**Syllabus**

**ST5550 Christian Encounter with Islam**

Professor: Dr. Craig A. Sheppard

2 credit hours

**Course Description**

This course introduces the history, theology, sacred writings, and practice of Islam, including the variation of beliefs within the different branches of Islam. It will also explore both historic and contemporary Christian thought and practice regarding evangelical ministry to Muslims.

**Course goals**

1. To introduce the student to Islamic Worldview, including its history, theology, culture, traditions, beliefs, and practices.
2. To equip the student to think Biblically and critically about Muslim theology and winsomely engage with Muslims and, by example, other religions.
3. To elicit a greater love for our Muslim neighbors and remove fear or false stereotypes about them as people in our global community.
4. To familiarize the student with the various divisions within the Islam, and current trends in Muslim ministry and thus enable the student to formulate a Biblical approach to ministering to Muslims.

**Course Assignments**

1. **Read all assigned books and articles**
   1. **Books:** 
      1. (Portions of) The Qur’an, translated by M. A. S. Abdel Haleem, Oxford World’s Classics. Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2008.
         1. Kindle version: <https://amzn.to/2ZAZYqS>
      2. White, James R. *What Every Christian Needs to Know About the Qur’an*. Bloomington, MN: Bethany House, 2013. [~300pp]
         1. Kindle version: <https://amzn.to/3pRDSLS>
      3. Chapman, Colin. *Cross and Crescent: Responding to the Challenge of Islam*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2008. [~400pp]
         1. Kindle version: <https://amzn.to/3CyQnQ1>
      4. Riddell, Peter G. and Peter Cotterell. *Islam in Context: Past, Present, and Future*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2003. [~220 pp.]
         1. Kindle version: <https://amzn.to/3BxVfUa>
   2. **Articles** (Insider Movement Proponents)
      1. Rick Brown, “Biblical Muslims,” International Journal of Frontier Missiology, 24:2, Su 2007, pp. 65-74. (accessible on canvas, under “articles”)
      2. Rebecca Lewis, “The Integrity of the Gospel and Insider Movements,” International Journal of Frontier Missiology, 27:1, Sp 2010, pp. 41-48. (accessible on canvas, under “articles”)
   3. **Articles** (Insider Movement Critic)
      1. David B. Garner, “*High Stakes: Insider Movement Hermeneutics and the Gospel,” Themelios 37.2 (2012): 249–74.* (accessible on canvas, under “articles”)
   4. Note: A form to report the completion of these readings will also appear on the final exam.  The assigned articles are provided online (canvas) on the “files” tab. If you have any problem accessing these articles, please email me at [csheppard@rts.edu](mailto:csheppard@rts.edu).
2. **Submit a Research Paper**
   1. Write a research paper (minimum 3500 words, ~15pp, excluding footnotes) on one of the following topics:
      1. **Epistemology:** Compare the Bible and the Qur’an (teachings, inspiration, origins, interpretation, etc.)
      2. **Soteriology:** Compare Islamic and Reformed views on heaven and hell, rewards and punishment.
      3. **Soteriology:** Compare and contrast Muslim and Reformed views on sin, atonement, and salvation.
      4. Compare and contrast Muslim and Reformed views on the Theology Proper (who is God).
      5. Analyze the notion (possibility and appropriateness) of cooperation with Muslims on social issues (abortion, religious freedom, medical care, battling etc.)
      6. Compare and contrast the different divisions within Islam (Sunni and Shiite, Traditionalist and Modernists, etc.) and implications and strategies for ministry.
   2. This paper should be marked by a solid introduction and conclusion(s), a clearly-stated thesis/outline/structure (methodology), solid academic argumentation and analysis, and a quality writing style with proper citation of multiple sources (5-10 minimum). This is **due Friday, January 21, 2022**, 11:59pm Central Timeand **must be** **submitted on Canvas in MS Word or Pages format (NOT .pdf). Make sure you include a Bibliography**.
3. **Complete the final exam on Canvas**, which will be a short-answer and essay exam, covering material discussed in class and all reading assignments. This final must be completed by **Saturday, February 4, 2022**, 11:59pm.
4. **Participate in Class Discussions**

**Grading**

The final course grade will be assigned according to the distribution indicated below, and in conjunction with the RTS grading scale. Late assignments are subject to a penalty of 10% per week late (i.e., received on late day 1-7 will receive a 10% deduction; late day 8-14, 20%, etc.)

Breakdown of Semester Grade:

Class Attendance and Participation **5%**

Reading Assignments: **25%**

Research Paper **30%**

Final Exam **40%**

**Contacting the Instructor**

Please contact the instructor by email at csheppard@rts.edu. Please do not contact me via Canvas.