

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
DIVINITY SCHOOL

ISLAMIC STUDIES AREA

1-Purpose and Nature of the Area

The Islamic studies area engages in the study of Islam as a textual tradition inscribed in history and particular cultural contexts. The area seeks to provide an introduction to and a specialization in Islam through a large variety of expressions (literary, poetic, social, and political) and through a variety of methods (literary criticism, hermeneutics, history, sociology, and anthropology). It offers opportunities to specialize in fields that include Qur'anic studies, Sufi literature, Islam and power, and contemporary manifestations of Islam. In addition to the courses listed below, students are encouraged to consult related course offerings in other areas of the Divinity School and in other university departments such as History, Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, and South Asian Languages and Civilizations.

2-Requirements and Admissions

Students without an advanced degree will apply for admission to the MA program of the Divinity School. Students applying from within the University of Chicago MA program will be expected to have completed three courses in the Islamic Studies area or the equivalent (to be established by consultation and petition) by the end of the MA. All applicants for PhD admission should have a strong preparation for the study of Islam. Such preparation should include reading knowledge of classical and Modern Standard Arabic, significant background in the study of the human or social sciences, and previous coursework in Islamic history, religion, civilization, or literature. The application letter should specify the applicant's background in the study of Arabic. If at the time of application, the applicant has not already completed the equivalent of three years of Arabic, the candidate should indicate the program of current study (including possible summer study) that will demonstrate that at the time of matriculation, he or she will have completed the equivalent of three years of Arabic.

A- Examples of Courses within the Divinity School

- Readings in the Qur'an (Sells)
- Modern Islam and politics
- Islamic Reform and Revival (19-20 c.)
- Islamic Love Poetry (Sells)
- Anthropology of Islam in 20th c. North Africa
- Comparative Mystical Literature (Islamic, Jewish, and Christian) (Sells)
- Women in modern Islam
- Seminar in the Writings of Ibn al-'Arabi (Sells)

- Islamic Philosophy in the Middle Ages (Robinson)
- Interactions between Philosophy and Literature in the Middle Ages (Robinson)
- Animal Spirituality in the Middle Ages (Robinson)

B- Examples of Courses offered outside of the Divinity School

(Here are some courses that have been offered in the past years. Many of the courses listed below are cross-listed among various departments, including NELC and SALC):

- 30324. Persian Poetry: Rumi's Mathnawi I, II (Moayyad)
- 30332. Persian Prose: Sufi Texts I, II
- 30337-8 Persian Lyric Poetry 2: History of the Ghazal (Lewis)
- 30501-3 Islamic History and Society I, II, II (Donner, Woods, Shissler)
- 30570 Mughal India (Alam)
- 30601-3 Islamic Thought and Literature I, II, III (Qadi, Perry, Bashkin)
- 30634 North Africa – Late Antique Islam (Kaegi)
- 30645 History of the Fatimid Caliphate (Walker)
- 30636 Survey of Classical Arabic Literature (Qutbuddin)
- 30641 Islamic Origins (Donner)
- 30642 The High Caliphate (Donner)
- 30672 Sufi Literature in Translation (Qutbuddin)
- 30684. Readings in the Sira Literature (Donner)
- 30840 Radical Islamic Pieties 1200-1600 (Fleischer)
- 30852, 30853 Ottoman World in the Age of Suleyman the Magnificent I, II (Fleischer)
- 30731 Iran under the Safavids (Woods)
- 40384 Pre-Islamic Poetry (Qutbuddin)
- 40393. Readings in Islamic Ritual Law (Donner)
- 40404, 40405 Readings in the Qur'an (I, II) (Kadi)
- 40406 Readings in Qur'an Exegesis I, II (Kadi)
- 40427 Islamic Readings in al-Tawhidi (Kadi)
- 40413 40414 Islamic Heresiography and Sectarianism I, II (Kadi)
- 40443, 40444 The Classical Sources I, II (Kadi)
- 40438 Methodology: Historical Hadith (Kadi)
- 40464 Early Khutba (Qutbuddin)
- 20570 Mughal India: Tradition and Transition (Alam)
- 20000-20100 Introduction to the Civilization of South Asia I, II (Alam, Majumdar)
- 47900 Readings in Indo-Muslims Historical and Literary Texts, in Urdu (Alam)

B-Language Requirements and Qualifying Examination for PhD Candidacy

i-Languages

Students at the PhD level are expected to have completed course work in advanced Arabic, in which there is a sustained engagement with Arabic primary sources, or to

have carried out significant independent study at an equivalent level, before submission of a dissertation proposal. After consultation with a faculty advisor in Islamic Studies, students may petition to replace either French or German one of the major languages of literature and scholarship within Islam.

ii-PhD Qualifying Examinations

The PhD qualifying examinations consist of four written examinations and an oral examination based on a research paper submitted for the occasion, in consultation with the student's advisor in the Islamic Studies area. At least two of the four written examinations should be taken in the Area of Islamic Studies. At least one of the four examinations should be taken in an Area outside of Islamic Studies.

Examinations in Islamic Studies include:

- IS1-Qur'anic Studies
- IS2-Sufi Literature
- IS3-Modern Islam and Power
- IS4-Islamic Reform and Revival (19th-20th c.)
- IS5-Islamic Philosophy

C-Dissertation

Upon successful completion of the PhD Qualifying Examinations, the student, in consultation with the faculty person with whom he or she wishes to work, will prepare a dissertation proposal in accordance with the School's established guidelines (see "Guidelines of the Committee on Degrees"). After the proposal has been approved by the advisor and readers at an informal colloquium, and after approval of the proposal by the Committee on Degrees, the student is formally admitted to candidacy for the PhD degree.

After the proposal has been accepted, the candidate will continue research and begin to write the dissertation. When a representative portion of the thesis (usually half) is completed, the student will arrange for the scheduling of a dissertation oral review. The purpose of this review is to provide evaluation and guidance for the candidate at the midpoint of the printing process. For this occasion the candidate will distribute to the committee either the completed portions of the thesis or, preferably, a shorter essay which will summarize and discuss the results of the research thus far and indicate the direction toward which the thesis is moving. During the review the candidate will be encouraged to complete the dissertation as planned, or advised to make appropriate revisions or remedy deficiencies.

The final requirement of the doctoral program is the successful defense of the dissertation before the student's dissertation committee. The committee may recommend to the Dean that this requirement be waived.