

ISLAMIC PHILOSOPHY IN THE MODERN ERA

Dr. Rachel Kantz Feder

Spring Semester

rachelkantz@gmail.com

Office Hours: By appointment

Short description:

This course will introduce students to the seminal debates and historical developments that defined the tradition of Islamic philosophy and its evolution into the modern era. It will begin with a survey of the formative period for medieval Islamic philosophy (falsafa) and speculative theology (kalam), concentrating on the translation movement (8th - 10th century), and the diversity of Islamicate thought. The course will focus on key figures and schools of thought while analyzing their contributions and discursive communities within the relevant contexts. In the latter part of the semester, we will study Islamic and Arab thinkers' relationship to 19th and 20th century European philosophy, particularly to moral philosophy, political economy, and existentialism. We will explore Arab and Muslim thinkers' reception of critical developments such as Darwin's evolutionary biology and the emergence of modern psychology. We will conclude by examining philosophical issues that shaped discourses on self-hood, decolonization, and modernity and found expression in various political and social currents in the modern Middle East.

Assessment:

Participation: 20%

Mid Term: In-Class Oral Presentation – 19%

Final requirement: Paper - 61%

8-13 pages long (double-spaced, excluding bibliography)

Attendance:

Attendance is mandatory. Students are permitted a maximum of three absences without penalty. Any additional absences will affect the final grade and may result in failure of the course.

Academic conduct:

Plagiarism is taken extremely seriously. Any instance of academic misconduct which includes: submitting someone else's work as your own; failure to accurately cite sources; taking words from another source without using quotation marks; submission of work for which you have previously received credit; working in a group for individual assignments; using unauthorized materials in an exam and sharing your work with other students, will result in failure of the assignment and will likely lead to further disciplinary measures.