

Syllabus for Christian-Muslim Relations-Spring 2014

Course Title: An Introduction to Christian-Muslim Relations

Instructor: Rev. Douglas Leonard – Executive Director of Al Amana Centre

TA: Rev. Justin Meyers – Director of Education

Course Credit: 4

Meetings Times: Thursday, 1:00pm-4:00pm

Room Location: Al Amana Chapel

Course Description:

This course is part of a semester program in the Sultanate of Oman, a country noted for its openness, tolerance, and hospitality. This makes it an ideal place to introduce students to Arab culture and religion, and the dynamics of relations between Christianity and Islam. Because Oman's religious and political leadership is currently articulating the importance of interfaith and intercultural cooperation, it provides an engaging environment in which one can explore approaches and possibilities of working together for the common good.

Course Objectives:

A cross-cultural, immersion experience encompasses many areas of exposure and learning. To help focus the experience, the course will examine four inter-related areas of Christian-Muslim relations. Understanding the differences and convergences of these areas helps one to develop a scholarly approach that integrates faith perspectives.

Area One: Introduction to Islam. We will begin by reading and discussing Reza Aslan's introduction to Islam *No God But God*, combined with excerpts from John Esposito's *The Straight Path* to provide students with a foundational understanding of Islam. Being in Oman allows one to learn about Islam from a Muslim perspective (Sunni, Shia, and Ibadi). Guest lecturers include professors of Islam from Oman's Sultan Qaboos University and the sharia law seminary (Institute of Sharia Studies).

Area Two: A Christian theology of other religions. How one approaches Christian-Muslim relations is largely determined by one's underlying theology of religious pluralism. Therefore it is important to have a sense of one's perspective in entering into interfaith relations, as well as assessing how the experience of engaging the 'other' informs one's theology.

Area Three: The history of Christian-Muslim relations. It is here one can see the various modes and means through which people of these faiths have engaged one another over the past 1,400 years. This aids one in

understanding the importance of contextual issues when building relationships with Muslims.

Area Four: A review of the foundations of Christian-Muslim relations in Oman. Through an examination of Ibadi law, the history of Oman's relations with western nations such as the UK and the United States, and speeches written by Oman's religious leaders, we will develop an understanding of Oman's current approach to religious coexistence.

Course Method:

The course will consist of assigned readings, lectures, discussions, student-led colloquies, guided inter-cultural encounters, inter-religious dialogues with Muslim friends, and opportunities to engage the people of Oman at a variety of levels.

Course Requirements:

- Attendance and active participation in all lectures, colloquies and meetings, and familiarity with assigned readings.
- Student led colloquies: as part of the course, each student will be assigned one section for which he/she will give a 20 minute lecture reviewing the material for that class period, summarizing the major themes and issues, identifying questions for discussion, and leading a group discussion. A 2-3 page brief on the topic will be turned in and distributed to the group in advance of the session.
- In preparation for small group discussions, students will be assigned a specific discussion role (facilitator, devil's advocate, creative connector, passage master). A one-page synopsis of readings and prepared material will be due one day prior to the scheduled discussion.
- Two short analytical essays, 3-5 pages each, will be due periodically throughout the semester. Students will receive a prompt with information regarding the paper one-week prior to its due date.
- A final paper, 10 pages (3,000 words), will be due at the end of the semester. It will address how a student's experience and increased knowledge in this area informs his/her theological understanding of, and engagement in, Christian-Muslim relations.

Course Grading:

Attendance and participation (should demonstrate reading comprehension):	10%
Discussions:	10%
Colloquies:	10%
Two analytical essays:	30%
Final reflection paper:	40%

Course Schedule:

Week	Topic	Reading
Thursday, February 6 th 1:00 – 4:00 pm	Syllabus review, Opening discussion, Issues in Christian-Muslim Relations	
Thursday, February 13 th 1:00 – 4:00 pm	Introduction to Islam The early history of Islam Student Presentation #1	Aslan, Preface through chapter 3 (p. 75)
Thursday, February 20 th 1:00 – 4:00 pm	Introduction to Islam Establishing authority and political structure of Islam Student Presentation #2	Aslan, Chapters 4 – 6 (p. 173)
Thursday, February 27 th 4:00 – 7:00 pm	Introduction to Islam Distinctions between the major branches and expressions of Islam (Sunni, Shia, Sufi, Ibadi) Student Presentation #3	Aslan, Chapters 7 – 8 (p. 224) Hoffman, <u>The Essentials of Ibadi Islam</u> , pp. 3-27
Thursday, March 6 th 1:00 – 4:00 pm	Introduction to Islam Modernity and Islam Contemporary Trends Human Rights and Gender Issues First 3-5 page paper due	Aslan, Chapters 9 - 11 Esposito, <u>What Everyone Needs to Know About Islam</u> , pp. 87- 109. Schimmel, <u>My Soul As A Woman</u> , pp. 17-25.
Thursday, March 13 th 1:00 – 4:00 pm	Theology of Religions: Replacement Theory Student Presentation #4	Knitter, Preface - 60
Thursday, March 20 th 1:00 – 4:00 pm	Theology of Religions: Fulfillment Model Student Presentation #5	Knitter, 63-106
Sunday, March 23 rd 1:00 – 4:00 pm	Theology of Religions: Mutuality Model Student Presentation #6	Knitter, 109-169
Sunday, April 3 rd 1:00 – 4:00 pm	Theology of Religions: The Acceptance Model Second 3-5 page paper due	Knitter, 173-247
Thursday, April 10 th Spring Break	Spring Break	Spring Break Read Goddard, Introduction

		through Chapter 3 (p. 49)
Thursday, April 17 th 1:00 – 4:00 pm	A brief History of Christian-Muslim Relations	Goddard, 50-104
Thursday, April 24 th 1:00 – 4:00 pm	Oman's approach to Religious Co-existence and Christian-Muslim Relations	Leonard, <i>A Historical Survey of US-Omani Relations 1790-present</i> , read whole chapter Leonard, <i>A Basis for Oman's Religious Tolerance: A review of the late 19th and early 20th century Ibadi jurisprudence regarding coexistence with Jews and Christians</i> . Read whole chapter
Thursday, May 1 st 1:00 – 4:00 pm	Final research paper due	

Required Reading:

Aslan, Reza. *No god but God: The Origins, Evolution, and Future of Islam*. Random House, 2006.

Goddard, Hugh. *A History of Christian-Muslim Relations*. Chicago: New Amsterdam Books, 2000.

Knitter, Paul F. *Introducing Theologies of Religions*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2002.
Reading Packet, provided

Recommended Reading:

A Common Word between Us and You, by the Royal Aal al-bayt Institute.

www.acommonword.com

Baily, Betty Jane & J. Martin. *Who Are the Christians in the Middle East?* Eerdmans, 2003.

Bos, Michael S. "Christian-Muslim Relations: Testing Our Credibility." *The Reformed Review*. Vol 61, No. 2 (Spring 2008), pp. 44-51.

Christian Witness to Muslims: An Introduction to the Issues, by the Commission on Theology, Reformed Church in America, 1995.

Cragg, Kenneth. *The Call of the Minaret*, 3rd ed. Oneworld Publications, 2000.

Crucified One is Lord: Confessing the Uniqueness of Christ in a Pluralist Society, by the Commission on Theology, Reformed Church in America. 1996,

<http://www.rca.org/NETCOMMUNITY/Page.aspx?&pid=1611&srcid=2058>

Eickelman, Dale F. "Oman," in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World*. Oxford University Press, 1995.

Ernst, Carl W. *Following Mohammad: Rethinking Islam in the Contemporary World*. University of North Carolina Press, 2003.

Esposito, John L. *Islam: The Straight Path*, 3rd ed., rev. & upd. Oxford University Press, 2004.

Ford and Pecknold *The Promise of Scriptural Reasoning*. Blackwell Publishing, 2006. pp. 1-57.

Nasr, Seyyed Hossein. *Islam: Religion, History, and Civilization*. HarperSanFrancisco, 2002.

Oman – Country Profile, by the Oxford Business Group,

<http://www.oxfordbusinessgroup.com/country.asp?country=31>

- Peterson, J.E. "Oman's Diverse Society: Northern Oman." *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 58, No. 1 (Winter, 2004), pp. 32-51.
- Peterson, J.E. "Oman: Three and a Half Decades of Change and Development." *Middle East Policy*, Vol. 11, No. 2 (Summer 2004), pp. 125-137,
http://www.jepeterson.net/sitebuildercontent/sitebuilderfiles/Oman_Decades_of_Development.pdf
- Ubaydli, Ahmed "Ibadiyah" & "Ibadi Dynasty," in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World*. Oxford University Press, 1995.
- Zebiri, Kate. *Muslims and Christians Face to Face*. Oneworld Publications, 1997.

COURSE SYLLABUS

Beginning Modern Standard Arabic

Arabic 100 (6 credits, 90 class hours)

COURSE OVERVIEW

The Arabic Language is the fifth most commonly spoken language in the world with an estimated 280 million native speakers. Additionally, Arabic is the liturgical and scriptural language for an estimated 1.7 billion Muslims, about a quarter of the world's population. A basic knowledge of the Arabic language is essential in order to understand Islam and to relate to Muslims. This course offers two hours of Arabic instruction, four days each week combined with conversational practice. Students often begin the course with little or no previous knowledge of Arabic. By the end of the course students will have acquired a variety of skills such as reading and listening comprehension, written and oral expression, as well as an insight into the Omani and Gulf Arab dialect. Throughout the beginner's course, students are provided with the basics of Arabic language such as the alphabet, pronunciation and general understanding of the Arabic grammar. One semester of Arabic at the Al Amana Centre is equal to one year of university level Arabic. This course provides a strong foundation for students preparing for careers in foreign service in Arab countries, with corporations who do business in Arab nations, post-graduate degrees in Middle Eastern studies, Islamic studies, and Christian-Muslim Relations.

REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS

- *Alif Baa. Introduction to Arabic Letters and Sounds.* Eds. Kristen Brustad, Mahmoud Al-Batal, and Abbas Al-Tonsi. Georgetown UP, 2010.
- *Al Kitaab fi Ta'allum al-'Arabiyya I. A Textbook for Beginning Arabic: Part One.* Eds. Kristen Brustad, Mahmoud Al-Batal, and Abbas Al-Tonsi. Georgetown UP, 2011.
- Additional materials, such as texts and exercises, will be presented in class.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This is a four-skill language course, in which you will develop listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in Arabic. After completing the Language and Culture requirement, students who have attended classes regularly and successfully completed all listening, written, and curricular assignments, as well as all exams (with a minimum grade of C) will be able to:

- a) engage in a basic conversation with another student or professor in Arabic and communicate key attributes about one's self to another person;
- b) use and understand a range of essential vocabulary words related to everyday life situation (e.g., negotiate prices of an item in the Souq (market) and to hire a taxi cab for a short trip using only Arabic);

- c) provide general information about Arab cultures (e.g., geography, weather, and customs, including culturally important expressions commonly used among friends and acquaintances) and participate in a simple conversation in Arabic with Omani people in the tribal areas of the interior;
- d) show greater cultural sensitivity and awareness of the differences and similarities that comprise other cultures and their own culture (e.g., practices of hospitality);
- e) weigh evidence, tolerate ambiguity, and develop the skills necessary for cross-cultural adjustment (e.g., observation, analytical, and interpretation skills, etc.);
- f) explain the grammatical structure of the Arabic language and how that relates to the Islamic tradition and the communal organization of traditional Arab society;
- g) understand basic Omani dialect when speaking with the home stay family and in the streets;
- h) read simple, authentic texts (e.g., selected verses/passages from the Quran) and pick out the main idea through the integration of new vocabulary and grammatical structures;
- i) pronounce Arabic well enough to be comprehensible to an Arabic speaker who is accustomed to conversing with learners of Arabic as a foreign language;
- j) use their newly acquired linguistic and cultural knowledge to explain how Islam and Christianity use the language of scripture, how such usage reflects cultural specificities, and how this knowledge can aid students studying Christian-Muslim relations in the development of genuine neighborly friendships, based on empathy, mutual understanding and dialogue, as the Scriptures encourage us to do.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Assignments

Participation in class: Attendance is obligatory. Furthermore, each student is expected to participate in class and to be adequately prepared to do so. During the excursions you will be given small assignments pertaining to language use and practice. Assignments will be discussed and corrected in class. You will be graded on quantity and quality of participation (10% of overall grade).

Tests: Throughout the semesters you will be randomly presented with a number of smaller tests or quizzes to test different language skills in the classroom. These are collected and graded periodically (20% of the final grade).

Homework: You are expected to accomplish the given homework within the announced time frame. Homework assignments can be either collected, or corrected or presented in class. You will be graded on the extent and regularity of accomplishment, as well as their correctness (10% of the final grade).

Midterm exam: The midterm exam takes place after three and a half weeks of instruction (20% of final grade).

Final exam: The final exam is taken at the very end of the course and examines your development in all skills (40% of final grade).

EVALUATION AND GRADING CRITERIA

Grading

See Assignments section for grading breakdown.

Grades: The grading scale used for this course is the following:

A+	100	A	95-99	A-	92-95
B+	89-91	B	86-88	B-	83-85
C+	80-82	C	77-79	C-	74-76
D+	72-73	D	70-71	Below 70 =	F

Evaluation

Students receive feedback from instructors throughout the course. Evaluation is a reflection of the student's proficiency, participation, engagement and progress.

SELECTED CONTENT TOPICS

- Arabic names
- Family and friends
- Presentations
- Family in the Arab world
- Universities and colleges
- Food and restaurants

SELECTED GRAMMAR TOPICS

- The Alphabet
- Grammatical gender
- The definite article
- Asking questions
- Subject pronouns
- Non-human plural agreement
- Possessive pronouns
- The verbal noun
- Composite nouns (genitive composition)
- The present tense
- Negation
- Adverbs
- Verbal phrase
- Nominal phrase
- Why?

Oman Culture and Society

Spring Semester 2014

Instructor: Ahmed Al Mukhaini Cell number 99314491
email: jicfa@yahoo.com

Student support: Doug Leonard, Justin Myers

Course Description

Oman is a microcosm of the culture of the Arabian Peninsula and in some ways is representative of the larger “Arab-World” a region encompassing the 22 countries of the Arab League from Morocco in Northwest Africa to the Oman itself, the country on the far eastern edge of the Arab World. While diverse in culture, the larger region comprised of Arab countries is united by a common language - Arabic, a shared faith - Islam, and a approximate political affiliation based on a shared experience in relation to mutual membership in the Arab League and respective dealings with Western colonial powers. To understand the culture, society and people of Oman is to understand in more depth the complexities, intricacies and importance of the Arab World.

Course Objectives

To provide students with an introduction to the history, social structure, politics, religion, economy and culture of Oman. Upon completion of this course students will:

- Gain an understanding of the Arab World through the detailed case study of Oman. Students will be better able to articulate how Oman is exemplary of the Arab World and how it is unique.
- Develop an appreciation for the customs and culture of Omani society and in turn of a greater pan-Arab culture.
- Discover an Omani perspective of the political history of the Gulf region in relation to regional and global foreign policy.

Lecture and Session Schedule

Week 1:

Monday, February 3rd, 2:00 pm – 3:30 pm at SALSO Legal Training Center Classroom (“SLTC”).

Introduction to the course and assessment methods. General questions and observations.

Tuesday, February 4th, 2:00 pm – 3:30 pm at SLTC

Topic: Oman: A voyage through Time: an illustrated and interactive presentation exploring the history of Oman from its pre-history to modern day Oman.

Week 2:

Monday, February 10th, 2:00 pm – 3:30 pm at SLTC

Topic: Construction of National Identity in Oman: an illustrated and interactive presentation exploring the evolution of Omani identity post Sultan Qaboos. Religious and political aspects are discussed too.

Tuesday, February 11th, 2:00 pm – 3:30 pm at SLTC

Topic: Tribes and Omani Society. This illustrated and interactive presentation aims to build on the previous topic to provide a close up examination of the tribe as a social organization.

Week 4:

Monday, February 17th, 2:00 pm – 3:30 pm at SLTC

Topic: Political Institutions of the State and Tribal Patronage. This illustrated and interactive presentation aims to explain the different political organizations and apparatus of the state in Oman as well as highlight the entrenchment of tribalism in the Omani political landscape.

Tuesday, February 18th, 2:00 pm – 3:30 pm at SLTC

Topic: Religious Underpinnings of the political landscape in Oman. This illustrated and interactive presentation aims to present various religious aspects and themes impacting politics and polity in the Muslim world and Oman.

Week 5:

Monday, February 24th, 2:00 pm – 3:30 pm at SLTC

Topic: Social groups and stigmas in Omani society. This illustrated and interactive presentation aims to provide an overview of the various social groups and stigmas, and associated stereotypes, from a tribal perspective.

Tuesday, February 25th, 2:00 pm – 3:30 pm at SLTC

Topic: Omanis in East Africa. This illustrated and interactive presentation aims to focus on this cultural group in Oman, highlighting some historical and political baggage.

Week 6:

Monday, March 3rd, 2:00 pm – 3:30 pm at SLTC

Topic: Oman's foreign policy.

Tuesday, March 4th, 2:00 pm – 3:30 pm at SLTC

Topic: Oman: Economic Development and Challenges

Week 7:

Monday, March 10th, 2:00 pm – 3:30 pm at SLTC

Topic: Ethics and Morality in Islam

Tuesday, March 11th, 2:00 pm – 3:30 pm at SLTC

Topic: Islamic Perspective on other religions and faiths: do non-heavenly religions exist?

Analytical essay due date.

Week 8:

Monday, March 17th, 2:00 pm – 3:30 pm Student(s) Presentation at SLTC

Tuesday, March 18th, 2:00 pm – 3:30 pm Research time at al Amana Centre

Week 9:

Monday, March 24th, 2:00 pm – 3:30 pm Student(s) Presentation at SLTC

Essays returned with grades and comments.

Tuesday, March 25th, 2:00 pm – 3:30 pm Research time at al Amana Centre

Week 10:

Monday, March 31st, 2:00 pm – 3:30 pm Student(s) Presentation at SLTC

Tuesday, April 1st, 2:00 pm – 3:30 pm Research time at al Amana Centre

Week 11: Spring Break

No sessions on April 7th and 8th

Week 12:

Monday, April 14th, 2:00 pm – 3:30 pm Student(s) Presentation at SLTC

Tuesday, April 15th, 2:00 pm – 3:30 pm Research time at al Amana Centre

Week 13:

Monday, April 21st, 2:00 pm – 3:30 pm Student(s) Presentation at SLTC

Portfolio/ scrapbook/ journal due date.

Research paper due date.

Tuesday, April 22nd, 2:00 pm – 3:30 pm Research time at al Amana Centre

Week 14:

Monday, April 28th, 2:00 pm – 3:30 pm Student(s) Presentation at SLTC

Tuesday, April 29th, 2:00 pm – 3:30 pm Research time at al Amana Centre

Papers returned with final course grade

Week 15: Reflection week

Monday, May 5th, 2:00 pm – 3:30 pm Student(s) Presentation at SLTC

Field trips

- Visit to Bait Al Zubair museum of Omani history and cultural heritage
- Visit to the Omani Military Museum (National Armed Forces Museum)
- Tour of archaeological sites of interior
- Tour of Nizwa Fort and lecture on political tension between Imamate and Sultanate.

Required Texts:

Al Rowas, Abdul Aziz bin Mohammed. Oman in History. Immel Publishing, London, UK. 1995. Selections available in reading packet

Al Zubair, Mohammad, and McBrierty, Vincent. Oman: Ancient Civilization, Modern Nation. Trinity college Dublin Press, Dublin, Ireland. The Bait Al Zubair Foundation LLC, Muscat, Oman. 2004. Selections available in reading packet

Other recommended readings as determined by Instructor, such as:

- Jepeterson.net
- The Oman Wahiba Sands Project by R.W. Dutton & N. de N. Winsler. (Geographical Journal Vol.153, No.1, March 1987, pp. 48-58)
- The Musandam (Northern Oman) Expedition 1971/1972 by N.L. Falcon. (Geographical Journal Vol.139, No.1, Feb 1973, pp. 1-19)
- The Shihuh of Northern Oman: a contribution to cultural ecology by Walter Dostal. (Geographical Journal Vol.138, No.1, March 1972, pp. 1-7)
- The Oman question: the background to the political geography of South-East Arabia by J.C. Wilkinson. (G.J. Vol.137, No.3, Sept. 1971, pp.361-371)
- Desert Borderlands of Oman by Wilfred Thesiger. (Geographical Journal Vol.116, No.4/6, Oct-Dec 1950, pp. 137-168)
- Some excursions in Oman by Percy Cox. (Geographical Journal Vol.66, No.3, Sept. 1925, pp. 193-221)
- On the border of the Great Desert: a journey in Oman by S.B. Miles. (Geographical Journal Vol.36, No.2, Aug. 1910, pp.159-178)
- Narrative of a journey into the interior of Oman, in 1835, by Lieutenant Wellsted. (Journal of the Royal Geographical Society Vol.7, 1837, pp.102-113)

Evaluation Criteria:

1. 10% Discussion
2. 10% Presentations
3. 20% Portfolio / scrapbook/ journal

4. 25% Analytical Essay (1500 words)
5. 35% Research Paper (3000 words)

Course Requirements:

Discussion: Students are expected to engage in class with questions and comments. The instructor might assign roles during discussions sessions.

Presentations: Each student will be required to select a topic related to Omani culture and society, to research the topic and give a 15-minute in-class presentation. Presentations will take place after the spring break.

Portfolio/ Scrapbook/ Journal: Each student will be required to submit a portfolio, scrapbook or journal documenting his/ her cultural experience in Oman or any emerging questions or observations. The portfolio, scrapbook or journal should not be less than 10 pages and not more than 20 pages.

Analytical Essay : Each student will be required to submit an analytical essay. The students will be presented with a host of questions or statements by the instructor. The students are expected to present critical arguments and analysis of the issues at hand.

Research paper: Each student will be required to develop his/ her own question and attempt to answer it, or synthesize his/ her own thesis on topics related to Omani culture and society. The paper should be researched using library and on-line sources. 3,000 words, double spaced typed pages.

Grading Scale:

Grades will be determined as follows:

Excellent		Above Average		Average		Below Average		Failing	
A	94%	B+	88%	C+	78%	D+	68%	F	59%
A-	90%	B	84%	C	74%	D	64%		
		B-	80%	C-	70%	D-	60%		

Integrative Experiential Learning

Brooke Isingoma, Instructor

Course Description

A required core course for participants in the Oman Semester. The class provides a forum for integrating elements of the program that take place beyond the classroom, including educational travel, guided outings, facilitated dialogues, and informal interactions in Omani society.

Objectives

- Experience life in Oman, both in local settings and lifestyles (urban and rural) and through expatriate eyes.
- Explore issues emerging out of student experiences and questions
- Take the opportunity in a new and out-of-the-ordinary setting to be intentional about pursuing personal goals, character, and faith formation in the ways students experience and interact with the world around them.

Learning Goals

1. Build confidence and skills for navigating life and relationships in a new culture and climate.
2. Reflect comparatively across cultures and religions.
3. Demonstrate an informed understanding of Omani culture(s).
4. Re-evaluate worldviews and faith perspectives in light of cross-cultural and inter-religious relationships and experiences, seeking guidance from biblical truth and the Holy Spirit.
5. Develop ability to articulate and discuss experiences, including personal thoughts, questions, and feelings both verbally and in writing.
6. Begin planning for how this cross-cultural experience will impact life upon returning home.

Format

Weekly course requirements will vary according to travel schedule and other factors. Participation in educational travel, organized outings, scheduled lectures and discussions, and informal interactions *is required* and these make up the bulk of the course time. Group discussion and debrief sessions, as well as occasional readings, will supplement experiential components.

Assignments and Evaluation

Attendance, participation, and meaningful contributions 33%

This includes experiential learning opportunities and class discussions/debriefs. Demonstrate engaged listening and thoughtful participation in all activities and discussions. Periodic verbal and/or written feedback will be offered to the group and to individuals; feel free to initiate a conversation at any time about how you are doing in this area.

Guided journal responses 32% (4% each)

Eight written responses related to experiential learning opportunities. Choose one of the following formats, choosing each one at least twice. *Please indicate clearly on each submission what format you chose.* Suggested length is one to two pages typed and double spaced for all formats. Typing not required if you have legible handwriting; turning in your handwritten journal would be fine. *Continuing Research:* Want to know more about something historical, geographical, cultural, or anything else related to the experience? Go find out and present your findings. Evaluate the reference materials you used. *Discussion Page:* Thoughts or questions you have that you would like to discuss with the class. Should include discussion prompts as well as some of your own thoughts as to why this prompt interests you. *Directed Reflection:* Choose one of the questions below or the question of the week to prompt your reflection and challenge you to think through implications. If you feel you can better reflect on the experience without using one of the questions, that is fine, but make sure what you offer is at least as substantial as the questions would prompt. Students will choose at least eight classes to turn in a written response about (an) experiential component(s) of the week prior. Papers due at the start of the first class time following the experience. (In other words, you cannot write on an experience from more than one week prior to submission.)

Standing Questions (there will also be a weekly question each week as an option):

- 1) How do you see both modern globalization and traditional Omani culture and identity represented in Muscat? In the interior?
- 2) How do you witness Oman practicing religious pluralism?
- 3) Discuss Christian ecumenism and denominational relations in Oman.
- 4) How is Oman serving as a bridge between hostile nations?
- 5) Discuss gender in Oman.

Possible experiential components to write on:

Guest speakers

Nizwa

Grand Mosque

Bait Al Zubair

Visit to the Institute for Sharia Studies

Christian Church visit(s)

Hindu Temple

US Embassy visit

Informal interactions

Other event or visit in Muscat

Reflection Papers 35%

Three reflection papers will help frame your time in Oman and help you make the most of it. Each should be two to three pages typed and double spaced and should demonstrate critical thinking, self-awareness, and engagement with the world around you in Oman. These may be revised and resubmitted if desired. Let the instructor know you intend to revise and resubmit within two business days of receiving graded paper back, and a new due date will be agreed upon.

- 1) The first is due Feb 12 in class, and will be worth 10%. It should address the following: Why are you here? What do you hope to gain from this experience, both in the semester and beyond? How will you pursue these things? How will you measure whether or not they are happening? If you're not sure why you're here, how will you continue to figure this out while you are here?
- 2) The second is due March 26 in class and should address the following: What has been most challenging for you so far this semester? Most rewarding? What has been unexpected?
- 3) The third will be your final paper in this class and will be worth 15%. It should address the following: Review your first reflection paper. How have you achieved what you set out to gain? What is left undone or incomplete? Did your goals and purposes change or develop while you were here? How? Why? How will you take this semester home with you and continue with what has begun here in Oman?