Course Syllabus
EMT 3101/6101HF Biography and Thought: The Life of Muhammad
Emmanuel College
Toronto School of Theology
Fall 2019

Instructor Information
Instructor: Nevin Reda
Office Location: EM 215
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E-mail: nevin.el.tahry@utoronto.ca
Office Hours: Thursdays, 11:00 am – 12:00 pm or by appointment (not during reading week)

Course Identification
Course Number: EMT3101/6101HF
Course Format: In-class
Course Name: Biography and Thought: The Life of Muhammad
Course Location: EM 205
Class Times: Wednesdays 11:00 am – 1:00 pm
Prerequisites: None

Course Description
This seminar studies the life of the Prophet Muhammad as it is presented in the earliest biographical and historical Muslim accounts. It introduces the sira and hadith literatures, in addition to classical and modern critical methods used to determine their authenticity and historical reliability. Topics include the first revelations, emigration from Mecca, the Constitution of Medina, and succession to Muhammad’s leadership. Students will learn about Muslim concepts of prophethood, the significance of the prophet in the legal-ethical and mystical traditions, and women in hadith scholarship. They will study the life of Muhammad and relate it to his spiritual as well as temporal experience to explore modern-day concerns. Class participation: 15%, Minor Research Paper: 35 %, Major research paper: 50 %.

Course Resources
Required Course Texts/Bibliography

Optional Readings:


Additional Bibliography (for book reviews)

   OR

**Course Website(s)**

- Quercus: [https://q.utoronto.ca/](https://q.utoronto.ca/)

This course uses Quercus for its course website. To access it, go to the UofT Quercus login page at [https://q.utoronto.ca/](https://q.utoronto.ca/) and login using your UTORid and password. Once you have logged in to Quercus using your UTORid and password, look for the My Courses module, where you’ll find the link to the website for all your Quercus-based courses. (Your course registration with ACORN gives you access to the course website in Quercus.) Information for students about using Quercus can be found at: [https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10701](https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10701). Students who have trouble accessing Quercus should ask Wanda Chin for further help.

**Course Learning Objectives/Outcomes**

**EMT 3101 Learning Outcomes**

Students who have successfully completed the course will:

**Religious Faith and Heritage**

- Demonstrate knowledge of religious heritage, and articulate clearly their own theological positions (as related to pastoral practices).
- Interpret scripture and religious texts using a variety of methods, sources, and norms.
- Identify and respect the diversity of theological viewpoints and practices within their religious tradition.

**Culture and Context**

- Demonstrate critical understanding for one’s area of specialization of the relationship between faith practices and cultural contexts.
• Give evidence of critical self-awareness with regard to their own—and others’—faith perspectives and practices of educational ministry.

Practices of Area of Specialization
• Demonstrate knowledge of theories and practices relevant to leadership in their own area of specialization.

EMT 6101 Learning Outcomes
Students who have successfully completed the course will demonstrate:

Knowledge of the area of concentration
• Comprehension of significant aspects of Muhammad’s life in the context of seventh century Arabia.
• Comprehension of significant aspects of the history and sources of hadith

Ability with Scholarly Tools and Skills
• Competence in the use of a library and in the construction of a bibliography
• Familiarity with pertinent web-based resources and skills.
• Competence in the following skills:
  o Clear and effective communication in both oral and written forms;
  o The construction of a logical argument;
  o The making of informed judgments on complex issues;
  o The use of standard conventions of style for scholarly writing.

Ability to carry out specialized research
• Attained competence in the area of Muhammad’s biography and a basic familiarity with hadith
• Gained an understanding of the nature and processes of research
• Developed a critical awareness of the nature and authenticity of the sources on Muhammad’s life and the difficulty of separating hagiography from history in studying biographies of founders of world religions.
• Attained a basic familiarity with the methodologies of hadith criticism in classical and contemporary scholarship.

Evaluation

Each student should know from the outset that this course requires regular attendance, daily reading, both written and oral assignments, and class participation. For the Emmanuel College Attendance Policy, see below.
Requirements

The final grade for the course will be based on evaluations in three areas.

(1) **Preparation, participation and reading (15%)** – In addition to participating in the regular activity of the class, including the reading of the required texts, students are expected to devote two hours or more outside of class for every hour of classroom instruction. Use this time to prepare the required readings and primary texts in advance. Always be ready to provide a brief summary of each reading, list the main points and explain how the readings relate to one another. Your class participation mark will reflect your participation in classroom discussions and one oral presentations on your book reviews or minor research paper. Presentation dates will be determined on the first day of class. Although not mandatory, you are also highly encouraged to attend the writing workshops (see below).


Students in the 3000 level course have the option of writing a minor research paper on the topic of the prophet Muhammad’s leadership through modern eyes in lieu of the two book reviews. This assignment is a foray into interdisciplinary studies, exploring the biography of the prophet Muhammad in conjunction with leadership theories from the realm of business management. Topics will be handed out on the first day of class. Your paper should be 7-8 pages in double-spaced 12 pt Times New Roman font.

(3) **Final paper (50%)** – A substantial scholarly research of 15-18 pages in double-spaced 12 pt Times New Roman font. Footnotes and bibliography should consistently follow *Chicago Manual of Style* (available on-line through the library website) Your paper must include the following:

- **Title page.** This includes the paper title, the student’s name, the course code and name, the name of the instructor and the date of submission.
- **Introduction.** The most important part of the Introduction is the thesis statement, setting out in the briefest possible form the exact proposition or hypothesis which the paper will demonstrate. The Introduction also provides the context necessary to show why the paper is important. To this end it identifies the research question and describes its broader setting in academic research. It gives attention to previous enquiry and the state of the scholarship on this issue, such as relevant secondary literature. The Introduction should also include a description of the project as a whole (i.e. a one-paragraph road map outlining what you plan to do).
  If you want, you can also include a brief section on method, for example, describing the relevant primary literature and the methods to be used for interpreting it.
  Your introduction should not exceed one or two pages, depending on the length of your paper.
  Some students like to write two or three paragraphs: one with the thesis statement, one with the road map, and one on the state of the scholarship.
- **Exposition.** The main body of the paper is the clarification, development, and demonstration of the thesis statement, using authoritative evidence. The exposition is typically organized as parts of an
argument. The interrelationship of the parts of the exposition, and the direct relevance of each part of the exposition to the thesis statement, should be clear to the reader.

**Conclusion.** The thesis statement should be recapitulated, the demonstration should be summarized, the limitations of the demonstration and the remaining uncertainties should be acknowledged, and the implications of the study for the faith community, the wider scholarly community, and/or the world should be set forth.

**Bibliography.** Books, articles, and other sources that have been used must be listed. Primary and secondary literature should always be distinguished.

(This description is derived from the TST Basic Degree thesis requirements with some modifications.)

**Grading System**

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Range</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>90-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>85-89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>80-84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>77-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>73-76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>70-72</td>
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| Failure

Please see the appropriate handbook for more details about the grading scale and non-numerical grades (e.g. SDF, INC, etc).

**Due Dates**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>15 %</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor Research</td>
<td>35 %</td>
<td>Oct. 16&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; @ 11:00 am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major Research Paper</td>
<td>50 %</td>
<td>Nov. 27&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; @ 11:00 am</td>
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**Submission Guidelines**

Please submit your assignments in both paper and electronic formats by the due dates/times. For electronic submissions, please email them to nevin.el.tahry@utoronto.ca. If you do not receive a response acknowledging that I have received your assignment within 24 hours, then please resend, since, I will probably not have received it.

**Writing Workshops**

To assist you write better reflection papers, essays, and research papers, I have organized one-hour, weekly writing workshops on Wednesdays 9:00-10:00 am, beginning with September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2019 and ending with November 27<sup>th</sup>, 2019. There will be no writing workshop during reading week. They will be held in the electronic classroom over in the E.J. Pratt Library, room 306, across from the elevator on the 3rd floor at Pratt. In the past, students who have attended writing workshops have generally done better in their writing assignments. You are highly encouraged to attend.
Late work. Students are expected to hand in assignments by the above dates. Penalty for late assignments is 2% reduction in mark per day of lateness for a maximum of one week, after which assignments will no longer be accepted.

This penalty is not applied to students with medical or compassionate difficulties; students facing such difficulties are kindly requested to consult with their faculty adviser or basic degree director, who should make a recommendation on the matter to the instructor. The absolute deadline for the course is one week after the last class. Students who for exceptional reasons (e.g., a death in the family or a serious illness) are unable to complete work by this date may request an extension (SDF = “standing deferred”) beyond the term. An SDF must be requested from the registrar’s office in the student’s college of registration no later than the last day of classes in which the course is taken. The SDF, when approved, will have a mutually agreed upon deadline that does not extend beyond the conclusion of the following term. If a student has not completed work but has not been granted an SDF, a final mark will be submitted calculating a zero for work not submitted.

Late work (Graduate). The prima facie deadline for the completion of work in a course is the last day of the examination week for the trimester in which the course is taken. Students are expected to meet the course deadlines of the instructor offering the course and are advised to plan their research projects accordingly. Students who find themselves unable to meet deadlines for completing coursework can, under certain conditions, receive extensions for completing the work after the dates set by the college in which the course is offered.

The authority to grant an extension for the completion of work in a course beyond the original TST or college deadline (whichever is earlier) for that course rests with the student’s college Graduate Director, not the instructor of the course. Nevertheless, the instructor’s signature is required for course extension requests to be processed. Students will petition their college Graduate Director for extensions, using a standard form provided by TST on its website. See Section 7.11 of the Conjoint Graduate Degree Handbook.

Course grades. Consistently with the policy of the University of Toronto, course grades submitted by an instructor are reviewed by a committee of the instructor’s college before being posted. Course grades may be adjusted where they do not comply with University grading policy (http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/grading.htm) or college grading policy.

Policies

Accessibility. Students with a disability or health consideration, whether temporary or permanent, are entitled to accommodation. Students must register at the University of Toronto’s Accessibility Services offices; information is available at http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca/. The sooner a student seeks accommodation, the quicker we can assist.

Plagiarism. Students submitting written material in courses are expected to provide full documentation for sources of both words and ideas in footnotes or endnotes. Direct quotations should be placed within quotation marks. (If small changes are made in the quotation, they should be indicated by appropriate punctuation such as brackets and ellipses, but the quotation still counts as a direct quotation.) Failure to document borrowed material constitutes plagiarism, which is a serious breach of academic, professional, Christian and Islamic ethics. An instructor who discovers evidence of student plagiarism is not permitted to deal with the situation individually but is required to report it to his or her
head of college or delegate according to the TST Basic Degree Handbook and the Graduate program Handbooks (linked from http://www.tst.edu/academic/resources-forms/handbooks and the University of Toronto Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/AssetFactory.aspx?did=4871. A student who plagiarizes in this course will be assumed to have read the document “Avoidance of plagiarism in theological writing” published by the Graham Library of Trinity and Wycliffe Colleges http://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/Library_Archives/Theological_Resources/Tools/Guides/plag.htm.

**Other academic offences.** TST students come under the jurisdiction of the University of Toronto Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm.

**Back-up copies.** Please make back-up copies of essays before handing them in.

**Obligation to check email.** At times, the course instructor may decide to send out important course information by email. To that end, all students in conjoint programs are required to have a valid utoronto email address. Students must have set up their utoronto email address which is entered in the ACORN system. Information is available at www.utorid.utoronto.ca. The course instructor will not be able to help you with this. 416-978-HELP and the Help Desk at the Information Commons can answer questions you may have about your UTORid and password. **Students should check utoronto email regularly** for messages about the course. **Forwarding** your utoronto.ca email to a Hotmail, Gmail, Yahoo or other type of email account is not advisable. In some cases, messages from utoronto.ca addresses sent to Hotmail, Gmail or Yahoo accounts are filtered as junk mail, which means that emails from your course instructor may end up in your spam or junk mail folder.

**Email communication with the course instructor.** The instructor aims to respond to email communications from students in a timely manner. **All email communications from students should be sent from a utoronto email address.** Email communications from other email addresses are not secure, and also the instructor cannot readily identify them as being legitimate emails from students. The instructor is not obliged to respond to email from non-utoronto addresses.

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**Course Schedule (may be subject to change)**

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>1st Sep. 11</th>
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**Introduction**

**Required Readings:**


2 Sep. 18

**The Sources**

Required Readings:
4. Quran 96 (Recite).

Optional Readings:
5. Quran 97 (Power, Fate), Quran 73 (The Enshrouded One); 74 (The Cloaked One).

3 Sep. 25

**Context**

Required Readings:

Optional Readings:

4 Oct. 2

**Muhammad in Mecca**

Required Readings:


**Optional Readings:**

6. Quran 53 (The Star); 80 (He frowned); 2:30–39.

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### 5 Oct. 9

**Prophets and Messengers**

**Required Readings:**

2. Matthias Zahniser, “Messenger,” in *EQ* (available on-line through the library website)
3. P. E. Walker, “Wilāya (2. In Shi’ism),” in *EI2 (Encyclopaedia of Islam 2)*

**Optional Readings:**


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### 6 Oct. 16

**Emigration to Medina**

**Required Readings:**


**Optional Readings:**


Minor Paper due

Oct. 23

Reading Week: No Classes

7 Oct. 30

Relations with Mecca

Required Readings:

Optional Readings:

8 Nov. 6

Hadith: Transmission and Collection

Required Readings:

Optional Readings:

9 Nov. 13

Methods and History of Hadith Criticism

Required Readings:

10 Nov. 20

The Prophet as Lawmaker and Legal Authority

Required Readings:

Optional Readings:
11 Nov. 27

Women and the Prophetic Tradition

Required Readings:

Research paper due

12 Dec. 4

The Prophet and Religious Pluralism

Required Readings:

Optional Readings: