



Islam and the Middle East

Religion 154: Islam and the Middle East

Hour Examination

This examination is given with the expectation that you will work individually, not together with or in conversation with anyone else. In short, it is expected that your work will reflect **your own** thought and understanding. Furthermore, this exercise is intended as the equivalent of an “hour examination,” not a major research paper. My suggestion is that you read the question, think about it, prepare yourself by reviewing your notes and the material that you have read and then sit down to write, allowing yourself approximately 60-75 minutes to write and revise your essay. I also recommend that you write the exam at one sitting, perhaps in your room, a quiet place in the Library or an unoccupied classroom. I would also like to re-emphasize one point made above. The essay should reflect your own thought and understanding of the topic; it should not simply be a compendium of ideas taken directly from the book or class lectures/discussion.

Unless the deadline is extended, your essay is due by 5:00 PM on Friday, 20 Dhu al-Hijja 1426. You may submit it as a Word document attached to an email message, as a simple email message or as a printed document handed in during class or placed in Prof. Longstaff’s mailbox (which is inside the Religious Studies Department Secretary’s office on the 3rd floor of Lovejoy).

For the purposes of this essay, imagine that the Student Association of Colby College has decided to publish a booklet intended to increase understanding and appreciation of religious diversity at the College. The officers of the Student Association have asked you to prepare the chapter on Islam and to set forth briefly, but comprehensively, what one ought to know about this very important religious tradition. While you cannot write “finished prose” in one hour, let your essay be the first draft of the chapter that you will offer for inclusion in the booklet. [Note: this essay is intended to allow you to draw together what you have learned about Islam and to focus upon items that you consider most important for understanding and interpreting this religious tradition.]