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### HSTR 400.02: History Research Seminar - Islam and the West

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**Islam and the West**  
**Wednesday, 6:00-8:50 PM, 3 credits**  
**Instructor: Professor Mehrdad Kia**  
**Stone Hall 304**  
**Office Hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays 3:30-5:30 pm**  
**Phone: (406) 396-1143**  
**E-mail: [mehrdad.kia@mso.umt.edu](mailto:mehrdad.kia@mso.umt.edu)**

### **Objectives and goals**

This is a seminar on the political and intellectual history of the Islamic world and its long and problematic relationship with Europe and the United States. The geographical area covered is the five former Soviet republics of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan (Russian Central Asia), Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iran, Turkey, the Arab Middle East and North Africa. The seminar will concentrate on topics that shaped and informed the interactions between European imperial powers and the Islamic world. We will discuss themes central to the recent history of conflicts that shaped the intellectual and political history of the Islamic world, including its ethnic, linguistic and religious identities and how these identities create tensions between the Islamic world and the West in current international relations. Among them: political and economic strategies of western colonialism; structures of multicultural empires; political theory and cultural practice of nationalism and radical Islam in the Middle East, North Africa, and Central Asia; decolonization and its reshaping of collective identities; the role of authoritarianism and religion in power-relations between states and cultures; the interaction between modern and post-modern politics, economy and religion.

### **Expectations**

The research-oriented and consistent student engagement with texts and ideas is central to this seminar. Students are expected to attend seminar sessions regularly and take notes. They should come to class having read the assigned texts closely, thought about them and prepared points of view for discussion. The participation in seminar discussions is indispensable.

### **Assignments**

The goal of this seminar is to focus on research and writing on the topics we cover during the semester: 1- By Wednesday October 20, students will submit a six-page

comparative paper on two of the intellectuals we will cover in the seminar. This paper should be typed in font 12 and double spaced. 2- In the last 3 weeks of the semester, students will complete a 30-page research paper, and they will present the main ideas contained in their paper in a class presentation for 15 to 20 minutes.

All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code for a definition of plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct. The Code is available for review online.

### **Attendance Policy**

An excess of 1 absence will result in loss of one grade.

### **Grading**

The grade for the seminar is based on student preparation in each class session, of student participation in the seminar discussions, and of the quality of research, writing and presentation. The main class assignments are:

Short Paper: 30%

Research paper: 60%

Attendance: 10%

The long research papers will be graded according to following criteria:

Content: 60%

Structure: 30%

Class presentation of paper: 10%

### **Textbooks**

David Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace*

Albert Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age*

Nikki Keddie, *An Islamic Response to Imperialism*

John Calvert, *Sayyid Qutb and the Origins of Radical Islamism*