RUTGERS UNIVERSITY—NEWARK
AFRICA, ISLAM, & THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD
21:510:365
Spring 2021

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Remote Office Hours: By appointment
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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 was practiced from the 8th century to the present. Through asynchronous lectures, weekly 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 insights 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 language appropriate for undergraduate level of study
Remote Learning
Our class this semester will be delivered 100% in a remote setting. This course is listed as “by arrangement” on the course schedule. This means that remote learning will consist of only asynchronous components completely delivered on Blackboard. This course will have a regular schedule of readings and assignments due throughout the term every week. There will not be any synchronous components; therefore, there will not be any online class meetings. Students will be required to review carefully the lecture notes posted weekly and to complete weekly readings and assignments (consisting of online postings on the discussion board). Please review the key required texts for this course. Students are required to purchase these texts. Midterm and Final Exam will be delivered on Blackboard. Further details can be found below under Course Requirements and Evaluation.

Required Texts
It is the responsible of the students to acquire the following required course texts prior to the start of class.


• Any additional primary sources listed in the weekly schedule are freely available online. All of the required readings for the course are contained in two books, the online sources, and the class notes.

Course Requirements and Evaluation
Grading in the course will be based on an evaluation of student performance in participation in discussion, final paper, midterm and final exam.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Participation in Discussion</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam (March 12)</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Paper (April 16)</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam (May 7)</td>
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Participation in Discussion
Constructive and energetic participation in online discussion is a key element of the successful completion of this course and is worth 25% of your final grade. You are required to post discussion board responses related to weekly assigned readings. Discussion questions will be posted to the course website well in advance. Each student must do a total of 3 postings per week. They are as follows:

- post a response to the instructor's question between Tuesday and Thursday before 11:59pm
- post a response to another student's initial response to the instructor's question from Friday 12:01am to Sunday 11:59pm. Please note, if you reply to a post by another student before Friday, your posting will not count toward your participation; and
- post your third and final response to another student's response to the instructor's question from Friday 12:01am to Sunday 11:59pm. Similar to your second posting, your third posting must be completed after Friday. Otherwise, your posting will not count toward your participation grade.

Completion of weekly discussion postings will help you to extend and enhance your understanding of the readings and the materials delivered in lectures which in turn, will help you prepare for the midterm and final exams.

Final Paper
There is one assigned paper for this course which is worth 25% of your course grade. The final 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 will be given in the course of the semester. You have to turn in your papers by 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 Turnitin assignment and must be turned in via Blackboard. Use the correct format for submitting via Blackboard. I will only grade your papers on 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 your final paper is a course requirement. Failure to submit the final paper, 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 by the due date (as stated officially on the syllabus) via Blackboard. 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. Assignments will not be accepted 5 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. You must complete the term papers in order to pass the course.

**Midterm**
The midterm exam will be held on March 12 between 9:00am and 9:00pm on Blackboard. The midterm will cover the topics that we have learned in class during the semester’s first half. Students must write the midterm to pass the course.

**Final Exam**
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 Blackboard on May 7 at 9:00 am–9:00 pm. Students write the final exam to pass 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 are 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. 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 a 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.

**Grading Scale**
Grading for the course will be as follows:
A = 89.5–100 (Outstanding)
B+ = 84.5–89.49 (Outstanding)
B = 79.5–84.49 (Good)
C+ = 74.5–79.49 (Good)
C = 69.5–74.49 (Satisfactory)
D = 59.5–69.49 (Poor)
F = 0–59.49 (Failure)

**Grading Policy**

This is a course that requires serious intellectual engagement with the course material, regular online class participation. To successfully complete this course, a student must carefully review the lectures, take good notes, study hard, and actively participate in online 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 will result in a zero. 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.

**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 (January 19/21)**

- **Introduction to the Course; an ABC of Islam: Belief, Practice, and Traditions**

**Week 2 (January 26/28)**

- **Islamization and Arabization of North Africa: Jihad and Expansion**
Week 3 (February 2/4)  
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 (February 9/11)  
Islamic Scholarship, Literature and Problems of Mixed Islam  

Week 5 (February 16/18)  
Imam Ahmad’s Short-Term Empire & its Long-Term Effects:  
Christian-Muslim Relations, Jihad, and Islam in the Horn of Africa  

Week 6 (February 23/26)  
Islam, the Western Indian Ocean and Swahili culture  

Week 7 (March 2/4)  
Islamic Law, Race, and Muslim Slavery in Africa  

Week 8 (March 9/11)  
Sufi Mysticism in Africa: Saints, Sufis and Brotherhods  

Week 9 (March 13–21)  
Spring Recess: No Classes

Week 10 (March 23/25)  
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 (March 30/ April 1)  

Week 12 (April 6/8)  
Islamic Modernity and Social Change  

Week 13 (April 13/15)  
Gender, Modernity, and Islam  
Video (Paradise is under our mother’s feet)

Week 14 (T/R, April 20/22)  
Islam in African Politics  

**Week 15 (T/R, April 27/29)**

Final Remarks
Evaluation, Review and Valediction
Regular Classes End on May 3, 2021
Exam Period: May 6–12, 2021

**Accommodation and Support Statement**

Rutgers University Newark (RU-N) is committed to the creation of an inclusive and safe learning environment for all students and the University as a whole. RU-N has identified the following resources to further the mission of access and support:

For Individuals with Disabilities: The Office of Disability Services (ODS) is responsible for the determination of appropriate accommodations for students who encounter barriers due to disability. Once a student has completed the ODS process (registration, initial appointment, and submitted documentation) and reasonable accommodations are determined to be necessary and appropriate, a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) will be provided. The LOA must be given to each course instructor by the student and followed up with a discussion. This should be done as early in the semester as possible as accommodations are not retroactive. More information can be found at ods.rutgers.edu. Contact ODS at (973)353-5375 or via email at ods@newark.rutgers.edu

For Individuals who are Pregnant: The Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance is available to assist with any concerns or potential accommodations related to pregnancy. Students may contact the Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance at (973) 353-1906 or via email at TitleIX@newark.rutgers.edu. For Absence Verification: The Office of the Dean of Students can provide assistance for absences related to religious observance, emergency or unavoidable conflict (e.g., illness, personal or family emergency, etc.). Students should refer to University Policy 10.2.7 for information about expectations and responsibilities. The Office of the Dean of Students can be contacted by calling (973) 353-5063 or emailing deanofstudents@newark.rutgers.edu.

For Individuals with temporary conditions/injuries: The Office of the Dean of Students can assist students who are experiencing a temporary condition or injury (e.g., broken or sprained limbs, concussions, or recovery from surgery). Students experiencing a temporary condition or
injury should submit a request using the following link:
https://temporaryconditions.rutgers.edu.

For English as a Second Language (ESL): The Program in American Language Studies (PALS) can support students experiencing difficulty in courses due to English as a Second Language (ESL) and can be reached by emailing PALS@newark.rutgers.edu to discuss potential supports.

For Gender or Sex-Based Discrimination or Harassment: The Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance can assist students who are experiencing any form of gender or sex-based discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, relationship violence, or stalking. Students can report an incident to the Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance by calling (973) 353-1906 or emailing TitleIX@newark.rutgers.edu. Incidents may also be reported by using the following link: tinyurl.com/RUNReportingForm. For more information, students should refer to the University’s Student Policy Prohibiting Sexual Harassment, Sexual Violence, Relationship Violence, Stalking and Related Misconduct located at http://compliance.rutgers.edu/title-ix/about-title-ix/title-ix-policies/.

For support related to interpersonal violence: The Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance can provide any student with confidential support. The office is a confidential resource and does not have an obligation to report information to the University’s Title IX Coordinator. Students can contact the office by calling (973) 353-1918 or emailing run.vpva@rutgers.edu. There is also a confidential text-based line available to students; students can text (973) 339-0734 for support.

For Crisis and Concerns: The Campus Awareness Response and Education (CARE) Team works with students in crisis to develop a support plan to address personal situations that might impact their academic performance. Students, faculty and staff may contact the CARE Team by using the following link: tinyurl.com/RUNCARE or emailing careteam@rutgers.edu.

For Stress, Worry, or Concerns about Well-being: The Counseling Center has confidential therapists available to support students. Students should reach out to the Counseling Center to schedule an appointment: counseling@newark.rutgers.edu or (973) 353-5805. If you are not quite ready to make an appointment with a therapist but are interested in self-help, check out TAO at Rutgers-Newark for an easy, web-based approach to self-care and support: https://tinyurl.com/RUN-TAO.

For emergencies, call 911 or contact Rutgers University Police Department (RUPD) by calling
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 Statement
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 (virtual) 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 virtual classroom rule is that we respect each other. 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/

Academic Misconduct
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:

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.

**Integrity Pledge**
All students are required to adhere to 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

**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