Course description

We have in recent years witnessed, on the one hand, the revival of religious beliefs and practices in Muslim countries and, on the other hand, a sudden awareness of the presence of Muslims, in Western countries. Indeed, following the Iranian Revolution of 1979, Islam came to play an important role in international politics and since September 11th, 2001, Islam has become the concern of all, in the non-Muslim world.

The presence of Muslims in Europe dates back to soon after the advent of Islam in the Arabian Peninsula. Muslim communities reached and settled in Spain, in Southern Italy from as far back as the 8th century. By the tenth century, Cordoba boasted of 700 mosques. A few centuries later with the expansion of the Ottoman Empire more Europeans converted to Islam. Albania, ex- Yugoslavia and Bulgaria are countries that have significant numbers of Muslims.

In France Muslims however did not come to settle. In the year 732 Charles Martel is said to have heroically ‘saved’ France from the invading Muslims. Yet France has today the highest percentage of Muslims in Europe. These communities however entered France and came to settle in France under very different circumstances: as ‘subjects’ of French colonies, then members of the French Union and later French Community, they responded to a call for work in the post World War Two period of economic reconstruction and emigrated to Europe. Today their children are the French Muslim boys and girls of France and many identify closely with their Islamic heritage. For a country that has since 1905 uncompromisingly championed the cause of secularism, this reality has been hard to accept.

The aim of this course is to:

1. Present a historical overview of the interactions between Muslims and the Europeans.
2. Review France’s colonial history in the Muslim world, in particular Algeria.
3. Contextualize France’s Laïcité in order to understand its significance today.
4. Examine France’s policies of immigration.
5. Explore Islam: its origins, its history and the circumstances that have led to its revival.
6. Review some of the more recent events as well the debates regarding Islam in France.
Students can choose one of the two options:

**Option A**
- Discussion around the readings 5%
- Discussion on the films 5%
- Media report 10%
- Debate 10%
- Midterm 25%
- Paper 20%
- Final 25%

**Option B**
- Discussion around the readings 5%
- Discussion on the films 5%
- Media report 10%
- Debate 10%
- Midterm 30%
- Final 40%

**Discussion around the readings: 5%**
Students are required to fulfill their reading assignments every week and come to class with an outline ready to participate in the class debate. Class participation should demonstrate knowledge of arguments and issues examined in the readings and an ability to participate in a discussion.

**Discussion around the films: 5%**
Each student or a group of students will be asked to lead the discussion on the films.

**The debate 10%**
There are two laws in France that relate very closely to our subject: the first passed in 2004 bans all religious signs in public schools. The second passed in 2010 forbids the covering of one’s face in public. There will be two debates on these laws in class. Class will be divided into two groups: one defending the law and the other speaking against the law. Students will be expected to do the necessary readings and come prepared to present both points of view.

**Media Report 10%**
Students will also be expected to keep up to date with news events in France (and other European countries) concerning issues that we cover in class: immigration, Islam, laïcité etc.. We will therefore start the class once a week with a few minutes on the news. One or two students will be assigned the task of presenting this item. This presentation will then have to be followed by a write-up, which would cover the following:
1) the provenance of the source and if necessary an evaluation of the source (if it is extremely bias or subjective);
2) its relevancy to France & Islam
3) a summary of the discussion in class in relation to the presentation.
Students need to hand in their write-up a week after their presentation. If the presentation is done in a group, one write-up is sufficient.

**Examinations:**
The format of the midterm and the final is short answer questions.

**Research Paper: 20%:**
Research paper on a topic related to France and Islam. The research paper should not be more than 6-7 pages. The students need to present a written proposal and have it approved by week 8. Students may be asked to present their research findings to class.

**PLEASE NOTE: THERE WILL BE A CLASS EXCURSION ON FRIDAY DECEMBER 9TH**

**Class Policy:**
- There are NO additional or make up assignments.
Late assignments will not be accepted.

Academic Dishonesty:

Plagiarism is punishable with a ‘failing grade’ in the class. Plagiarism may be broadly defined as “copying of materials from sources, without acknowledging having done so, claiming other’s ideas as one’s own without proper reference to them, and buying materials such as essays/exams.”

Required books:
- Some articles posted online
- Faiza Guène, Kiffe Kiffe Tomorrow
  Harvest books, 2006.

Required viewing of films:
- Gillo Pontecorvo, The Battle of Algiers (La Bataille d’Alger)
- Rachid Bouchareb, Days of Glory (Les Indigènes)
- Rachid Bouchareb, Outside the Law (Hors la loi)
- Yamina Benguigui, Sunday God willing, (Inchallah Dimanche)
- Mehdi Charef, Summer of 62 (les Cartouches Gauloises)

To watch in class
- Philippe Triboit, L’Embrasement
- Negar Zoka, Ce que dévoile de voile
- Karim Miské, Les Musulmans de France

Week 1: September 19th & 21st

Reading:
- Christopher J. Walker, ‘Friends or Foes? The Islamic East, and the West’, History Today, March 2007
- Edward Said, Orientalism introduction
- Accounts of the Battle of Poitiers

Weeks 2: September 26th & 28th
Lecture: France and her colonies: the Conquest of Algeria
Reading:
Discuss: Gillo Pontecorvo’s The Battle of Algiers (La Bataille d’Alger)
**Week 3: October 3rd & 5th**  
*Lecture: The effects of the Algerian War on Metropolitan France*  
Reading:  
- The Manifesto of the 121  

Discuss Rachid Bouchareb’s *Days of Glory (Les Indigènes)*

**Week 4: October 10th & 12th**  
*Lecture: The history of immigration to France*  
Reading:  

Discuss Yamina Benguigui’s *Sunday God willing (Inchallah Dimanche)*

**Week 5: October 17th & 19th**  
*Lecture: The History of Laïcité in France*  
Reading:  
- Oliver Roy *secularism confronts Islam Introduction and chapter 1.*  

Discuss Rachid Bouchareb, *Outside the Law (Hors la loi)*

**Week 6: October 24th & 26th**  
*Lecture: The case of the Muslim immigrants: Cosmopolitan France?*  
Reading:  
- Azouz Begag, *Ethnicity & Equality: France in the balance* (required reading)  
- Scott Sayare, ‘Razing a neighborhood and a social engineering idea’ *International Herald Tribune*, September 6, 2011  

Discuss Mehdi Charef, *Summer of 62 (les Cartouches Gauloises)*

**Week 7: October 31st & November 2nd**  
Monday: midterm  
*Lecture: Others aspects of life in the banlieus: music; housing*  
Reading:  
- Lyrics of a number of songs.
Week 8: November 7th & 9th
Lecture: Islam and the question of Women

FOR ALL THOSE OPTING FOR OPTION A: HAND IN THE TITLE FOR THE RESEARCH PAPER.

Week 9: November 14th & 16th
Lecture: The 2004 and the 2010 Laws
Reading (in view of preparing for the debate)
- Jonathan Laurence & Justin Vaisse, Integrating Islam: political and Religious Challenges in Contemporary France, (book on the reserve shelf in the library)
- John Bowen, Why the French don’t like Headscarves (book on the reserve shelf in the library)

Wednesday: Class Debate: arguments for and against the 2004 law

Week 10: November 21st & 23rd
Lecture: Muslim French or French Muslims?
Reading:
- Olivier Roy, Secularism confronts Islam, chapter 2

Wednesday: Class Debate: arguments for and against the 2010 law

Week 11: November 28th & 30th
Lecture: What has been done so far
Reading:
- Jonathan Laurence & Justin Vaisse, Integrating Islam: political and Religious Challenges in Contemporary France, chapters 4 & 5

Wednesday: EXCURSION: Visit the Paris mosque

Week 12: December 5th & 7th
Lecture: The National Front and the politics of racism
Islam and the media; The riots of 2005: to what extent were they related to Islam?

Reading:
- Olivier Roy, Secularism confronts Islam, chapter 3 ad 4
- Faiza Guène, Kiffe Kiffe Tomorrow

Excursion: Friday December 9th.

Week 13: (last week):
Monday December 12th: Final examination & Hand in the research paper.
As we took one Friday for the excursion, this week we will only meet once for the final exam.

Instructions for the write-up of the presentation

You need to hand in a write-up of your presentation a week AFTER your oral presentation in class.

This write-up should be divided into two paragraphs:

**Paragraph 1:**
a summary of the news item you chose to present.
You need to state
- what happened;
- why you chose it;
- what, in your opinion was significant about the event;
- how this event highlights the role of the EU as an institution.

You should state very clearly your sources and if it is relevant comment on the source:
- why you chose it as a source;
- is it a reliable source?
- does it have, in your opinion, a particular bias?

**Paragraph 2:**
a summary of the discussion/ questions that your presentation raised in class.

This section will depend very much on the type of questions that are raised in class. Prepare a few questions as a way of starting a brief discussion.