

Graduate Program

Islam

Program Overview

The graduate program in Islam approaches Islamic Studies in all its facets and dimensions - historical, textual, and ethnographic, with a particular interest in connecting the study of Muslim texts and contexts with larger theoretical questions and conversations in the field of Religious Studies and the broader Humanities and Social Sciences.

Course offerings in the program provide students with a firm grounding in important historical and contemporary debates and arguments in the study of Islam and their relation to wider methodological challenges and problems. Courses in the Islam subfield combine rigorous thematic engagements with particular aspects of Muslim thought and practice in the past and in the present. The subfield focuses on acquiring critical skills required for independent research.

Collectively, the faculty of the Islam subfield bring together a range of research interests and specializations including premodern and modern Islam, Islamic Law, gender, Islamic history, Muslim scholarly knowledge, traditions and institutions, Sufism, and Qur'anic Studies.

Applicants should have advanced preparation in Arabic and/or other Islamicate languages relating to their proposed areas of interest. Before taking the general exams, students are also required to achieve reading competence in French or German by passing a language exam.

Students in this field are encouraged to make use of the resources provided by various other departments and programs, including but not limited to the Departments of:

[Near Eastern Studies](#), [History](#), [Anthropology](#), [Comparative Literature](#) and [Classics](#), as well as the Programs in [South Asian](#) and [Gender & Sexuality](#) Studies.

Sample Course offerings

- Major Trends and Debates in Islamic Studies
- Religious Authority in Modern Islam
- Studies in the History of Islam:
Legal Theory and Social Realities
- Representations of Sex and Gender in the Islamic Tradition
- Late Medieval and Early Modern Islam
- Qur'anic Studies

Weekly Workshop and Subfield Activities

The Islam workshop is a weekly forum that brings together graduate students and faculty of the subfield to share and engage works-in-progress. The workshop also features guest talks and workshops. In addition, as part of the workshop students are provided active feedback and training on grant proposal writing, job application process, and other matters of professionalization.

The subfield also sponsors guest lectures and conferences. Recent visitors have included Ahmed Ragab, Ali-Karjoo Ravary, Abdul Qader Tayob, Abigail Balbale, and Seth Kimmel.

Graduate Program

Islam

Faculty

Shaun Marmon

Associate Professor of Religion

Marmon's research interests include the study of slavery, gender, and ideas of "race" and ethnicity in Muslim societies; the relationship between Islamic law and medieval social practice; and the social and cultural history of the Mamluk Empire. She is the author of *Eunuchs and Sacred Boundaries in Islamic Society and Slavery in the Islamic Middle East*.

Tehseen Thaver

Assistant Professor of Religion

Thaver's research primarily centers on Qur'anic Studies, especially the Qur'an's commentarial tradition in the premodern period, with secondary interests in Sufism, and religion and politics in Iran and Turkey. She is currently working on her book project, *Beyond Sectarianism: Text, Hermeneutics, and the Formations of Religious Identity in Early Islam*.

Muhammad Qasim Zaman

Robert H. Niehaus '77 Professor of Near Eastern Studies and Religion

Zaman's research focuses on the relationship between religious and political institutions in medieval and modern Islam, on social and legal thought in the modern Muslim world, on institutions and traditions of learning in Islam, and on the flow of ideas between South Asia and the Arab Middle East. His most recent book is *Islam in Pakistan: A History*.

Our Graduates

Recent graduates in the Islam subfield hold tenure-track positions at institutions including George Washington University, University of California-Davis, California State University-Sacramento and the University of Illinois-Urbana.

Recent dissertations include:

- Islamic Modernism in Colonial Punjab: The Anjuman-i Himayat-i Islam, 1884-1923
- Omani Ibadism: transitions in modernity, encounters with Salafism
- In the shade of the *Sahih*: Politics, culture and innovation in an Islamic commentary tradition
- Coercion in classical Islamic law and theology

<http://religion.princeton.edu>