

Deconstructing “Muslim American”—Race, Nationalism, and Globalization
SOC349H1S
Winter 2021; Mondays 3-6pm

Instructor: Professor Tahseen Shams
Office Hours: Tuesdays 2-3pm EST (Online via BB Collaborate)
Email: tahseen.shams@utoronto.ca
Lectures: Online – Synchronous on BB Collaborate in Course Website
Teaching Assistant: Laila Omar (Email: laila.omar@mail.utoronto.ca)
TA Office Hours: TA Office Hours are online, by appointment only.

Course Description

Muslim Americans have time and again been cast as both threatening “outsiders” as well as examples of what makes the United States a “nation of immigrants.” What do these contestations teach us about how race, nationalism, and globalization shape immigrant identities? Taking Muslim Americans as a case study, this course will examine a range of topics, from everyday boundary-making to ongoing global politics pertaining to different Muslim groups in the United States, often drawing comparison with Muslims in other Western countries. More broadly, the course aims to unpack how various global and local/national forces shape the contours, dimensions, and meanings attached to an identity category. To that end, the course begins with some prominent sociological theories, such as intersectionality, double-consciousness, and Orientalism. We will apply these theoretical lenses to analyze issues of race, globalization, cultural citizenship, media representation, and political integration in Muslim American and immigrant experiences.

Course Objectives

The main goal of this course is to help students develop a broad understanding of the different ways in which global forces, such as international politics, globalization, and immigration, can shape individual and collective experiences on the ground. As such, while this course will be particularly helpful for students interested in contemporary geopolitics and Muslim immigrants, all students can apply what they have learned from this course to study any other population or issue related to race, nationalism, immigration, and globalization. The overall goal is to help students develop critical thinking, writing and presentation skills for communicating complex ideas.

Prerequisite

All students must have taken SOC201H1, SOC202H1, SOC204H1 plus two (1.0 FCE) of SOC251H1, SOC252H1, SOC254H1 prior to enrolling in this class. Students without this prerequisite will be removed at any time discovered and without notice.

Required Readings

Readings and more detailed instructions about assignments will be made available on Quercus.

Course Evaluation

Assignments	Points (100 total)
In-Class Discussion	20
Media Portfolio	20
Midterm Assignment	30
Final Paper	30

1. In-Class Discussion (20 points)

Students are expected to come to class having read the assigned texts so that we can engage in lively group discussions. Materials covered in these discussions (such as movies, music, images) are testable material. I encourage students to ask substantive questions and bring outside sources of information to the discussions. As a teacher, I believe students should be challenged to think sociologically and understand different points of view, even if they find some ideas to be uncomfortable. As such, I expect students to objectively assess the strengths and weaknesses of an argument—even if they disagree with it—and then present a convincing case to support their views using empirical evidence or facts. At the end of the course, students' performance will be evaluated based on how directly and thoughtfully the students addressed these questions, *in every class*.

- What is the main argument of the piece?
- What is the overarching problem/context to which the author of the piece is responding?
- What are the strengths of the author's argument? What did you like about the reading?
- Conversely, what are the weaknesses? What did you disagree with or think could be improved?
- How does the reading relate to other topics/readings we have discussed in class?
- What are some real-life examples outside the reading to which the arguments of the reading can be applied?

2. Midterm Assignment (30 points)—Due February 8

There is no midterm test/exam in this course. Instead, each student is to submit a critical literature review (2 pages, double-spaced, in 12-point font) of a topic of the students' choosing but one that is related to the course materials. The reviews are required to not just give an overview or summary of the existing research on that topic, but to critically analyze the current state of research, its strengths and weaknesses. First, each student is to identify a topic related to the course that they are interested in. Second, after researching the literature on that topic, each student should identify 1-3 gaps/limitations in the literature. Third, they are to construct 1-3 original research questions that could potentially fill those research gaps. It is important that these

questions are feasible—i.e., they could be conducted as a research project within 1-2 years. Fourth, in the conclusion, students are to clearly identify the method, sample population, and site that could be used to begin exploring the answers to their research questions. In summary, the midterm paper should have four main components: 1) brief overview of the literature, 2) research gaps or limitations, 3) original research questions, and 4) tentative methodology. There should be a brief references section, but it will not count towards the page-limit. I expect the proposal to be meticulously thought-out, extremely well-written, and concise. Students should expect the evaluation standards for both the midterm and final papers to be very high. The midterm assignment is designed to help students prepare their final paper.

3. Final Paper (30 points)—Due April 5

The final assignment of the course will be a research proposal: 4-pages long (excluding references), double-spaced, in 12-point font. Students are required to submit a proposal relevant to their research interests but with some focus on a Muslim community. However, the primary focus of the research question is not required to be on Muslims or Muslim Americans. For instance, Muslims (either in Canada, the U.S. or abroad) could be a reference or comparison group with another religious and/or racialized group. However, the topic should be relevant to the course, ideally the one the students chose for their midterm paper. I encourage students to start working on this assignment early on in the semester so that they can revise and submit a polished proposal at the end of the course. I expect the proposal to be extremely well thought-out, carefully prepared, with the most pertinent information: puzzle, research gap, research question, background/context/critical review of existing literature, methods, tentative timeline, intellectual merit, and broader impact.

The purpose of this assignment is to provide students with an opportunity to think carefully and craft a research proposal that they can use to launch a project either at U of T or in graduate school. Even if students do not intend to pursue research activities or academia, this assignment will push students to succinctly summarize and present their ideas to potential sponsors/reviewing committees/employers. Moreover, in both academic and non-academic career paths, like in non-profit, there is a constant need to procure grants and funding for projects. These funding agencies almost always ask for project proposals. This assignment will teach students the craft of finding a gap, presenting one's idea as important, and writing a strong proposal.

4. Media Portfolio (20 points)—Due April 5

Throughout the semester, students will collect various newspaper articles, twitter posts, social media posts (Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook), that relate to the topic of their research project. These items will likely be a mix of screen shots, hyperlinks and etc. You should aim to have one item per week and should by the end of the semester have 12-15 items in your portfolio. As you collect these items, you should pay attention to patterns and tendencies that you noticed in the pieces you collected. For each of these items, students will have to write a blurb of 10-12 sentences reflecting on these

questions: What topics do they cover? How do they cover them? Why do they cover them? How are they relevant to your research project? What are some concepts and discussions we had in class that are related to this post? This portfolio—compiled either as a PDF, word document, or PowerPoint presentation—should be submitted online at the same time student submit their final research paper.

Grades

Out of a total of 100 points, students will have to overall score the following to get the corresponding final grades.

90-100 = A+ 77-79 = B+ 67-69 = C+ 57-59 = D+
85-89 = A 73-76 = B 63-66 = C 53-56 = D 49 or below = F
80-84 = A- 70-72 = B- 60-62 = C- 50-52 = D-

Course Policies

1. Lectures: The lectures will all be delivered online live/synchronously at the regular course time (3-6pm, every Monday; see schedule below). On your course website, click on “BB Collaborate” from the menu to your left. Now, click on the course. You will see the list of lectures. Click on the appropriate lecture (such as, Lecture Week 1). I highly recommend you log on 10-15 minutes ahead of the scheduled lecture time in case there is any technical difficulties that need to be sorted out.
2. How to Submit Course Assignments: Students are to submit assignments online via the course website before midnight, 12am on the days the assignments are due as per the class schedule below. For each day the paper is late, 2 points will be deducted from the final score on the assignment. I will not accept late submissions without penalty unless for extraordinary circumstances and without documentation as outlined above. Grades will not be reweighed to earlier or later assignments.
3. Course Website: The course website on Quercus is available at <https://q.utoronto.ca/>. The site will contain the course syllabus, all handouts, links of interest and course announcements. Students are responsible for the content of all course materials.
4. Office Hours: I will hold office hours online via BB Collaborate every Tuesday from 2-3pm. Click on BB Collaborate on the menu bar to your left on the course website. Click on the course name. You will then see the option “Weekly Office Hours.” Click on it and drop by if you have any questions.
5. Lecture Attendance: Attendance is mandatory. Students unable to attend are responsible for obtaining notes on all material covered, including lecture material and course announcements. I will, however, record the live lectures and post them after each class.

6. Make-Up Assignments: Please read carefully! Students cannot make-up for assignments or submit late papers unless they missed the original date for reasons beyond their control (such as, illness, accidents, funerals). **If a student miss tests or submit assignments later for medical reasons, the student must contact me (not the TA) within 2 days of the missed test and declare their absence on the system (ACORN).** For other reasons, such as family emergencies or personal reasons, they must have the college registrar email me. **Students who have been approved by me to submit a late paper must do so within 2 days after receiving my permission.** Please note: I will not consider requests for extensions unless the situation is sudden, an emergency, or extraordinarily beyond control. **There will be no make-up for make-up assignments.**
7. Remarking: If you feel that your assignments or tests were not properly evaluated, you may request a remark. But, all requests for re-grading the course assignments should be made to your TA **within one week** of the date when the assignments are returned to the class. A short essay that clearly states specific reasons to justify the request and backs up these reasons with evidence from your assignment must be submitted to your TA. No re-grading requests will be considered if the request is submitted more than one week after the assignments are returned to the class. Note: compared to the original mark, a new grade can go up, be the same or go down.
8. Communication: Please direct your emails and questions to the course TA. When emailing, please use your utoronto.ca address. The university tells faculty not to reply to emails that use Gmail, yahoo etc. or other web accounts. Please also include "SOC349" and a brief description in the subject line, so your email can be easily prioritized. Emails will typically be answered within 3 business days. Keep in mind that for simple questions, email is the preferred method of communication. However, for longer questions, students should attend office hours and/or schedule an appointment with the TA or the professor. Before emailing a routine question, please make sure the answer is not given in the syllabus. Please note that just as you would/should not email or greet your workplace boss as "Hey Boss", beginning with "Hi Prof" is not a good idea. I would most likely not respond to those emails.
9. Making Appointments: TA office hours are by appointment only. If you would like to meet with your TA to discuss assignment feedback, course content or concerns, please contact them with 24-hour notice (via email). TAs will not hold office hours unless notified of a student's arrival.
10. Accessibility: If you require accommodations or have any accessibility concerns, please visit <http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility> as soon as possible.
11. Academic Integrity: Academic integrity is fundamental to learning and scholarship at the University of Toronto. Participating honestly, respectfully, responsibly, and fairly in this academic community ensures that the U of T degree that you earn will be valued

as a true indication of your individual academic achievement and will continue to receive the respect and recognition it deserves. Familiarize yourself with the University of Toronto's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>). It is the rulebook for academic behavior at the U of T, and you are expected to know the rules. Potential offences include, but are not limited to:

In papers and assignments:

- . Using someone else's ideas or words without appropriate acknowledgement.
- . Copying material word-for-word from a source (including lecture and study group notes) and not placing the words within quotation marks.
- . Submitting your own work in more than one course without the permission of the instructor.
- . Making up sources or facts.
- . Including references to sources that you did not use.
- . Obtaining or providing unauthorized assistance on any assignment including:
 - Working in groups on assignments that are supposed to be individual work
 - Having someone rewrite or add material to your work while "editing"
- . Lending your work to a classmate who submits it as his/her own without your permission.

Misrepresentation:

- . Falsifying or altering any documentation required by the University, including doctor's notes.
- . Falsifying institutional documents or grades.

The University of Toronto treats cases of academic misconduct very seriously. All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated following the procedures outlined in the Code. The consequences for academic misconduct can be severe, including a failure in the course and a notation on your transcript. If you have any questions about what is or is not permitted in this course, please do not hesitate to contact me. If you have questions about appropriate research and citation methods, seek out additional information available campus resources like the [U of T Writing Website](#). If you are experiencing personal challenges that are having an impact on your academic work, please seek the advice of your college registrar.

12. **Plagiarism:** Cheating and misrepresentation will not be tolerated. Students who commit an academic offence face serious penalties. Avoid plagiarism by citing properly: practices acceptable in high school may prove unacceptable in university. Know where you stand by reading the "Code of Behavior on Academic Matters" in the Calendar of the Faculty of Arts and Science.

Class Schedule

Week 1 January 11: Course Overview

Week 2 January 18: Theoretical Perspectives—Double Consciousness and Intersectionality

- DuBois, W.E.B. 1903. *The Souls of Black Folk*. (The Forethought, and chapters 1 and 2)
- Bayoumi, Moustafa. 2009. *How Does It Feel to Be a Problem? Being Young and Arab in America*. New York, NY: The Penguin Press. (Preface)
- Collins, Patricia Hill. 1991. *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment*. (Chapter 11)

Week 3 January 25: Theoretical Perspectives—Orientalism and “Clash of Civilizations”

- Said, Edward. 1979. *Orientalism*. 25th anniversary edition. New York, NY: Vintage. (Preface and pp. 1-15; 26-28)
- Prashad, Vijay. 2000. *The Karma of Brown Folk*. Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press. (Chapter 3)
- Huntington, Samuel. 1993 (Summer). “The Clash of Civilizations?” *Foreign Affairs* 72(3).
- Lewis, Bernard. 1990 (September). “The Roots of Muslim Rage.” *Atlantic Monthly*.

Week 4 February 1: Globalization, International Migration, and Islamophobia

- Barber, Benjamin. 1996. *Jihad vs. McWorld: How Globalism and Tribalism are Reshaping the World*. New York, NY: Ballantine Books. (Introduction)
- Rana, Junaid. *Terrifying Muslims: Race and Labor in the South Asian Diaspora*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. (Introduction)
- Cainkar, Louise A. 2009. *Homeland Insecurity: The Arab American and Muslim American Experience After 9/11*. New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation. (Chapter 3)
- Love, Erik. 2017. *Islamophobia and Racism in America*. New York, NY: New York University Press. (Chapter 1)

Week 5 February 8: Contested Identities—Race, Religion, and National Identity

- Li, Qiong, and Marilyn B. Brewer. 2004. “What Does It Mean to Be an American? Patriotism, Nationalism, and American Identity After 9/11.” *Political Psychology* 25(5): 727-739.

- Ajala, Iméne. 2014. "Muslims in France and Great Britain: Issues of Secularization, Identities and Loyalties Post 9/11." *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 34(2): 123-133.
- Mishra, Sangay K. 2016. "Race, Religion, and Communities: South Asians in the Post-9/11 United States." In *Desis Divided: The Political Lives of South Asian Americans*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press. (pp. 71-104)
- Gerges, Fawaz A. 2003. "Islam and Muslims in the Mind of America." *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 588(1): 73-89.
- **Midterm Paper Due by 11:59pm, on Quercus**

Week 6 February 15: Reading Week; No Class

Week 7 February 22: Political Incorporation and Mobilization

- Bakalian, Amy, and Mehdi Bozorgmehr. 2009. *Backlash 9/11: Middle Eastern and Muslim Americans Respond*. Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press. (Chapter 8)
- Haddad, Yvonne Yazbeck. 2009. "Claiming Space in America's Pluralism: Muslims Enter the Political Maelstrom." In *Muslims in Western Politics*, edited by Abdulkader H. Sinno. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press. (pp. 13-34)
- Sinno, Abdulkader H. 2009. "Muslim Underrepresentation in American Politics." In *Muslims in Western Politics*, edited by Abdulkader H. Sinno. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press. (pp. 69-94)
- Mamdani, Mahmood. 2002. "Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: A Political Perspective on Culture and Terrorism." *American Anthropologist* 104(3): 766-775.

Week 8 March 1: Varying Salience of Local and Global Contexts on Immigrant and Black Muslims' Experiences

- Karim, Jamillah. 2009. *American Muslim Women. Negotiating Race, Class, and Gender Within the Ummah*. New York University Press. (Chapter 1).
- Karim, Jamillah. 2005. "Between Immigrant Islam and Black Liberation: Young Muslims Inherit Global Muslim and African American Legacies." *The Muslim World* 95(4): 497-513.
- Mazrui, Ali A. 2004. "Muslims Between the Jewish Example and the Black Experience: American Policy Implications." In *Muslims' Place in the American Public Square*, edited by Zahid H. Bukhari, Sulayman S. Nyang, Mumtaz Ahmed, and John L. Esposito, 117-144. Walnut Creek, CA: Altamira Press.
- Guhin, Jeff. 2018. "Colorblind Islam: The Racial Hinges of Immigrant Muslims in the United States." *Social Inclusion* 6(2): 87-97.
- Pew Research Center. 2018. "Muslims in America: Immigrants and Those Born in the U.S. See Life Differently in Many Ways."

<http://www.pewforum.org/essay/muslims-in-america-immigrants-and-those-born-in-u-s-see-life-differently-in-many-ways/>.

- Elliott, Andrea. 2007. "Between Black and Immigrant Muslims, An Uneasy Alliance." *The New York Times*, March 11.
<https://www.nytimes.com/2007/03/11/nyregion/11muslim.html>.

Week 9 March 8: A "Global Muslim Community" and State Borders

- Grillo, Ralph. 2004. "Islam and Transnationalism." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 30(5): 861-878.
- Schmidt, Garbi. 2005. "The Transnational Umma—Myth or Reality? Examples from the Western Diasporas." *The Muslim World* 95: 575-586.
- Wuthnow, Robert, and Stephen Offutt. 2008. "Transnational Religious Connections." *Sociology of Religion* 69(2): 209-232.
- Abdi, Cawo. 2015. *Elusive Jannah: The Somali Diaspora and a Borderless Muslim Identity*. University of Minnesota Press. (Chapter 4).

Week 10 March 22: The Question of a Muslim Panethnicity and Solidarity

- Borzorgmehr, Mehdi, Paul Ong, and Sarah Tosh. 2016. "Panethnicity Revisited: Contested Group Boundaries in the Post-9/11 Era." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 39(5): 727-745.
- Karim, Jamillah. 2009. *American Muslim Women: Negotiating Race, Class, and Gender Within the Ummah*. New York University Press. (Chapters 2 and 3).
- Mandaville, Peter. 2011. "Transnational Muslim Solidarities and Everyday Life." *Nation and Nationalism* 17(1): 7-24.

Week 12 March 29: A Comparative Look at Muslims in Western Countries

- Reitz, Jeff, Patrick Simon, and Emily Laxer. 2017. "Muslims' Social Inclusion and Exclusion in France, Québec, and Canada: Does National Context Matter?" *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 43(15): 2473-2498.
- Zolberg, Aristide, and Long Litt Woon. 1999. "Why Islam is Like Spanish: Cultural Incorporation in Europe and the United States." *Politics and Society* 27(1): 5-38.
- Gallup. 2008. "Islamophobia: Understanding Islam in the West." Accessed February 12, 2018. <http://www.gallup.com/poll/157082/islamophobia-understanding-anti-muslim-sentimentwest.aspx>.
- Połńska-Kimunguyi, Eva, and Marie Gillespie. 2016. "Terrorism discourse on French international broadcasting: France 24 and the case of Charlie Hebdo attacks in Paris." *European Journal of Communication* 31(5): 568-583.
- Miera, Frauke, and Valéri Sala Pala. 2009. "The Construction of Islam as a Public Issue in Western European Countries through the Prism of the Muhammad Cartoons Controversy." *Ethnicities* 9(3): 383-408.

Week 13 April 5: Final Paper and Media Portfolio Due by 11:59pm, on Quercus

Final Paper Rubric

Criteria	Points
<p>Introduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly introduces the area of interest and the problem. • Uses a “hook” to capture the interest of the reader immediately. • Introduces the necessary information relevant to the course and topic of interest • Provides a thesis statement that captures the intellectual position of the researcher in relation to the problem. • Convinces the reader of the importance of the research problem in terms of its theoretical impact or practical significance. 	5
<p>Critical Analysis of the Existing Literature</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review focused on 1-3 specific items, such as what, when, where, how. • Analyzes, not describes or summarizes, the state of the field on the identified topic. • Review reflects thorough and careful research. • Identifies the gaps, problems and issues unresolved by the literature. • Uses the “funnel technique” to organize the literature review. 	5
<p>Research Question(s)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smooth thought transition from the literature review to the research questions. • States concisely the research questions. • The research questions clearly correspond to the research gaps identified. • The research questions are original, i.e., have not been asked in the literature already. • There is an intellectual merit or broader impact of the research question. 	5
<p>Methodology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describes the data gathering methods, sample, site, and design of research. • Justifies the methodology in relation to the research topic or problem. • The design of the methods is feasible and can be completed in 1-2 years. • The methodology can actually answer the research questions being asked. • States how the positionality of the researcher can potentially influence the results. 	5
<p>Intellectual Merit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convinces the reader how the research will extend existing knowledge. • Describes the limitations of the research. • Outlines potential future research directions building on this project. 	3

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describes the generalizability of the research project’s potential findings for different fields of study. 	
<p>Broader Impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describes specifically the practical implications of the study’s findings beyond academia. • Describes specifically and creatively how researcher will disseminate the findings of the research to different and broader audiences. 	3
<p>Writing Qualities and Organization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing is clear and concise. • Avoids excessive use of direct quotes. • Subheadings used to clarify organization. • Length appropriate - no more than 4 pages double-spaced. • Writing is in active voice, present verb tense as much as possible. • Grammar, spelling, citation style and punctuation are correct. 	4

