any)
T, 8/31	Jesus and his teachings	The Modern Quest for the Historical Jesus	• The Historical Jesus Debate: An Overview • Jesus as Peasant Cynic Sage • Jesus as Apocalyptic Prophet	Moodle Study Questions (if there are any)
Th, 9/2	Images of Jesus in Antiquity	Paul	• Romans 1:1–5:21; Philippians 2:1–11 • Christ as Angel Incarnate • The Grace of Christ as Incongruous Gift • Paul’s Typological Understanding of God’s Grace	Moodle Study Questions (if there are any)
T, 9/7	Images of Jesus in Antiquity	Mark	• Mark 1:1–8:21 • Werner Kelber, <i>Mark’s Story of Jesus</i> 11–42 (not on Moodle; available in College Store)	Moodle Study Questions (if there are any)
Th, 9/9	Images of Jesus in Antiquity	Mark	• Mark 8:22–13:37 • Werner Kelber, <i>Mark’s Story of Jesus</i> 43–70	Moodle Study Questions (if there are any)
T, 9/14	Images of Jesus in Antiquity	Mark	• Mark 14:1–16:8 • Werner Kelber, <i>Mark’s Story of Jesus</i> 71–96	Moodle Study Questions (if there are any)

<i>Date</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Focus</i>	<i>Readings</i>	<i>Assignment Due</i>
Th, 9/16	Images of Jesus in Antiquity	Jesus as the Logos	- John 1:1–18 - The Beginnings of Christology - Jesus as "the Word made Flesh" in the Gospel of John - Athanasius, <i>Against the Arians</i> 3.29–34; - Theodore of Mopsuestia <i>On the Incarnation</i> VII	Reading Review
T, 9/21	Muhammad and his teachings	Before the Prophet: Muhammad in Islamic Myth	Islam: An Islamic Story of Abraham - Selections from Sayyid Ali Naqi Naqvi, <i>A History of Islam</i> - Selections from <i>The Life of Muhammad</i> - Selections from <i>Muhammad</i> by Martin Lings	Moodle Study Questions (if there are any)
Th, 9/23	Muhammad and his teachings	Biography & Teachings: The Meccan Period	- Watch (film, youtube): <i>THE MESSAGE</i>, (1976), until mark 1 hour and 5 minutes, i.e., emigration to Medina. - Isra-Mi'raj Account - Selections from the Qur'an - Hadith of Gabriel	Moodle Study Questions (if there are any)
T, 9/28	Muhammad and his teachings	The Medinan Period	- Watch (film, youtube): <i>THE MESSAGE</i> (1976), the rest. "Last Sermon of the Prophet" "Constitution of Medina" <i>In Light of the Heavens</i> (selection) <i>The Spiritual Teachings of the Prophet</i> <i>Moral Teachings of the Prophet</i> <i>Sayings of Muhammad</i>	Moodle Study Questions (if there are any)
Th, 9/30	FALL BREAK	—	—	Moodle Study Questions (if there are any)

<i>Date</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Focus</i>	<i>Readings</i>	<i>Assignment Due</i>
T, 10/5	Muhammad in Early and Middle Period	The Prophet in the Early and Middle Period	- Names of the Prophet - In POETRY: RUMI, Burdah, Madih Poetry - In ART: <i>Hilya</i> (examples) & Christiane Gruber, “Introduction” in <i>The Praiseworthy One</i> - In MUSIC: Al-Firdaus Ensemble, Qawwali - THE PROPHET’S CITY, FAMILY & HIS PILGRIMS - In TEXTS—opening - Tarif Khalidi, <i>Images of Muhammad</i> (selections) - Annemarie Schimmel, <i>And Muhammad is His Messenger</i> (selections)	Moodle Study Questions (if there are any)
Th, 10/7	Midterm	—	—	Moodle Study Questions (if there are any)
T, 10/12	Jesus in Early and Mediaeval Islam	—	- Kazemi or BRILL— Jesus in the Quran - Tarif Khalidi, <i>The Muslim Jesus</i> (selections) - Donaldson, “Al-Yaqubi’s Chapter about Jesus Christ”/ <i>Qisas al-Anbiya</i> (selections) <i>Jesus in the Shia Traditions</i> (selection) - WATCH: Nasheed [https://bit.ly/36i1FJR]	Moodle Study Questions (if there are any)
Th, 10/14	Muhammad in Medieval Christianity	—	- John Turan, “European Accounts of Muhammad’s Life” <i>Faces of Muhammad</i> (selection) <i>Medieval Latin Lives of Muhammad</i> (selection) - Dante, <i>Inferno</i> canto xxviii (lines 1-36) in <i>The Divine Comedy</i>	Moodle Study Questions (if there are any)
T, 10/19	Lab, Thinking-through Exercise (I)	[Comparison and its Challenges]	- Conclusion” from Buddha, Jesus and Muhammad “Conclusion” from The Four Wise Men	Moodle Study Questions (if there are any)

<i>Date</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Focus</i>	<i>Readings</i>	<i>Assignment Due</i>
Th, 10/21	Jesus in the Early and Central Middle Ages	Jesus as Model for the Cloistered Monastic Life	- Athanasius' <i>Life of St. Antony</i> (selection) - St. Jerome, <i>Letter 14, To Heliodorus</i> - The Rule of St. Benedict (a short introduction) - The Life of a Benedictine Monk - From Epic to Romance - Jesus as Mother	Moodle Study Questions (if there are any)
T, 10/26	Jesus in the Later Middle Ages and the Reformation	Jesus as Model for Life in the World	- St. Bonaventure, <i>Life of St. Francis</i> (selections) - Martin Luther, "Two Kinds of Righteousness"	Moodle Study Questions (if there are any)
Th, 10/28	DAY OFF			Moodle Study Questions (if there are any)
T, 11/2	Jesus in the Early Modern Period and the Enlightenment		- Video: Bart Ehrman, "Scholars Look at the Gospels" - Jefferson's Criteria for including Gospel Passages in his "Life and Teachings fo Jesus" File	Moodle Study Questions (if there are any)
Th, 11/4	Jesus in the Modern Period	Jesus in Black and White	- David Morgan, "The Masculinity of Jesus in Popular Religious Art"; - Kelly Brown Douglas, "The Black Christ"	Moodle Study Questions (if there are any)
T, 11/9	The Prophet in the Modern Period (I)	New Themes, New Images, Controversies	- WATCH: <i>Muhammad: Messenger of God</i> (2015) - on youtube - Tarif Khalidi, <i>Images of Muhammad</i> (selections) - Schimmel, "The 'Muhammadan Path' and the New Interpretation of the Prophet's Life" in <i>And Muhammad is His Messenger</i>	Moodle Study Questions (if there are any)

<i>Date</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Focus</i>	<i>Readings</i>	<i>Assignment Due</i>
Th, 11/11	The Prophet in the Modern Period (II)	Satanic Verses, Cartoons, Blasphemies	• Watch (documentary): <i>Muhammad: Legacy of a Prophet</i> (2002) - A PBS Documentary • <i>Muhammad: His Life Based on the Earliest Sources (selections)</i>	Moodle Study Questions (if there are any)
T, 11/16	Towards a Synthesis	Legacy	• F.E. Peters, “A New Dawn: The Aftermath, The Legacy” in <i>Jesus and Muhammad</i> • Tim Winter, “Jesus and Muhammad: New Convergences” • David Kerr, “Muhammad: Prophet of Liberation” in <i>Studies in World Christianity</i> • Roothan, “The “Shamanic” Travels of Jesus & Muhammad”	Moodle Study Questions (if there are any)
Th, 11/18	Lab	The Future/Eschatology		Moodle Study Questions (if there are any)
T, 11/23	Conclusion	An Open Conversation		Dialogue Exercise Paper