

School of Theology and Ministry
Seattle University
901 12th Avenue, PO Box 222000
Seattle, WA 98122-1090

Fall 2009

Course Information

Abraham to Muhammad: Scripture, Canon and Interfaith Understanding

STMA 593; 3 credits

Thursdays, 1:30 pm - 4:20 pm, HUNT 100

Prerequisites: STMM 526

Instructor Information

Erica L. Martin, PhD

Office: TBA

Email: erica@martin-stoddard.com

Phone: 206-450-5376

Office Hours: Thursdays, 11am-1pm

Texts and Materials

Required Books

- James E. Bowley, ed. *Living Traditions of the Bible: Scripture in Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Practice*. St. Louis: Chalice Press, 1999.
- *The Qur'ān*, translated by M.A.S. Abdel Haleem. Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2008.
- Rebecca Kratz Mays, ed. *Interfaith Dialogue at the Grass Roots*. Philadelphia: Ecumenical Press, 2008.

Additional Required Materials

- Reading assignments not found in the required books will be placed on the ANGEL course website for students to download. These readings are clearly marked in the syllabus.
- Supplemental texts will be provided in class by the instructor.

Course Description

This class takes a close look at familiar figures, including Adam, Noah, Abraham, Lot, Joseph, Moses, Jesus, Mary and Muhammad, and the surprisingly different ways their stories are portrayed in Jewish, Christian and Muslim sacred texts. In addition to tracing the history of interpretation of these characters, this class addresses historical and theoretical issues relating to the origin and transmission of scripture, and helpful strategies for reading the texts of different religions side-by-side. On a deeper level, this class explores the potential of shared and divergent story as a basis for interfaith understanding and dialogue about religious pluralism.

Course Goals and Objectives

- This course aims to facilitate understanding of the similarities and differences between the presentation of scriptural characters (including Adam, Noah, Abraham, Lot, Joseph, Moses, Jesus, Mary and Muhammad) in Jewish, Christian and Muslim sacred texts.
- This course will develop students' knowledge of the history and conditions behind the writing and canonization of the Hebrew Bible, New Testament and Qur'ān.

- This course will expand students' awareness of the issues, problems and possibilities surrounding religious pluralism and inter-faith dialogue.

The above course goals and objectives will be achieved through a number of means. Students will read and complete a written reflection on the week's readings before arriving in class. This reflection will be posted in a Discussion Forum on the class ANGEL website. Students will read and respond to one another's posts. The instructor will often deliver short lectures providing background information and focusing the group on the subject at hand. In class, the session will be divided into two parts. In the first, the instructor will present a series of scriptural and para-scriptural texts depicting and/or describing the figure to be studied that week. These texts will be read aloud in class, studied and discussed in a "seminar" fashion with the occasional use of small groups. Following a short break, in the second section of class the instructor will pose discussion questions based on the reading and divide the class into small or large groups for discussion. These groups will often report a summary of their discussion to the rest of the class.

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Students will improve in their ability to read scriptural texts critically.

Assessment of Learning Outcome number 1 will be conducted on the basis of the students' critical interaction with scriptural texts in the course of class sessions and the student's use of scriptural texts in the Final Paper.

2. Students will increase in awareness of their own social location/ assumptions/ hermeneutics as they engage the text in their own lives, their communities, and the larger world.

Assessment of Learning Outcome number 2 will be conducted on the basis of the student's weekly Reflection Assignments and ability to articulate an awareness of their own social location/ assumptions/ hermeneutics as they engage texts in the Final Paper.

Course Requirements

Attendance

Students are expected to attend all class sessions. Failure to attend does not exempt students from assignment deadlines, and may result in a lower grade. If an absence is unavoidable, advance notification is essential to arrange for an alternative route to make up the course material. In the case of an emergency which causes an absence, contact the instructor as early as possible. Non-attendance will negatively affect the student's Class Participation score, discussed below.

Reading Assignments

The syllabus lists reading assignments pertinent to the week's topic. Readings are taken from the Required Books and a variety of chapters and links to online articles found on the class ANGEL site. Weekly reading load consists of 75-100 pages.

Reflection Assignments

Each week students will submit a SHORT (1-2 page) Reflection Assignment, in which you critically and thoughtfully engage the week's assigned readings. This assignment is designed to provide an opportunity for students to think deeply about the assigned readings before class begins and arrive prepared to engage in lively and critical discussion of the materials. Students will choose one of the questions regarding the week's materials posted on the Discussion Forum and write a 1-2 page (roughly 400-500 word) response, to be posted by Monday evening. Students will then read the posts of the other class members and respond substantively to at least two of them by Wednesday evening.

These assignments will be graded on a standard scale: an on-time assignment (both post and minimum of two responses submitted by the deadlines above) receives 10 points. A late assignment receives 5 points. A missed assignment receives 0 points.

Final Paper

The Final Paper is due in class on **December 3**. This paper is to be 8-10 pages in length, typed, double-spaced, in a 12 point Times New Roman font with standard margins, notated in Chicago Manual style (Turabian). Please schedule an appointment with Erica in which you will present your paper topic and consult regarding resources **no later than October 22**. Each student will present a preliminary summary of their paper/project to the class. The specifics of the Final Paper will be discussed in class.

The final paper will be graded according to the following criteria: a. on-time submission; b. adherence to style guidelines (including length, format and notation); c. conformity with the goals of the assignment as laid out in the paper assignment sheet and in class; d. use of materials, concepts and strategies covered in the class; e. overall quality of written work (strong thesis statement, clear structure of paper body, clear delivery of ideas and information, conclusion, etc.)

Class Participation

Having completed the weekly reading and writing assignment, please come to class prepared to engage in active and thoughtful discussion of the week's materials.

Each week I ask that you bring the following materials with you to class:

1. The Bible – both the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament, either bound together or separately. A note about translations: I prefer that you use the NRSV. Other acceptable translations for academic purposes include the NJB, NASB, and NIV. Unacceptable translations for academic study include the KJV, LB, TEV, Msg, etc. See me to discuss other translations if necessary.
2. The Qur'ān (see Required Books).
3. Occasionally, I may ask you to bring additional texts to class.

Class participation is evaluated not only on its quantity but also its quality. In addition to attendance at each class session, arrival with the proper materials, and focused engagement in small and large group class discussion, it is essential that each individual

is treated respectfully and their ideas and comments civilly considered. Disagreement is unavoidable, and discussion of disagreement is beneficial, but must always be conducted with the utmost care and consideration. This applies both to online and in-class discussion.

Grading Weight and Scale

Reflection Assignments	50% of final grade
Final Paper	30% of final grade
Class Participation	20% of final grade

Seattle University uses the following system of grading to indicate the level of individual student achievement. Each letter grade has a quality point value assigned for the grade achieved. Graduate students are expected to maintain a B (3.0) average. The quality point value is assigned to each letter grade as follows:

A	4.0 Superior Performance
A-	3.7
B+	3.3
B	3.0 Good Performance
B-	2.7
C+	2.3
C	2.0 Minimal Performance in courses applicable to graduate degree (<i>STM students must repeat STMM 553 and certain required courses.</i>)
C-	1.7 Courses graded C- or below will not count toward graduate degree or certificate
D+	1.3
D	1.0 Poor Performance
D-	0.7
F	0.0 Failing

Policies

Attendance: Please refer to “Course Requirements,” above.

Deadlines: Late work will be penalized unless explicit arrangements have been made between student and instructor.

Academic Honesty: The School of Theology and Ministry strictly adheres to the Academic Policy concerning Academic Honesty as published in the Seattle University Student Handbook.

Disability: If you have, or think you have, a disability (including an “invisible disability” such as a learning disability, a chronic health problem, or a mental health condition) that interferes with your performance as a student in this class, you are encouraged to discuss your needs and arrange support services and/or accommodations through Disabilities Services staff in the Learning Center, Loyola 100, (206) 296-5740.

Schedule of Classes and Assignments:

September 24

Introductions; Review of Syllabus

Class Topic: What is Scripture? What is Inter-Scriptural Analysis? How does Inter-Scriptural Analysis promote interfaith understanding?

October 1

Class Topic: Noah; The Writing and Canonization of the Hebrew Bible

Reading Assignment:

- Bowley, "Introduction" in *Living Traditions of the Bible* p.1-34.
- Reeves, "Scriptural Authority in Early Judaism" in *Living Traditions of the Bible* p. 63-84.
- Meyer, "Scripture in Modern Judaism" in *Living Traditions of the Bible* p. 191-206.
- Marc Zvi Brettler, *How to Read the Bible*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2005 p. 7-17; 273-278. [ANGEL]
- John Hick "Religious Pluralism and Islam," Lecture delivered to the Institute for Islamic Culture and Thought, Tehran, February 2005, p. 1-10. [ANGEL]

Writing Assignment: Reflection Assignment, in which you critically and thoughtfully engage the week's assigned readings. Choose one of the questions posted on the Discussion Forum and write a 1-2 page (roughly 400-500 word) response, to be posted by Monday evening. Read other class members' posts and respond substantively to at least two of them.

October 8

Class Topic: Abraham; Jewish Approaches to Religious Pluralism

Reading Assignment:

- Raphael Jospe, "Pluralism out of the Sources," *Studies in Christian-Jewish Relations*, Volume 2 (2007): 92-113. [ANGEL]
<http://escholarship.bc.edu/scjr/vol2/iss2/10/>
- David Ray Griffin, "Religious Pluralism: Generic, Identist, and Deep," in *Deep Religious Pluralism*, ed. David Ray Griffin. Louisville: Westminster John Know Press, 2005, p. 3-38. [ANGEL]
- Sandra B. Lubarsky, "Deep Religious Pluralism and Contemporary Jewish Thought," in *Deep Religious Pluralism*, ed. David Ray Griffin. Louisville: Westminster John Know Press, 2005, p.111-129. [ANGEL]
- MOVIE "Hineni: Coming Out in Jewish High School" Keshet, 2008

Writing Assignment: Reflection Assignment, in which you critically and thoughtfully engage the week's assigned readings. Choose one of the questions posted on the Discussion Forum and write a 1-2 page (roughly 400-500 word) response, to be posted by Monday evening. Read other class members' posts and respond substantively to at least two of them.

October 15

Class Topic: Adam; The Writing and Canonization of the New Testament

Reading Assignment:

- Metzger, "The Context and Development of the Christian Canon" in *Living Traditions of the Bible* p. 85-102.
- Constantelos, "The Bible in the Orthodox Church" in *Living Traditions of the Bible* p. 133-144.
- Fitzmyer, "Scripture in the Catholic Tradition" in *Living Traditions of the Bible* p. 145-162.
- McClanahan, "The Story that is the Bible: A Contemporary Protestant Approach" in *Living Traditions of the Bible* p. 177-190.
- Julie Galambush, *The Reluctant Parting: How the New Testament's Jewish Writers Created a Christian Book*. San Francisco: Harper Collins, 2005 p. 3-35. [ANGEL]

Writing Assignment: Reflection Assignment, in which you critically and thoughtfully engage the week's assigned readings. Choose one of the questions posted on the Discussion Forum and write a 1-2 page (roughly 400-500 word) response, to be posted by Monday evening. Read other class members' posts and respond substantively to at least two of them.

October 22

Class Topic: Jesus and Mary; Christian Approaches to Religious Pluralism

Reading Assignment:

- "Nostra Aetate: Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions," Proclaimed by His Holiness Pope Paul VI, October 28, 1965, p. 1-3. [ANGEL]<http://www.cin.org/v2non.html>
- "Dominus Iesus: On the Unity and Salvific Universality of Jesus Christ and the Church," 2000, p. 1-22. [ANGEL]
http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20000806_dominus-iesus_en.html
- Michael L. Fitzgerald, "Religious Pluralism – A Theological Consideration," *Catholic Biblical Federation* VI, 7, 2002, p.1-10. [ANGEL]
http://www.c-b-f.org/start.php?CONTID=05_02_05_03_04_00&LANG=en
- Stendhal, Kirster "From God's Perspective we are all Minorities," based on a lecture delivered on February 27, 1992, at the Center for the Study of the World, p. 1-8. [ANGEL]
<http://pluralismsunday.wordpress.com/2008/07/23/kristen-stendahl->

on-religious-pluralism/

- George Conger, “Muslim Priest and Buddhist Bishop-Elect are Raising Questions About Syncretism,” *Christianity Today* September 15, 2009. [ANGEL]
<http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2009/marchweb-only/112-53.0.html>
- Investigate recent statements bearing on religious pluralism from your religious tradition, denomination or community. Please choose a text, copy or print it out, and come to class prepared to summarize, evaluate and express your opinion on the statement.

Writing Assignment: Reflection Assignment, in which you critically and thoughtfully engage the week’s assigned readings. Choose one of the questions posted on the Discussion Forum and write a 1-2 page (roughly 400-500 word) response, to be posted by Monday evening. Read other class members’ posts and respond substantively to at least two of them.

October 29

**Final Paper
Topics Due*

Class Topic: Moses; The Revelation and Canonization of the Qur’ān

Reading Assignment:

- Michael Pregill, “The Hebrew Bible and the Qur’an: The Problem of the Jewish ‘Influence’ on Islam” *Religion Compass* 1/6 (2007): 643–659.
- Johnson, “The Lessons of the Garden: An Examination of the Scriptural Legacy of Islam” in *Living Traditions of the Bible* p. 103-132.
- Fred M. Donner, “The Historical Context,” in *The Cambridge Companion to the Qur’an*, ed. Jane Dammen McAuliffe. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006, p. 1-39. [ANGEL]

Writing Assignment: Reflection Assignment, in which you critically and thoughtfully engage the week’s assigned readings. Choose one of the questions posted on the Discussion Forum and write a 1-2 page (roughly 400-500 word) response, to be posted by Monday evening. Read other class members’ posts and respond substantively to at least two of them.

November 5

Class Topic: Muhammad; Muslim Approaches to Religious Pluralism

Reading Assignment:

- Mustafa Ruzgar, “Islam and Deep Religious Pluralism” in *Deep Religious Pluralism*, ed. David Ray Griffin. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005, p. 158-177 [ANGEL]
- Ali S. Asani, “Reflections on Islam and Pluralism: On Knowing the Muslim ‘Other,’” *World Muslim Congress*, 2007, p. 1-9. [ANGEL]

<http://worldmuslimcongress.blogspot.com/2007/04/pluralism-and-islam-asani.html>

- Roger Abdul Wahhab Boase, “*The Qur’anic model of religious pluralism: its relevance for Muslim-Jewish relations today*,” in *Muslim-Jewish Dialogue in a 21st Century World*. Centre for Minority Studies, History Department, Royal Holloway University of London, Egham, p. 17-37. [ANGEL] <http://eprints.rhul.ac.uk/616/>
- Abdullah Saeed, “Towards a More Inclusive View of the Religious ‘Other,’” Dunedin Abrahamic Interfaith Group and Otaho University Chaplaincy 2007 Annual Peace Lecture, p. 1-11. [ANGEL] <http://www.dunedininterfaith.net.nz/lecture07.php>
- Ali İhsan Yitik, “Islam and Pluralism: Does the Quran Approve of Religious Pluralism?” *Journal of Religious Culture*, 68 (2004), p. 1-5. [ANGEL] <http://www.iterasi.net/openviewer.aspx?sqrilitid=wzscbydrz0oodmxho4fdia>
- Christian W. Troll, SJ, “Bible and Qur’an in Dialogue,” *Bulletin Dei Verbum* 79/80, p. 31-38. [ANGEL] <http://www.sankt-georgen.de/leseraum/troll37.pdf>

Writing Assignment: Reflection Assignment, in which you critically and thoughtfully engage the week’s assigned readings. Choose one of the questions posted on the Discussion Forum and write a 1-2 page (roughly 400-500 word) response, to be posted by Monday evening. Read other class members’ posts and respond substantively to at least two of them.

November 12

Class Topic: Joseph and the Role of Second Temple Literature

Readings Assignment:

- Hal Foster, “Against Pluralism” in *Recodings: Art, Spectacle, Cultural Politics*. New York: The New Press, 1985, p. 13-32. [ANGEL]
- Brian Arthur Brown, “Noah’s Other Son,” in *Noah’s Other Son: Bridging the Gap Between the Bible and the Qur’an*. New York: Continuum, 2007, p. 45-54. [ANGEL]
- James Kugel, “Joseph in the Bible” and “The Assembly of Ladies,” in *In Potiphar’s House: The Interpretive Life of Biblical Texts*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994, p. 13-65. [ANGEL]

Writing Assignment: Reflection Assignment, in which you critically and thoughtfully engage the week’s assigned readings. Choose one of the questions posted on the Discussion Forum and write a 1-2 page (roughly 400-500 word) response, to be posted by Monday evening. Read other class members’ posts and respond substantively to at least two of them.

November 19

Class Topic: What is Prophecy? Five Righteous Men

Reading Assignment:

- Mays, “Introduction” in *Interfaith Dialogue at the Grass Roots*. p. 1-4.
- Swidler, “Understanding Dialogue” in *Interfaith Dialogue at the Grass Roots*. p. 9-24.
- Winter, “Doing Effective Dialogue – And Loving it” in *Interfaith Dialogue at the Grass Roots*. p. 25-34.
- Patel, Kunze and Silverman, “Storytelling as a Key Methodology for Interfaith Youth Work” in *Interfaith Dialogue at the Grass Roots*. p. 35-46.
- Howe and Heim, “The Next Thing to Dialogue” in *Interfaith Dialogue at the Grass Roots*. p. 47-60.

Writing Assignment: Reflection Assignment, in which you critically and thoughtfully engage the week’s assigned readings. Choose one of the questions posted on the Discussion Forum and write a 1-2 page (roughly 400-500 word) response, to be posted by Monday evening. Read other class members’ posts and respond substantively to at least two of them.

December 3

Class Topic: Synthesis and Conclusion

Reading Assignment:

- Kogan, “Bringing the Dialogue Home” in *Interfaith Dialogue at the Grass Roots*. p. 61-74.
- Mohammad, “The Art of Heeding” in *Interfaith Dialogue at the Grass Roots*. p. 75-86.
- Weiman, “The Power of Hope” in *Interfaith Dialogue at the Grass Roots*. p. 87-96.
- Hornung, “Conclusion: Making Dialogue Real” in *Interfaith Dialogue at the Grass Roots*. p. 97-108.

*******Final Paper Due*******

Class schedule is subject to change at the instructor’s discretion.