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, Islamic philosophy, and Islamic law and theology. Students are encouraged to explore related course offerings in other areas of the Divinity School and in other University departments, including History, Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, and South Asian Languages and Civilizations.

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Recent Graduates
Lauren Osborne, PhD 2014
“From Text to Sound to Perception: Modes and Relationships of Meaning in the Recited Qur’an”
Assistant Professor of Religion, Whitman College

Shatha Almutawa, PhD 2013
“Imaginative Cultures and Historic Transformations: Narrative in ‘Ras’il Ikhwān Al-Safā’”
Assistant Professor of Religious Studies, Willamette University

Mun’im A. Sirry, PhD 2012
“Reformist Muslim Approaches to the Polemics of the Qu’ān against Other Religions”
Assistant Professor of World Religions and World Church, University of Notre Dame

Graduate Workshops
The Council on Advanced Studies (CAS) sponsors interdisciplinary graduate research workshops in the humanities, social sciences, and divinity, designed to bring together faculty and graduate students from the University of Chicago and the wider Chicago area to create scholarly dialogue, to encourage cross-disciplinary collaboration, and to foster the exchange of ideas. Workshops include Middle East History and Theory, Medieval Studies, Gender and Sexuality Studies, Religions in America, Early Christian Studies, Jewish Studies, and Hebrew Bible. In addition, the Divinity Students Association offers a range of workshops and clubs: one for each area and others according to student interest. Current groups include Islamic Studies, the Women’s Caucus, and The Sacred Flame. To learn more, visit divinity.uchicago.edu/clubs-and-workshops.

Recent Courses
Our faculty teach over 100 courses each year in the academic study of religion. Please visit divinity.uchicago.edu/courses for current and past course offerings.

- Introduction to the Qur’an (Casewit)
- Introduction to Islamic Law (El Shamsy)
- Persian Poetry: Shahnameh 2 (Lewis)
- What is a Madrasa Education (Casewit)
- Persian Poetry: Mathnawi of Rumi 2 (Lewis)
- Women Writing Persian: Survey of Poetry and Prose (Lewis)
- Early Islamic Historiography (Donner)
- Islamic History and Society 1: Rise of Islam and the Caliphate (Donner)
- Islamic Origins (Donner)
- Islamic History and Society II: The High Caliphate (Donner)
- Shi’ism: History, Memory, Politics (Doostdar)
- Readings in Qur’an, Tafsir, and Sira (Sells)
- Islamic Love Poetry (Sells)
- Islamic Thought in al-Andalus (Casewit)
- Readings in the Text of the Qur’an (Sells)
- Animal Spirituality in the Middle Ages: A Medieval Menagerie (Robinson)
- Comparative Mystical Literature (Sells)
- Muslim Perceptions of the Bible (Casewit)
- Crusade and Holy War in the Medieval World (Pick)
- Qur’anic Exegesis (Casewit)

The University of Chicago Library
Our library is one of the largest and richest research collections (both in print and online formats) in the world. Religious Studies has been a core component of the collection since the University’s founding, and its current strengths match the research needs of the areas of study in the Divinity School. The Library has a full-time Bibliographer for Religion and Philosophy who holds workshops specifically designed for those studying religion. To learn more visit library.uchicago.edu.

UChicagoGRAD
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