Islam and Interreligious Engagement: Sample Course Descriptions for MDiv Students

Islam-Focused Courses:

Islamic Ethics

This course introduces central concerns, sources, and debates in Islamic ethics, and surveys a variety of subfields, including Qur'anic, prophetic, sexual, environmental, and medical ethics. Emphasis is placed on understanding the methods of Islamic ethics; connections between conceptions of the Divine, human person, and society; and how diversity, identity, and context shape ethical perspectives.

Islamic Religious Thought

This course introduces Islamic religious thought by exploring foundational sources, religious sciences, institutions, and debates related to theology, exegesis, law, and ethics. Emphasis is on connections and distinctions among various branches of religious thought; diversity within traditions; and major theologians, exegetes, scholars, and jurists. A foundation is provided for students focused on Islam, as well as for students seeking a robust introduction to Islam.

Muslim Global Histories

This course explores Islam, a religious tradition claimed by more than 1.6 billion practitioners around the globe. Our interdisciplinary approach will trace the historical development and contemporary conditions of the Islamic tradition. Viewing Islam from different perspectives offers an opportunity to experience the richness of this tradition, and interacting with primary and secondary source materials will allow students to engage with various layers of the Islamic experience.

Never Wholly Other: Religious Diversity in Islamic Theology and Exegesis

This course examines Islamic perspectives on religious diversity, other religious and non-religious traditions, and interreligious engagement. It involves exploration of primary Islamic sources (including the Qur'an and Hadith) and traditional and contemporary interpretations drawn from exegetical, legal, polemical, and theological discourses. Emphasis is placed on theological, exegetical, and contextual assumptions; interpretative methodologies; and on the relevance of the Islam-specific conversation to broader discussions of religious diversity and interreligious engagement.

The Qur'an – Engaging a Sacred Text

This course aims to introduce students to the Qur'an—the central touchstone in Islamic thought and practice—through intensive engagement with the text (in translation) and through exploration of the historical, practical and interpretative traditions surrounding the text. The course surveys
historical origins and development, highlights the Qurʾān’s pervasive role in the daily lives, rituals and artistic expressions of Muslims, and examines Qurʾānic form, content, and interpretation.

Women, Islam, and Interpretation

This course focuses on the complexity and diversity of Muslim women's attempts to assert agency and authority within Muslim communities. Great emphasis is placed on hermeneutical strategies, competing discourses, and identity and power negotiations. This course is relevant to students interested in Islam, in sex and gender, and/or in developing transformative interpretative strategies.

Non-Islam Focused Courses Commonly Taken by IIE Students:

Religions in the City: Introduction to Interreligious Engagement

The field of interreligious engagement is introduced through readings, site visits, spiritual practices, and self-reflection. Students aim to cultivate understanding of the phenomenon of religious diversity, central questions and concerns that arise in relation to religious diversity, and prominent approaches to this field.

Introduction to the Bible

This course offers an introduction to the core texts, narrative trajectories, historical backgrounds and theological concerns of the Bible as the canonical book of both Christianity and Western civilization. Key questions regarding the ethics of scriptural interpretation in the context of race, gender, class, ecology and an increasingly inter/nonreligious environment are discussed.

Communication Arts: Effective Live Communication in Varied Settings and Formats

Our ability to impact communities is wholly dependent on our facility as live communicators. Students gain appreciation for how live communication helps communities grow and thrive. Students practice in varied contexts, receive feedback, and gain awareness as live communicators. Upon completion, students are better able to engage with others consciously, meaningfully, and deliberately—regardless of circumstances or setting.

Pastoral Listening Practicum

Students learn and practice pastoral listening skills through directed practicum work in small groups. Emphasis is on nondirective listening and includes spiritual companioning and crisis intervention and suicide prevention.

Field Education Seminar I: Part-Time Concurrent Internship
Two contexts of learning are integrated: supervised work in field site and facilitated work in weekly integrative peer-group seminar. Through intentional, sustained practices such as theological reflection, professional and spiritual formation, and weekly supervision, students engage in action-reflection-action model for learning. The first half of a two-semester course, students are concurrently in supervised field placements for a total of 360 hours for the academic year. This course includes asynchronous work online and synchronous in-person work.

**Field Education Seminar II: Part-Time Concurrent Internship**

Two contexts of learning are integrated: supervised work in field site and facilitated work in weekly integrative peer-group seminar. Through intentional, sustained practices such as theological reflection, professional and spiritual formation, and weekly supervision, students engage in action-reflection-action model for learning. The second half of a two-semester course, students are concurrently in supervised field placements for a total of 360 hours for the academic year. This course includes asynchronous work online and synchronous in-person work.