1. **Basic Information**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module Level:</th>
<th>6</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Credit Value:</td>
<td>15 credits</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lecturer:</td>
<td>Dr Carool Kersten</td>
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<td>GTA:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Semester:</td>
<td>Semester 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Day and Time:</td>
<td>Thursdays, 13-15 Hrs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dates:</td>
<td>25/09; 02/10; 09/10; 16/10; 23/10; 06/11; 13/11; 20/11; 27/11; 04/12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Note:</td>
<td>no lecture on 30 October because it falls in Reading Week</td>
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<tr>
<td>Room:</td>
<td>STRAND K0.19 KINGS BLDG</td>
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2. **Outline of Module Educational Aims, Learning Outcomes and Content**

(a) **Module educational aims**

A survey of developments in intellectual life throughout the modern Muslim world in order to come to an understanding of Muslim thought from the latter half of the 20th century onwards, through a combination of lectures, readings, and classroom discussions.

(b) **Module learning outcomes**

**Generic skills:**

- To engage competently and critically with primary and secondary sources.
- To present ideas in both written and oral form.
- To demonstrate the capacity to conduct research at a level appropriate to a final level BA course

**Module-specific skills:**

- To come to an informed understanding of various strands of contemporary Muslim thinking
- To develop the critical skills for identifying a variety of possible readings of the Islamic heritage and appreciate the multiplicity in interpreting Islam’s intellectual legacy

(c) **Module content: description and teaching plan**

This module provides an overview of the intellectual history of the contemporary Muslim world through ten sessions consisting of a combination of lectures and classroom discussion of assigned texts relevant to the topic. The discussion of the assigned texts will take the week after the lecture introducing the topic.

The module begins with an introduction to contemporary thought in the various parts of the Muslim world, identifying various strands of Islamic thinking and the problems of categorizing and classifying these different trends and types of contemporary thinkers. This followed by a thematic survey of the ways in which Muslims engage with their religious tradition (epistemology, Qur’anic studies) and deal
with present-day themes, including politics (secularism, civil society, democracy), law and human rights, dealing with ‘the other’ (religious pluralism, gender), and globalization.

25 September 2014 Introduction

Introductory readings:


2 October 2014 Lecture on (Neo)-traditionalist and ‘moderate’ Muslims

For Classroom discussion


9 October 2014 Lecture on Reactionary Muslims

For classroom discussion:


Further readings:


16 October 2014 Lecture on Progressive or Liberal Muslims?

For classroom discussion:


Further readings:


23 October 2014 Lecture on Islam as ‘heritage’: New ways of thinking about religion

For classroom discussion:


Further readings:


Kersten, (2009) ‘Indonesia’s New Muslim Intellectuals’ Religion Compass 3(6), pp. 971-985


30 October 2014 READING WEEK

6 November 2014 Lecture on New Approaches to the Qur’an and to Qur’anic Studies

For classroom discussion:


Further readings:


Soroush (2008) ‘I’m a Neo-Mu’tazilite’

**13 November 2014 Lecture on Politics in the Muslim world: Secularism, civil society, democracy**

For classroom discussion:


Further readings:


**20 November 2014 Lecture on Shari‘a: Law, ethics, and human rights**

For classroom discussion:


Further readings:

Alijani (2011) ‘Pre-Secular Iranians in a Post-Secular Age; The Death of God, the Resurrection of God’ in Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa, and the Middle East, 31(1), pp. 27-33


**27 November 2014 Lecture on Islam and ‘the other’ (religious pluralism; gender issues)**

For classroom discussion:


Further readings:


**4 December 2014 Lecture on The Muslim world and globalization**

For Classroom Discussion:


Mernissi ( ) ‘A Feminist Interpretation of Women’s Rights in Islam’


Further readings:


**REVISION SESSION (Date to be confirmed)**

**Classroom Discussion**


3. **Assessment** (Study Abroad Students should also see Section 4 below)

(a) **Nature of assessment**

There is no formative assessment (i.e. assessment that students are expected to submit, but which does not count towards the final module mark), but only two compulsory elements of summative assessment, both of which contribute to the final module mark:

- 1 x 2,500-word coursework essay, the title to be chosen from the list of five (5) questions provided at the end of this module syllabus; do not formulate your own essay title. This component of is worth 40% of your final mark. Each student will be given a provisional mark and constructive feedback on the coursework essay, both returned via KEATS, which may be followed up by a one-to-one tutorial in appointments to be advertised.

- 1 x 2-hour unseen written open-book examination, in which two (2) questions must be answered, selected form four (4) options. You are permitted to bring all assigned texts and your notes to the exam. This component of the assessment is worth 60% of your final mark

(b) **Coursework essay deadline, revision class and examination period**

- The deadline for the submission of the assessed coursework essay is 12 noon on Monday 3 November 2014. Feedback will be available from 24 November 2014 onwards.

- A one-hour revision class will be held on in the week of 8 December, time and venue to be confirmed

- The examination will take place in **Exam Period I** (January 2015).
(c) Scope of assessment

Coursework essay questions generally relate to topics covered in the first half of the module. Examination questions normally deal with most of the remaining topics. While care is taken to avoid overlap across both sets of questions, examination questions may be formulated so as to encourage analysis, in the same answer, of topics that were investigated in different sessions, including those that fell early in the module.

(d) How to impress the examiners

- In the assessed coursework essay and examination answers, successful students will need to demonstrate a nuanced grasp of any topic, an awareness of its context and a capacity to develop a well-reasoned argument that is convincingly supported by reference to suitable evidence and is presented in a structured manner using clear English. Make sure that you consult the generic Undergraduate Marking Criteria document.
- Poor English (e.g. grammar, punctuation and spelling) will lead to loss of marks. Inadequate scholarly presentation of the assessed coursework essay (e.g. over the styles of footnotes/endnotes and bibliography) will similarly be penalized.
- Discussion of the best approaches to meeting these requirements forms part of the teaching programme in the module. Students should seek advice if they are unsure of anything.

In preparing and submitting your assessed coursework essay, please note the following points:

(i) It must not exceed the word limit. The limit includes all footnotes/endnotes, but excludes the bibliography, which you should provide. There is a 5% tolerance: no penalty will be incurred for essays that are up to 5% over the word limit. Beyond that tolerance band, two marks will be deducted for every 5% of excess words until 50% is reached. After 50%, three marks will normally be deducted for each further 5% of excess words.
(ii) It must consistently be set out in accordance with a recognized citation system. You are strongly encouraged to follow the College’s ISS Citing References guide, which can be accessed via the website. Accurate citation of sources, in such a manner as to enable a reader easily to identify and locate them, is very important in historical writing. Please note that the presentation of your work, including the standard of English and the quality of source referencing and bibliographical provision, has a strong bearing on the mark given for it.
(iii) The first page of the submitted coursework essay must be a School of Arts & Humanities cover-schet (downloadable via the departmental handbook), with the requisite information inserted completely and accurately. Pay careful attention when giving your candidate number, which changes for each academic year, as your work cannot be attributed to you on the College systems if this information is either incomplete or wrong.
(iv) It must be submitted via the assessment submission section of the KEATS area for the module, by the published deadline. Late submissions will be treated as follows unless an extension has been granted by the Chair of the BA Programme Board of Examiners on the basis of an Extension Request Form (ERF), supplied with supporting evidence, or comes to be granted retrospectively:

Work submitted within 24 hours after the original deadline will be marked, but the mark for this element will be capped at 40%.
Work submitted more than 24 hours of the original deadline will not be marked, and the submission will receive a mark of zero.

An extension may be granted retrospectively, providing the ERF and supporting documentation is submitted no later than 2 weeks after the published coursework submission deadline. Note that extensions cannot be granted by individual module teachers. ERFs and NEAs can be downloaded from the Policy Zone of the College website.

Please also note the following points:

(i) Check that you understand the rules for submitting assessed coursework. Be aware that the deadline for this submission is FINAL.
Check that you understand College rules on plagiarism. Information about plagiarism is available via the College website at: http://www.kcl.ac.uk/library/help/plagiarism/index.aspx, and you should also have been enrolled on a KEATS plagiarism module.

Collusion also counts as misconduct. Think twice before circulating your work to other students.

(e) Marking policy

Work submitted for this module will be assessed according to Model 3, as modified by the BA Programme Board of Examiners. For a definition of this model, check the Marking Policy part of the departmental web pages, which can be found at: https://www.kcl.ac.uk/artshums/depts/trs/study/handbook/assessment/taught/markmodels.aspx

The examiners following Model 3 will apply the generic Undergraduate Marking Criteria, which can be found at: http://www.kcl.ac.uk/artshums/study/handbook/sguides/assessment/ugmarkcrit.pdf.

4. Assessment (Study Abroad Students only)

If you are studying at KCL for Michaelmas Semester only, then you must submit a second essay, in place of the 2 hour exam, a 3,500 word essay will be required to be submitted in hard copy to department office by 4pm on Monday 8th December 2014. Liaise with the course convener to be provided with a suitable title.

to be submitted in hard copy to department office by 4pm on Monday 8th December 2014.

5. What to Bring to Lectures

Apart from materials that will enable you to take notes, bring this module syllabus to every lecture. This is for a very practical reason. Since I may wish to refer to books/articles during a lecture, it helps if you can consult the reading lists there and then; I will not waste time either dictating bibliographical details or writing them up on the board. It is also important that you remember to bring (if you don’t bring a laptop) printouts of whatever primary sources might have been made available via KEATS. You will not wish to be the only member of the group who cannot follow a text that is being read and discussed. Sharing is not always convenient.

6. KEATS

The Syllabus, assigned texts (either in pdf format or links to the pertaining e-journal) for classroom discussion, a reading list useful for class preparation, essay writing and exams, as well as links to additional useful online resources are all available through the module page in the KEATS.

7. Assistance

- email me at carool.kersten@kcl.ac.uk
- visit me 3.31 Virginia Woolf Building. During my office hours; no appointment is necessary, but arranging a time in advance (by email) is helpful. Office hours in Semester [1] 2014–15 (excluding Reading Week) are: Wednesdays, 11am-12pm; Thursdays, 16-17 Hrs.

8) A note on Readings & Reading Lists

The classroom readings consist of texts that need to be studied closely as they will form the point of discussions during the weekly sessions. They also are the core texts for the final examination. The further readings are meant to provide you with further context and to help you with further preparation for assessments if you decide to write on that particular topic. Further online links are provided
through KEATS.

Key texts

Aside from reading the texts assigned for classroom discussion, it is important to obtain an overall understanding of the (intellectual) history of the contemporary Muslim world so that you can contextualize the specific topics covered in the module. The section on key texts is meant to provide you with guidance but is by no means exhaustive. You will benefit tremendously from reading one of the books under this section.

Additional readings

These reading suggestions are providing further insights in specific topics or parts of the Muslim world. They offer additional context and also provide more detailed and extensive guidance in preparing for coursework essays.

Suggested readings of session topics

The rest of this reading list is arranged by topic and provides concrete starting points for researching coursework essays and for further reading on other topics that catch your interest. You are not expected to read everything on each list. It is possible that some works may not be available when you visit the library, though you ought to search other libraries to which you have access, especially the Senate House Library, located in the complex behind the British Museum, and library of the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), located next to Senate House, just off Russell Square. Nevertheless, the more you read the better: you will be required to demonstrate, both in the assessed coursework essay and in the summer examination, not only that you understand the essential features of any particular topic, but also that you are familiar with different interpretations of that topic. It is never enough, therefore, to rely either upon a single book or upon lecture notes.

In addition there are links to leading academic journals in the study of Islam and the Muslim world which often contain the latest in scholarship on topics relevant to this module. You are strongly encouraged to source these independently for more material that can help you with your coursework essays and preparing for the final exam.

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**ESSAY QUESTIONS**

**CHOOSE ONE QUESTION**

(1) Discuss the challenges a contemporary intellectual history of the Muslim world poses to the categorization of different types of intellectuals

(2) Draw a comparison between Islamic (Neo)Traditionalist’/ ‘Moderate’ Muslims and Progressive/’Liberal’ Muslim addressing similarities and differences.

(3) Discuss why Salafis and Islamists can be considered as ‘reactionary’ Muslims?

(4) Why is ‘liberal Islam’ such a contentious term?

(5) How and why is reason and rationalism so central to heritage thinkers?

(6) Explain why heritage thinkers are critics not caretakers
In terms of selecting appropriate readings for answering the selected question, your first point of departure are the assigned classroom readings for the relevant sessions. The key background texts and additional readings in the reading list (also posted on KEATS) will provide an additional orientation towards the subject of your selected question. These are complemented by the specific readings under the various topic headings, which provide material for the more substantive engagement with the essay question. Also you are very much encouraged to source material yourself, because as per the marking criteria the highest marks are awarded for work that gives, among others, evidence of independent reading.

Carool Kersten, updated September 2014