



Christian-Muslim Relations: The Theological Dimension (TH-663)
Winter/Spring 2006

The course is designed to look at the ways in which Christian and Muslim perceptions of their respective religions and their relationships to one another have evolved through history, in conflict and in concord, contributing the conceptual "theological" heritage with which Christians and Muslims operate in the modern world. In contemporary perspective, attention will be given to ways in which scholars of each tradition are engaged in rethinking the relationship between the two faiths, and the reality that theological perceptions are colored by the particular contexts in which Muslims and Christians interact. **Meeting Day, Time and Dates:**
Wednesdays, from 4:30 p.m. to 6:50 p.m., beginning February 1

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[Course Syllabus](#)

GOALS AND PURPOSES

The course is designed to acquaint students with the various kinds of theological encounter that have characterized Christian-Muslim relations since the early days of Islam. It will cover scripture and interpretation, theological writings from the 8th to the 20th centuries, ways in which political engagement has colored theological interpretation, recent discussions of religious pluralism, and forms of theological dialogue.

READINGS

The following texts are available in the Hartford Seminary bookstore:

1. Required:

- o Hugh Goddard, *A History of Christian-Muslim Relations*
- o Khalid Abu El Fadl, et. al, *The Place of Tolerance in Islam*

1. Recommended:

- o Kate Zebiri, *Muslims and Christians Face to Face*.

[Note: other readings will be available on reserve in the Seminary library]

COURSE SCHEDULE

February 1 Introduction

February 8 Scriptural Bases for Viewing the Other

- New Testament
- Qur'an

February 15 Early Christians and Islam

- Christological Controversies
- Arguing with Muslims

February 22 Early Muslims and Christianity

- Theology and Law
- Arguing with Christians

March 1 ONLINE DISCUSSION [details to be explained]

March 8 Medieval/Reformation Period

- Crusades/ Jerusalem; Spain
- Protestant Reformers; travelers to Muslim lands

March 15 Recent Christian Writings on Islam (Pluralism)

- Protestant Missionaries
- Islamists and Theologians

[note: student presentations]

March 22 Recent Muslim Writings on Christianity (Pluralism)

- Popular
- Intellectuals

[note: student presentations]

March 29 ONLINE DISCUSSION [details to be explained]

April 5 Christian-Muslim Dialogue

- International
- U.S.

[note: student presentations]

April 19 Does Theology Matter on the Ground? Part I

- Southeast Asia

- South Asia

April 26 Does Theology Matter on the Ground? Part II

- Africa
- Middle East

Middle East Conclusion

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Read all of Hugh Goddard and selected readings (to be assigned) from Khalid Abu El Fadl. Reading Kate Zebiri is strongly recommended.
2. Read one article assigned to you (available in the library) and give a brief oral summary in class at the time designated.
3. Research either: (a) Recent Christian theological writing on Islam and/or pluralism, (b) recent Muslim writing on Christianity and/or pluralism, (c) Christian-Muslim theological dialogue in the international or national (US) arena. You will make a brief class presentation at the appropriate time, accompanied by a written essay of about 10 pages.
4. At the end of the course submit a 5-page reflection paper on the relationship between theology and historical circumstance, with specific reference to any of the materials considered in class.