

ET-665
The Daily Round and Life Cycle Events in Jewish and Muslim Law
Hartford International University

Fall 2024
M 5:00 – 6:50 PM
(HYBRID SYNCHRONOUS)

Instructors

Dr. Suheil Laher Office Hours: <i>by appointment</i> Email: slaher@hartfordinternational.edu	Rabbi Yitzchok Adler Office Hours: <i>by appointment</i> Email: rabbi@bethdavidwh.org
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Course Description

Jewish and Islamic Law are remarkably similar in scope, content, and theological underpinnings. This course enables students to explore the similarities and differences through a side-by-side presentation of frequently encountered issues in both systems. After a brief introduction to the sources, history, and schools of Jewish and Islamic law, the course turns to focus on the regulations concerning: Purity, Prayer, Birth and Death Rituals, Charity, Fasting, Food, Dress, Marriage and Divorce. The course equips students with practical knowledge of these topics, including how the classical regulations are implemented in the modern world.

Course Objectives

Informational:

- A solid foundational, practical knowledge of the core religious rulings concerning issues that are frequently encountered in daily life
- The core technical terminology and key concepts in Jewish and Islamic law

Spiritual:

- To encourage students to find spiritual fulfillment in their both worship and mundane activities through cultivating sincerity to God
- To inculcate in the students a sense of responsibility with sacred knowledge

Practical:

- Expose students to the diversity of opinion exists in both Jewish and Islamic law, and thereby to be more tolerant of differing views

Program Learning Outcomes

- Benefit from the formal study of and immersion in interreligious studies within a multifaith classroom context.
- Examine the lived and historic theological or legal traditions within Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, being able to explain how communities move from the text to structured beliefs and traditions, approaches, and doctrines within various communities.
- Articulate your own worldview or religious belief system while empathically and respectfully engaging people whose worldviews, religious practices, and religious beliefs differ from your own
- Identify the scriptures and sacred texts of Judaism, Christianity and Islam
- Demonstrate knowledge of the theological and legal traditions within Judaism and Islam.
- Express your ideas and perspectives clearly in oral and written communication.
- To demonstrate knowledge and skills for dialogical and constructive engagement with diversity.
- To demonstrate the ability to relate theory and practice in the social contexts in which a religion's communities exist.

This course meets the following program requirements:

MAIRS - Interreligious Studies: Elective
MAIRS - Islamic Studies: Elective
MAIRS - Islamic Studies: Beliefs and Practices
MAIRS - Islamic Studies: Religious Pluralism
MAC - Chaplaincy Elective
MAC - Islamic Chaplaincy Elective

In addition, this course has been approved for the BTIC certificate in Interreligious Leadership, a certificate that consists of 4 courses as well as other requirements. For more details, see: <https://www.bostontheological.org/certificates>

Assessment

Attendance & Participation	10%
Weekly Quizzes	20%
In-Class Presentations	25%
Reflection Papers (2)	25%
Final	20%

Books

Required

1. Holland, Muhtar, *Al-Ghazali: Inner Dimensions of Islamic Worship*. (Islamic Foundation, 1983). Available on DTL.
2. ONE of the following manuals of Islamic Law:
 - a) Hanafi: Quduri, *Mukhtasar al-Quduri*
 - tr. Tahir Mahmood Kiani. (Taha, 2010), or
 - tr. Suheil Laher, (PDFs provided, or sélections at <https://dewdropsweb.com/fiqh/>)
 - b) Maliki: Ibn Abi Zayd, *Risala*, tr. Alhaj Bello Daura, ([online versión](#))
 - c) Shafi`i:
 - a. Nawawi, *Maqasid*, tr. N. Keller
 - b. Ibn Naqib, *The Reliance of the Traveller*, tr. N. Keller (Amana, 1997)
 - d) Hanbali:
 - a. Qaddumi, *Qaddumi's Elementary Hanbali Primer*, tr. Joe Bradford. (CreateSpace, 2013)
 - b. Ibn Qudama, *Umdat al-Fiqh Explained*, tr. Hatem Al-Haj, 2 vols. (IIPH, 2019)
 - e) Zaydi: Mu'ayyid Billah, *Tajrid*, tr. Rassi Society, ([online version](#))
 - f) Ja`fari: Sistani, *Islamic Laws*, ([online version](#))
3. Ibn Rushd, *The Distinguished Jurist's Primer (Bidāyat al-Mujtahid)*, 2 vols. (PDFs: [vol 1](#) and [vol 2](#))

Recommended

1. Ibn Hajar, *Attainment of the Objective (Bulugh al-Maram)* (Darussalam, 1996).

General Background and History of Jewish Law

1. Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan, *Handbook of Jewish Thought*
2. Walzer, Lorderbaum and Zohar, *The Jewish Political Tradition, Volume One/ Authority*

General Background and History of Islamic Law

1. Ahmad, Ahmad Atif. *Islamic Law: Cases, Authorities, and Worldview*. (Bloomsbury, London, 2017)
2. Vikør, Knut S. *Between God and the sultan: A history of Islamic law*. (Oxford University Press, USA, 2005)
3. Weiss, Bernard G. *The spirit of Islamic law*. (University of Georgia Press, 1998)
4. Stewart, Devin. *Islamic Legal Orthodoxy: Twelver Shiite Responses to the Sunni Legal System* (University of Utah Press, 1998)

Class Outline

	DATE	TOPIC
1	9/9	<p>Prelude: Origins, Scriptural Sources, Doctrines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>When and where did each religion begin?</i> • <i>How does each define and apply the word ‘covenant’?</i> • <i>What are the scriptural sources?</i>
		<p>Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Gifts of the Jews by Thomas Cahill, pages 1-51 • Scriptural Sources for "covenant" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Genesis 9:8-16, Genesis 17:1-26, Exodus 3:22, Exodus 19:1-20:14, Exodus 31:16 ○ Quran: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3:76, 16:91-95, (general), 2:124-5 (Abraham) 2:40, 2:63, 2:80-83, 4:154-5, 5:12-13, 5:70 (Israelites), 5:14 (Christians), 3:187 (People of the Book), 3:81, 33:7 (prophets) • M. Draz, “The Early Life of the Prophet” in <i>Introduction to the Quran</i> (London: Tauris, 2000), 3-12. • M.A.S. Abdel-Haleem, “Quran and Hadith” in Tim Winter (ed.) <i>The Cambridge companion to classical Islamic theology</i> (Cambridge University Press, 2008) 19-32.
2	9/16	<p>History of the Two Laws</p> <p>Important Terms (a separate sheet of key terms will be provided)</p>
		<p>Readings</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handbook of Jewish Thought by Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan, pages 213-259 • The Jewish Political Tradition, Volume One/ Authority by Walzer, Lorderbaum and Zohar, chapters 1, 6 and 7 • Ahmad Atif Ahmad, <i>Islamic Law: Cases, Authorities, and Worldview</i> (Bloomsbury, London, 2017), 49-70. • RECOMMENDED: • W. Dihlawi, <i>Difference of Opinion in Fiqh</i>, tr. Muhammad Abdul-Wahhab, (London, TaHa Publishers), 21-42, 43-56. (PDF provided) • Knut S. Vikør, “From Practice to Method” in <i>Between God and the sultan: A history of Islamic law</i> (Oxford University Press, USA, 2005), 20-30.
3	9/23	What is holiness?
		Readings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rabbi Joseph Telushkin, <i>A Code of Jewish Ethics</i>, vol. 1 • Ibn Rajab, “The Sound Heart” in <i>The Key to Paradise</i> (Birmingham: Daar us-Sunnah), 55-65, (85-98 optional). • Ghazali, <i>Inner Dimensions of Islamic Worship</i> (Leicester, The Islamic Foundation, 1983), Foreword and Translator’s Foreword
4	9/30	Purity
5	10/7	Purity
	10/14	<i>NO CLASS (HIU CLOSED – Indigeous Peoples’ Day)</i>
6	10/21	Prayer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are we all praying to the same God? • Are there prayers that are common to both Islam and Judaism? Is commonality in prayer even possible? • There are three times a day for Jewish prayer and five times a day for Islamic prayer. What is the origin of these time-based protocols? • Does the language of prayer matter?
		Readings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jewish Meditation by Aryeh Kaplan • To Pray As a Jew by Rabbi Hayim Donin, chapter 1, pages 9-22 • Ghazali, Inner Dimensions
7	10/28	Clergy and Ordination <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the clergy roles in each faith • How does a person earn or achieve clergy status? • Are there clergy roles for women?

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there differentiated ranks or status in the clergy structures of Islam and Judaism today? • Role of clergy in adjudicating civil matters and criminal matters.
8	11/4	Sabbath, Festivals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The respective calendars of each faith / how we track time • How is the concept of a Sabbath translated into spiritual practice, and what are the bases of these practices? • Is it ever justified to violate the rules of a Sabbath? • What are the regulations and special prayers for the Eids?
9	11/11	Charity Fasting
10	11/18	Food and Drink The Jewish diet is called “kosher”. The Islamic diet is called “halal”. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are they similar? How do they differ? • Are they interchangeable? • Different diets can be social barriers. Is there a way for them to become social bridges?
	11/25	<i>NO CLASS (HIU Reading Days)</i>
11	12/2	Marriage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does clergy have any official status in western democratic society?
12	12/9	Divorce <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When might religious law supersede local governance?
13	12/16	Birth and Death Rituals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Birth • Maturity • Religious Conversion • Death