

## ISLB14, Islamic Studies: Level 2, 30 credits

*Islamologi: Föreläsning, 30 högskolepoäng*

First Cycle / Grundnivå

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### Details of approval

The syllabus was approved by The Pro Dean of First and Second Cycle Studies at The Joint Faculties of Humanities and Theology on 2026-06-08 (U 2026/356). The syllabus comes into effect 2026-09-01 and is valid from the spring semester 2027.

### General information

The course is offered as a freestanding course. It can be selected as a specialisation course in the Bachelor's programme in Religious Studies and Theology. It can be included in a first or second cycle degree.

*Language of instruction:* Swedish and English  
Elements in other Scandinavian languages may occur.

*Main field of study*      *Specialisation*

History of Religions      G1F, First cycle, has less than 60 credits in first-cycle course/s as entry requirements

### Learning outcomes

On completion of the course, students shall be able to

#### Knowledge and understanding

- identify core texts and major thinkers within Islamic intellectual history,
- understand how the interplay of legal, philosophical, and ethical ideas and theories have evolved and shaped debates on Islam in Muslim societies,
- contextualize and trace the development of major schools of thought from the classical period to modern times by recognizing the diversity of, and difference between, major textual genres,
- identify, describe, and explain differences and tensions between ideals and practices within Islamic traditions,

- understand how social, economic, material, gender-related, and political contexts and structures shape the conditions for lived religiosity,
- describe the main features of key debates on “Islam” as a scholarly concept and academic field in light of the diversity of Muslim life and Islamic intellectual traditions,
- demonstrate a broad understanding of the political relevance of Islam in historical and contemporary contexts based on current theoretical perspectives,
- describe and provide examples of historical and contemporary expressions of the relationship between politics and Islam,
- discuss debates on Islam, systems of government, and concepts of politics in different historical and societal contexts,
- account for previous research on a chosen topic or problem area within Islamic Studies,
- discuss the difference between primary sources, previous research and handbooks, study resources, and other types of material,
- explain the characteristics of an academic paper in contrast to other genres/text types, such as journalistic features or opinion pieces,

### **Competence and skills**

- use knowledge of central texts and figures within Islamic traditions to historically contextualize Islamic thought and practice from the seventh century to the modern era,
- identify different theoretical doctrines and essential concepts in Islamic thought,
- demonstrate skills in analyzing and interpreting primary texts in translation using traditional and modern hermeneutics,
- complete an academic paper based on scientific research methodologies, including the use of primary texts and secondary scholarly literature,
- describe and discuss Muslim religious life using theoretical concepts and nuanced empirical examples,
- critically discuss, both orally and in writing, and draw conclusions about the relationship between questions of interpretation and Islamic diversity, with regard to theological variations, socio-political contexts, gender issues, and perspectives on power,
- independently reflect on methodological approaches in the study of religion,
- analyze advanced texts on Muslim religious practice and academic methodological discussions,
- compare how different Muslim-majority societies organize power, legislation, and institutions,
- critically analyze discussions on the role of Sharia as law, ethics, and moral guidance,
- critically analyze public debates about Islam,
- analyze how theological traditions, historical events, and social and cultural processes influence reinterpretations and reforms among traditional and non-traditional religious authorities,
- produce a minor paper,

- select and employ research methods relevant to Islamic Studies and to the assignment,
- select and assess academic texts of relevance to the assignment,
- present and discuss the topic in speech and writing,
- use a system for quotations, references, and bibliography that is acceptable in academic contexts,

## Judgement and approach

- assess and evaluate how Islamic knowledge is produced and applied,
- critically examine classical texts through the lenses of history, conceptual analysis, and scholarly methods of interpretation,
- evaluate and, on the basis of relevant evidence, provide nuanced perspectives on contemporary public debates concerning Islam and Muslims,
- critically evaluate claims and descriptions concerning Islam and politics that appear in the media and public debate,
- critically engage with theoretical perspectives on religious change, systems of government, modernization, and pluralization in relation to Islam,
- critically engage with political statements about different interpretations of Islam in historical and contemporary contexts,
- critically evaluate research methods in Islamic Studies and their relevance to different research areas within the field,
- apply good judgement to the assessment of different perspectives on previous research on the topic,
- perceptively identify their need of further knowledge on the topic.

## Course content

The course consists of the following modules:

1. Key Texts in Islamic Studies, 7,5 credits
2. Islam between Ideals and Practice, 7,5 credits
3. Islam, Politics, and Public Debate, 7,5 credits
4. Critical Thinking and Academic Writing, 7,5 credits

Module 1 provides a historical and thematic survey of foundational texts, both classical and modern, that have shaped Muslim beliefs, practices, and intellectual history. The module covers texts and treaties in Islamic law and jurisprudence, Islamic theology and philosophy, Sufism and ethics, and history and historiography. It is devised as an introduction to classical and modern interpretation methods, relying on English translations of primary sources.

During Module 2, the diversity of Muslim religious practice in different national and local contexts is studied and analyzed, as well as how this diversity relates to conceptions of Islam as a unified religious tradition. The module explores boundary-making processes surrounding what is perceived as "correct Islam" in different contexts. It examines how such boundaries are negotiated in lived practice, both as expressions of changing social conditions and as responses to challenges posed by new religious actors, in both majority and minority settings. Drawing on ethnographic

research on Muslim religious life from recent decades, the module discusses how Islam as a theological and ritual tradition is shaped and reinterpreted, and how these processes have been theorized from perspectives of gender, power, and class. In addition, the module engages with ongoing scholarly discussions concerning the concept of “Islam” and its applicability in relation to the empirical diversity of Muslim religious life.

Module 3 examines the interaction between Islam and politics in relation to processes of social change in historical and contemporary contexts. It is based on critical and contextual perspectives and analyzes how Islam and politics influence one another across different societies and historical periods. The module explores political expressions and dynamics in Muslim-majority societies as well as in minority contexts, and examines how Islam is discussed in contemporary political debates, both globally and in Europe, with particular focus on Sweden. The module also addresses issues such as religious extremism, fundamentalism, and other examples of the political dimensions of religion.

Module 4 enables the student to practice taking on an independent assignment that is to be reported in a minor paper. The aim of the module is to introduce and provide training in academic writing. The assignment can cover any topic in the field of Islamic Studies and use historical, textual, archival, social-scientific, or ethnographic research methods. The topic is to be chosen in consultation with the lecturer on the module. Each student chooses their own topic and is responsible for presenting and discussing this topic with the other students and the lecturer.

## Course design

Module 1: The teaching consists of lectures, group exercises, and 4–5 mandatory seminars. Absence from the seminars may be compensated for with written assignments in accordance with instructions from the lecturer. Students who are absent from more than 50 % of the seminars will need to retake the module. The module entails a mandatory oral presentation on a topic determined with the lecturer.

Module 2: The teaching consists of lectures, group exercises, and 4–5 mandatory seminars. Absence from the seminars may be compensated for with written assignments in accordance with instructions from the lecturer. Students who are absent from more than 50 % of the seminars will need to retake the module.

Module 3: The teaching consists of lectures and 4–5 mandatory seminars. Absence from the seminars may be compensated for with written assignments in accordance with instructions from the lecturer. Students who are absent from more than 50 % of the seminars will need to retake the module.

Module 4: The teaching consists of lectures and supervision.

If students, through no fault of their own – for example, due to an accident or sudden illness – have been unable to complete one or more mandatory components, the department is responsible for providing an equivalent alternative or another opportunity to complete the relevant component(s). This also applies to students who are serving as student representatives.

## Assessment

Module 1: The assessment is based on a written take-home exam.

Module 2: The assessment is based on a written take-home exam.

Module 3: The assessment is based on a written take-home exam.

Module 4: The assessment is based on a minor paper of approximately 40,000 characters, including spaces, a cover sheet, table of contents, and bibliography, and on a final defence seminar.

The examiner, in consultation with Disability Support Services, may deviate from the regular form of examination in order to provide a permanently disabled student with a form of examination equivalent to that of a student without a disability.

## **Grades**

Grading scale includes the grades: Fail, Pass, Pass with distinction

For a grade of Pass on the whole course, the student must have been awarded a grade of Pass for all modules. For a grade of Pass with distinction on the whole course, the student must also have been awarded a grade of Pass with distinction for at least two modules.

## **Entry requirements**

General entry requirements and successful completion of at least 15 credits within Religious Studies: Level 1 (REVA10/ÄRED11), of which at least 5 credits must consist of Module 4. Alternatively, general eligibility and successful completion of at least 15 credits within Islamic Studies: Level 1 (ISLA11), or the equivalent.

## **Further information**

- The course is offered at the Centre for Theology and Religious Studies, Lund University.
- The modules can also be taken as freestanding courses (ISLB32, ISLB33, ISLB34, and ISLB35).
- The credits allocated for course content that in whole or in part is commensurate with another course can only be credited once for a degree.