

**RUTGERS UNIVERSITY – NEWARK**  
**AFRICA, ISLAM, & THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD**  
**21:510:365**

**Class Time/Location: T/R 11:30 am-12:50 pm, Hill 104**  
**Spring 2020**

**Dr. Habtamu Tegegne**

**Office: Conklin 329**

**Office Hours: T/R 4:00 pm – 5: 00 pm**

**Email: [ht254@newark.rutgers.edu](mailto:ht254@newark.rutgers.edu)**

### **Office Hours**

I hold office hours in Conklin Hall 329 on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 4:00 pm and 5: 00 pm, and by appointment. I am present, during office hours which are scheduled for you, to talk about a course material or an assignment. If you have any urgent and critical issue about anything, ask and clear them with me immediately. Communication is the key for a rewarding course experience. Take advantage of these opportunities.

### **Course Description**

Interest in Islam and its media coverage has been intensifying since the 9/11 terrorist attack on the World Trade Center in 2001. Media representation has focused excessively on certain aspects of global Islam, such as the radicalism and violence of select Muslim groups while ignoring the diversity in Islam and its dynamic roles in world history. This course will remedy this bias by providing a more complete picture of the diverse ways in which Islam impacted African societies and how indigenous African traditions in turn impacted the way Islam is practiced from the 8<sup>th</sup> century to the present. Through lecture, intensive in-class discussion, reading and writing assignments, midterm and final exam, we will explore such topics as Islamic law and state institutions, Islam and colonialism, Islamic revivalism and reform movements, and Islam and gender. We begin the course with a discussion of some basic concepts in the study of Islam, followed by an in-depth study of the spread of Islam to Africa and the emergence of Muslim states and cultures. We will focus on North Africa, West Africa, the Horn of Africa and East Africa.

### **Course Objectives**

- Understand the role of Islam in the evolution of African societies
- Acquire insight into the origins and nature of contemporary issues about Islam
- Provide the foundation for a comparative understanding of different cultures
- Learn and apply key theories and concepts in the study of Islam in African history
- Develop an awareness about past interpretations made in the secondary sources and current scholarly trends in the field of Islam in African history
- Develop interpretive thinking, research and writing skills, and the ability to write with clarity and use appropriate language.

## Course Requirements and Evaluation

Grading in the course will be based on an evaluation of student performance in the term paper, class attendance, participation in discussion, group presentation, midterm and final exams. Points will be available as follows:

Final Exam:	25%
Midterm Exam:	20%
Final Paper	15%
Participation in Discussion:	20%
Group Presentation	10%
Class Attendance	10%

## Grading Scale

In the final determination of the letter grades, I will use “+”. Grading for the course will be as follows:

- A grades (90-100);
- B+ grades (87-89)
- B grades (80-86);
- C+ grades (77-79)
- C grades (70-76);
- D grades (60-69); and
- F grade (below 60).

## Grading Policy

This is a course that requires serious intellectual engagement with the course material, regular attendance and class participation. To successfully complete this course, a student must pay attention to the lectures, take good notes, study hard, and actively participate in class discussion. Assignments, including term papers, will be graded exclusively for their merit. Grade must be earned. Never beg for grade. I won't round a student's overall score. I will not bump a student's grade even if it means that the student will lose his/her scholarship or fail in school. Assignments not completed earn a 0. I am a fair and ethical grader, so please do not bother asking me about your grade. If I notice an honest error I will correct and mark a grade up.

## EVALUATION DETAILS

### Attendance (10%) (Ongoing)

Attendance is required – and rewarded, since active engagement in class is essential to succeed in this course. I take attendance daily. According to university policy, a total of eight [8] absences, whether excused or unexcused, will result in failure in this course. Likewise, five [5] consecutive, unexcused, absences will result in failure in this course. Poor attendance record can adversely affect your scholarship grants and other benefits. Class attendance can affect your class participation grade, which counts for 20% of your grade. Your participation grade will drop by 10 points for every absence. In this class, attendance is taken primarily to encourage students to engage in intellectual exchange and learning in the classroom. Attendance will also be rewarded through in-class assignments and unannounced quizzes.

Always come prepared and in a timely fashion. You are responsible for the material covered during your absence, including discussion and reading. Since the exam comes mainly from the lecture and class participation determines a significant portion of your course grade, you will benefit from regular attendance.

## **Tardiness**

If you are late and miss attendance you will be counted as tardy. Two late arrivals will be counted as one absence. A student must produce a written validation explaining the reason for absence. If you know that you will miss class for a compelling reason, you are responsible for contacting me in advance of class to request an excused absence. Medical emergencies and illness verified by a physician, deaths in the family, religious holy days, athletic events, natural disaster, jury duty, and scholastic obligations will be accommodated. I will not excuse absences due to work, personal vacations or any unjustifiable and unverifiable reasons.

## **Participation in Discussion (20%) (Ongoing)**

Participation in class discussions is essential for the successful completion of this course. On Thursdays the class time will be devoted primarily to discussions of each week's assigned readings. Discussion questions will be posted to the course website well in advance of the Thursday discussion. The questions will guide your reading and our class discussion on Thursdays. Every student is placed in a group for the semester for the purpose of discussion. Each group will be assigned one discussion question to answer. That means, Group 1 answers question 1, Group 2 answers question 2; and so on. The list of the questions for each group will be projected to the class on a slide projector.

The class will break into groups at the beginning of each discussion. Each group reads, discusses, and answers a discussion question for 15-20 minutes, noting the group's findings and conclusions on a piece of paper. Each group should agree a note taker who also serves as a spokesperson. Group members take turns learning to serve spokesperson and note taker and lead discussion within that group. At the end of class discussion I will collect the notes each group jotted down from the readings. The work distribution of each team must be indicated on the note by identifying the spokesperson and the notetaker. Once the groups have completed their discussion, I will call them for a general class discussion. The spokespersons of each group will present to the class in 2-4 minutes what the group discussed and concluded from the reading, inviting discussion.

Class participation is more than showing up to class. I value how actively involved you are in class discussion. Active participation is displayed by verbally commenting, reflecting and asking questions that are relevant to and informed by the assigned readings. I will watch both participation in general class discussion and in small groups closely. Students who contribute significantly to their group's work and to the general class discussion will get correspondingly higher scores for their participation grade. Participation in discussions are the easiest points to earn in the class. Finish all assigned readings before the beginning of the Thursday class. One of the textbooks assigned for this course is longer than usual, but it not so much to complete in time if you plan ahead. The discussion will help you to extend and enhance your understanding of the readings and the material delivered in lectures which in turn, will help you prepare for the midterm and final exams.

## **Group Presentation (10% of course grade)**

Each student is required to make an oral and visual presentation with four other classmates. The entire class will be divided into groups for the purpose of presentation in the beginning of the semester. List of names in each group along with their scheduled date of presentation will be uploaded to blackboard. The presentations could focus on one of the topics listed in the syllabus or it could come from outside the syllabus. The topic of presentation selected by the group must be approved by the instructor at least two weeks prior to scheduled presentation. The assignment has two components: oral presentation and written report accompanied by bibliography. Each group will conduct research on a topic of presentation (both in the library and online).

All members of the group must be present on the day of presentation which may not exceed 30 minutes and followed by questions and answer session. Written report of (4-5 pages) of the oral presentations must be handed in the beginning of the presentation. The report must indicate the specific contribution of the group members, the sources consulted for the presentation, and the major conclusions drawn. The presentations are aimed at extending and deepening students' understanding of the course material and lectures and prepare them for the midterm and final exams. Details of the specific requirement of this assignment and schedule of the presentation are forthcoming.

### **Procedures/Format**

Lecture and discussion (both small-group work and general class discussion) will be the twin emphasis of the course. On Tuesdays I will give lecture on the topic for that week. The lecture on Tuesday and the textbook will provide you the background information you need to a deeper understanding of the assigned readings. On Thursdays we will complete unfinished lecture (if any) and devote the remaining class time to discussion of assigned readings. Bring to class the assigned readings upon which the week's class discussion is based. It won't also hurt to bring the textbook on Tuesdays to help you take note and attend the lecture better. You should also always bring to class a pen/pencil and notebook to take notes. Unless you have a compelling reason to use it, I discourage you from bringing your laptops to class. Take notes as you read the textbooks and other assigned materials outside class.

### **Final Paper (15%) (Due April 16)**

There is one assigned paper for this course which is worth 15 % of your course grade. The term paper is based on the writing of a nineteenth century jihadist woman edited by Mack and Boyd entitled *One Woman's Jihad, Nana Asma'u*. The writing guideline and the topics will be given in the course of the semester. You have to turn in your papers on the due date. Late papers will not be accepted for full credit without any documented valid excuse. Your paper is due April 16. The term paper is a turn it in assignment and must be turned in via blackboard. Use the correct format for submitting via blackboard. If you run into difficulty submitting your paper from your personal computer take screenshot of your failed submission and reach out to me immediately via email. In addition, please note, submission of a term paper and of a final exam are course requirements. Failure to submit them, regardless of total points accrued for other assignments, will result in an "F" grade for the course.

### **Late Policy**

It is your responsibility to turn in the correct and final version of your assignments on the due date (as stated officially on the syllabus) via blackboard unless you have obtained prior approval for a different date due to special extenuating circumstances. Five points will be

deducted for each day your term paper is late. You may only ask for an extension of your term paper at least 48 hours before the due date and only if you have a valid reason backed by documentation. None will be accepted 10 days past the deadline. Doctor's notes that are dated either more than 24 hours after the onset of illness or after the due date will not be accepted. Even if you have obtained a doctor's note, you will be penalized until the day I receive your doctor's note.

### **Exams (45%)**

The midterm exam will be held on **13 March**. The midterm will cover the topics that we have learned in class during the semester's first half. The final will be a non-cumulative examination and will cover topics we learned during the second half of the semester. The final exam will be held on tentatively **May 12 at 10:00 am-1:00 pm**. Students are required to take the exams based on the schedule indicated in the course syllabus and university schedule. The term paper and the final exams are course requirements. Despite the total points you earned, failure to submit the term paper and the final exam will result in overall failure in the course.

### **Make-up Exam Policy**

In fairness to other students who are not given the same opportunity, make-up exams are not given as a matter of principle unless there is extreme extenuating circumstances. Since exam schedules are given in the beginning of the semester, please plan your work and other non-academic responsibilities accordingly. Make up for missed exams will not be given especially because they are given online, and you will have ample window of time in which to take them. If you start your online exam after it was too late and your internet "goes out", it is not a valid excuse to warrant a retake on the exam. Do not wait until it is too late. If you do not have a personal laptop or desktop connected to the internet, there are many computers available at multiple locations across campus which you can use for the exams. I will never reschedule midterm and final exams for the sake of accommodating another class.

Make up will be given if absence involved athletic event, scholastic obligations, call for military service, medical emergencies, valid personal or family emergencies, death in family, natural disasters, and jury duty. You must request and get my consent to your absence if you want to take a makeup exam. If you know you will miss the midterm and final exams for valid reason, be sure to pre-schedule a make-up exam at least 10 days in advance. You will be given a midterm exam on a date different from the official (syllabus-stated) day only if you have a valid reason and valid documentation. Your proof should be dated and written on letterhead paper. If your absence involved death of family member, be sure to bring a document that indicates that you are related to the deceased person. If granted, I will prepare a make-up exam more difficult than the originally scheduled exam. Failure to take the scheduled make-up will result in a zero on the exam. Final exams cannot be made up past the end of the semester unless you miss it for university excused reason.

### **Pop Quizzes and in-class Assignments**

Unspecified number of pop quizzes and in-class assignments will be administered at various points throughout the semester. Quizzes and in-class assignments will count towards your participation grade. Since they will not be announced in advance, regular attendance is in your best interest. Quizzes will be based on course lectures and assigned readings. Their purpose is to evaluate how well you understand the material covered in the week's lecture and assignments.

There will be no make-up quizzes given to students who are absent or who arrive late to lecture. Pop quizzes will be given particularly if the class is not actively following the lectures and participating in class discussions.

### **Course Website**

Blackboard is our best means of communication. Be sure to check blackboard and your university email account on a regular basis. You will need access to the website in order to know your grade, complete some of the readings, to get paper topics, exams, announcements, and other information of interest and importance. You will need to be able to access the website at least three times a week; on the evenings before TR and on Saturdays in order to download the weekly assignments, lectures, PowerPoints, and other relevant files. Please use only blackboard to submit your term paper.

### **Copyright**

Lecture notes, slides, handout materials, examinations and assignments developed for this course are the intellectual property of the course instructor. These materials have been developed for student use only and they are not intended for wider dissemination outside of the course. Posting, selling and providing course material to third-party websites violates an instructor's intellectual property rights, and the American Copyright Law. Failure to follow these instructions violates the university's Code of Student Conduct, and will result in disciplinary measures.

### **Decorum**

Classroom decorum is a university requirement every student must fulfil. As university students you are expected to behave as adults and act with courtesy and professionalism at all times. Express your thought and opinion in a way which is professional and does not offend anyone. Avoid any rude, or inappropriate comments and disruptive activity. My important and simple classroom rule is that we respect each other. Arrive promptly and remain in classroom for the entire lecture or discussion. If you have a compelling reason to leave class early, please let me know in advance of time and take a seat very close to the exit. Turn off cell phones and all other noisy electronic devices during class sessions. Laptops must be used only for note taking. You need to respect the course rules stated in the syllabus and conduct yourself within the bounds of the University Student Code of Conduct. Here is the link to the code:

<http://studentconduct.rutgers.edu/disciplinary-processes/university-code-of-student-conduct/>

### **Disruptive Activities**

You have the right to be in class, but you have also the obligation to respect the right of others to be in class and refrain from any disruptive activity. A disruptive activity as stated in the Student Code of Conduct include “[e]ngaging in classroom conduct prohibited by the faculty member or in violation of the law or University policy.” Surfing the internet during lecture, talking when someone else is speaking, playing games on your laptop or cell-phone, texting, sleeping, arriving late, and leaving class early are extremely disruptive. These disruptive activities affect my thought process, my teaching, and my health. You will be asked to leave the room if you engage in disruptive activities. If you arrive late and leave early without advance notice, you will be marked absent and lose your participation grade for that day.

## **Students with Disabilities**

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation:

<https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>

If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus' disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>. For more information please contact the Office of Disability Services in the Paul Robeson Campus Center, in suite 219, by phone at 973-353-5375 or by email at [odsnewark@newark.rutgers.edu](mailto:odsnewark@newark.rutgers.edu).

## **Plagiarism**

You are expected to follow the student guideline concerning academic honesty and conduct. All work must be your own. If you have questions about plagiarism, you can see me. Plagiarism is a serious offence and is punishable, under the university code of conduct. Any instance of plagiarism will result in a zero grade in the assignment and will be reported to the Dean's Office for disciplinary hearing. There is a very good statement on plagiarism on the American Historical Association's webpage. The American Historical Association's definition of plagiarism can be found at:

[http://historians.org/governance/pd/Curriculum/plagiarism\\_defining.htm](http://historians.org/governance/pd/Curriculum/plagiarism_defining.htm).

Be sure to read it carefully and closely. For a full discussion of Rutgers University's policies regarding academic integrity consult the following website: <http://www.ncas.rutgers.edu/oas/ai>.

According to the RU Academic integrity policy:

'Plagiarism is the use of another person's words, ideas, or results without giving that person appropriate credit. To avoid plagiarism, every direct quotation must be identified by quotation marks or appropriate indentation and both direct quotation and paraphrasing must be cited properly according to the accepted format for the particular discipline or as required by the instructor in a course.'

As stated in the academic integrity policy, some common instances of plagiarism are:

- Copying word for word (i.e. quoting directly) from an oral, printed, or electronic source without proper attribution.
- Paraphrasing without proper attribution, i.e., presenting in one's own words another person's written words or ideas as if they were one's own.
- Submitting a purchased or downloaded term paper or other materials to satisfy a course requirement.
- Incorporating into one's work graphs, drawings, photographs, diagrams, tables, spreadsheets, computer programs, or other non-textual material from other sources without proper attribution.

## Academic Integrity

All students are required to sign the Rutgers Honor Code Pledge. The following pledge must be listed on every assignment or exam you submit. **“On my honor, I have neither received nor given any unauthorized assistance on this examination/assignment.”**

See: <https://www.sashonors.rutgers.edu/academics/integrity-pledge>

## Required texts

Nehemia Levtzion and R. Pouwels, *The History of Islam in Africa*, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. (Oxford: James Currey, 2000). ISBN 978-0821412978

Beverly Mack and Jean Boyd, *One Woman's Jihad, Nana Asma'u* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000) ISBN 978-0253213983

Any additional primary sources listed below under the schedule are freely available online. All of the required reading for the course is contained in two books, the online sources, and the class notes.

## Disclaimer

Should the need arise I reserve the right to amend this syllabus. The assignments and deadlines are subject to changes due to situations such as weather emergency.

## Weekly Schedule

Below is the course schedule that we will follow in the course of the semester. The schedule is subject to revision. We might drop, add, or exchange readings according to our specific interests.

Week 1 (T/R, January 21/23) Introduction to the Course; an ABC of Islam: Belief, Practice, and Traditions

**Readings:** Levtzion and Pouwels, “Introduction: Patterns of Islamization and Varieties of Religious Experience among Muslims of Africa”, in *The History of Islam in Africa*, 1-20  
Recommended: Brenner, “Histories of Religion in Africa,” *Journal of Religion in Africa*, 30, 2 (2000), 143-67.

**Add/Drop Period without “W” Grades: 1/28/20 - 1/29/20**

Week 2 (T/R, January 28/30) Islamization and Arabization of North Africa: Jihad and Expansion  
Readings: Sivers, “Egypt and North Africa,” in *The History of Islam in Africa*, 21-36

Week 3 (T/R, February 4/6) Trade, politics, and Islamization in Western Sudan  
Reading: Levtzion, “Islam and the Bilad al-Sudan to 1800,” in *The History of Islam in Africa*, 63-92; TBA

Week 4 (T/R, February 11/13) Islamic Scholarship, Literature and Problems of Mixed Islam  
Readings: Reichmuth, “Islamic Scholarship in Sub-Saharan Africa,” in *The*

*History of Islam in Africa*, 419-440; David Owusu-Ansah, "Prayers, Amulets, and Healing," *The History of Islam in Africa*, 441-4776.

Week 5 (T/R, February 18/20) *Imam Ahmad's Short-Term Empire & its Long-Term Effects: Christian-Muslim Relations, Jihad, and Islam in the Horn of Africa*  
Readings: Arab Faqih, *The Conquest of Abyssinia*, 78-91, 244-255; Kapteijns, "Ethiopia and the Horn of Africa," in *The History of Islam in Africa*, 227-250  
Recommended: Raven, "Some Early Islamic Texts on the Negus of Ethiopia," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 33 (1988): 197-218.

Week 6 (T/R, February 25/27) Islam, the Western Indian Ocean and Swahili culture  
Readings: Pearson, "The Indian Ocean and the Red Sea," in *The History of Islam in Africa*, 37-62; Pouwels, "The East African Coast, c. 780 to 1900 C.E.," 251-272

Week 7 (T/R, March 3/5) Islamic Law, Race, and Muslim Slavery in Africa  
Readings: Christelow, "Islamic in Africa," in *The History of Islam in Africa*, 349-372  
Recommended: Ware, "Slavery in Islamic Africa, 1400-1800", in *The Cambridge World History of Slavery*, Volume 3: AD 1420-AD 1804, 47-80.

Week 8 (T/R, March 10/12) Sufi Mysticism in Africa: Saints, Sufis and Brotherhoods  
Readings: Viktor, "Sufi Brotherhoods in Africa," in *History of Islam in Africa*, 441-476  
Recommended: Brenner, "Sufism in Africa," Olupona, *African spirituality* (New York, The Crossroad Publishing Company, 2000), 324-349; and Seesemann, "Sufism in West Africa," *Religion Compass*, 10, 4 (2010), 606-614.

### **Midterm Exam March 13**

**Week 9** (T/R, March 17/19) Spring Recess: No Classes

Week 10 (T/R, March 24/26) Revitalization and Jihad in Nineteenth-Century Africa  
Readings: Beverly Mack and Jean Boyd, *One Woman's Jihad, Nana Asma'u*  
Recommended: Robinson, "Revolutions in the Western Sudan," in *The History of Islam in Africa*

Week 11 (T/R, March 31/ April 2) Muslim Africa, Imperial Rule, and Resistance: Samouri Ture, The Sudanese Mahdi, and the Jihad in Somalia  
Readings: Triaud, Jean-Louis, "Islam in Africa under French Colonial Rule," in *The History of Islam in Africa*, 169-87  
Recommended: Hess, "The Mad Mullah' and Northern Somalia," *Journal of African History* 5, 3(1964): 415-433;

Week 12 (T/R, April 7/9) Islamic Modernity and Social Change  
Reading: Seesemann and Soares, "As Good Muslims as Frenchmen: On Islam and Colonial Modernity in West Africa," *Journal of Religion in Africa*, 39, 1 (2009).

Week 13 (T/R, April 14/16) Gender, Modernity, and Islam  
Readings: Dunbar, "Muslim Women in African History," in *History of Islam in Africa*, 397-418; Fortier, "Women and Men Put Islamic Law to Their Own Use," in Badran, ed.,

*Gender and Islam in Africa: Rights, Sexuality, and Law* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011), 213-31.

Video (Paradise is under our mother's feet)

**Term Paper is Due April 16**

Week 14 (T/R, April 21/23) Islam in African Politics

Reading: Kaba, "Islam in West Africa: Radicalism and the New Ethic of Disagreement, 1960-1990," in *The History of Islam in Africa, 189-208*; Chande, "Radicalism and Reform in East Africa," in *The History of Islam in African History*, 349-372;

Recommended: Marchal, "A Tentative Assessment of the Somali *Harakat Al-Shabaab*," *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 3/3 (2009), 381-404

Week 15 (T/R, April 28/30) Student Presentations

Evaluation, Review and Valediction

Classes End: May 4

Reading Days: May 5 – May 6

EXAM: TBA

## Contract

By returning to class after the first meeting and signing this document, I acknowledge that I have heard, read, understand, and agree to respect and follow the policies and expectations of the course.

Name Printed \_\_\_\_\_

Name Signed \_\_\_\_\_