**Reading Syllabus & Reading Guides**

**OBJECTIVE:** To expand upon the one day study tour experience, preparation for the tour includes completion of **three** readings plus brief reading guides. These short, informational articles or resources are to further your understanding of the modern Middle East, the presence of Middle Eastern communities in the United States, and more closely, the presence of Middle Eastern communities in North Carolina.

**REQUIREMENTS: *You may choose the three out of the following eight reading guides*** that appeal to you most from the following list (though we recommend reading everything) to complete this summer. We will collect the three reading guides at the workshop on August 16, or they can be returned to [harver@email.unc.edu](mailto:harver@email.unc.edu) as you complete them. Completion of three reading guides is required for receiving all 10 PD Contact Hours.

Some of the readings will come from books written or edited by professors at UNC Chapel Hill. The PDFs of these chapters will be sent to the whole group via email; these readings are for the specific educational purposes of this group only - **please do not reproduce or distribute these chapters further**.

**SYLLABUS**

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| **READING GUIDE #** | **TOPIC** | **READING(S) TO COMPLETE** |
| **1** | Many Americans forget that Ramadan is a [centuries-old tradition in the U.S](http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2014/06/ramadan-american-tradition-201462714534443176.html).; the first observances were by enslaved African Muslims. This reading reminds us of the long history of Islam in the United States. The [Prince Among Slaves resource](http://princeamongslaves.org/module/muslimsinus.html) provides further information on the life and communities of enslaved African Muslims. | * **Resource:** Prince Among Slaves: the Cultural Legacy of Enslaved Africans (<http://princeamongslaves.org/>). This Unity Productions Foundation and PBS website features rich content expanding on three theme areas: Muslims in early America, the Trans-Atlantic slave trade, and Identity. * Beydoun, Khaled A. (2014, June 28). Ramadan: A centuries-old American tradition. *Al Jazeera.* Retrieved from <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2014/06/ramadan-american-tradition-201462714534443176.html> |
| **2** | This reading is focused on the history of Muslim Americans, specifically, the period from 1865-1965. This chapter discusses where Muslim immigrants settled, why they came to America, as well as the rise in non-immigrant adherents to Islam. | * Howell, Sally. (2013). Laying the Groundwork for American Muslim Histories: 1865-1965. In Julianne Hammer & Omid Safi (Eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to American Islam* (45-64). New York: Cambridge University Press. |
| **3** | The following chapter discusses the complexity of Muslim communities in the present day. These two chapters (reading guides 2 and 3) establish a good historical understanding of Islam in America. | * Abdullah, Zain. (2013). American Muslims in the Contemporary World: 1965 to the Present. In Julianne Hammer & Omid Safi (Eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to American Islam* (65-81). New York: Cambridge University Press. |
| **4** | This reading is about the celebration of Ramadan (which began the evening of June 5). For more information about Ramadan, please read this [Guide to the Islamic holy month](http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jun/17/ramadan-guide-to-islamic-holy-month-muslims-fast) from *The Guardian*. The White House has hosted an annual iftar since 1996 when President Clinton began the tradition, continued by President George W. Bush, and now President Obama. The [President’s remarks](https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2016/06/05/statement-president-occasion-ramadan) on the beginning of Ramadan highlight the diversity of the American Muslim community. Obama will host the annual iftar at some point this summer. | * Gani, Aisha. (2015, June 17). Ramadan: a guide to the Islamic holy month. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jun/17/ramadan-guide-to-islamic-holy-month-muslims-fast>. * Obama, Barack. (2016, June 5). Statement by the President on the Occasion of Ramadan*.* Office of the Press Secretary: theWhite House, Washington. D.C. Retrieved from <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2016/06/05/statement-president-occasion-ramadan>. |
| **5** | This “reading” is actually a [documentary on the Lebanese community](http://video.unctv.org/video/2303678785/) in North Carolina. *Cedars in the Pines: The Lebanese in North Carolina*, chronicles the story of Lebanese immigration to North Carolina from 1890 to today. Capturing oral histories of the Lebanese community, this documentary weaves an intimate narrative of immigration, family and memory. | * **Film**: Khater, Akram. (Executive Producer). (2012, November 8). Cedars in the Pines [Television broadcast on UNC-TV]. In Cullinan, Diana (Producer.) Research Triangle Park, North Carolina: UNC-TV. Retrieved from: <http://video.unctv.org/video/2303678785/> * Find curriculum to accompany the film here: <http://nclebanese.wikispaces.com/Film+Task+Cards>. |
| **6** | The [Pluralism Project](http://pluralism.org/religions/) by Harvard University has great and comprehensive information about several different religions. The section on Islam provides basic and accessible information on the faith. The short essays are divided into many different topics: an Introduction to Islam, Islam in America, the Muslim Experience, and Issues for Muslims in America. | Pluralism Project, *Harvard University.* Please read the following three sub headings:   * The Five Pillars (<http://pluralism.org/religions/islam/introduction-to-islam/the-five-pillars/>) * Calligraphy and Islamic Design (<http://pluralism.org/religions/islam/the-muslim-experience/calligraphy-and-islamic-design/>) * Halal Food (<http://pluralism.org/religions/islam/the-muslim-experience/halal-food/>) |
| **7** | This reading by UNC Professor Carl Ernst goes beyond the Five Pillars of Islam and discusses the importance of painting a full picture of the Islamic religious tradition, rather than focusing on fundamentalist minorities. | * Ernst, Carl. (2003). Approaching Islam in terms of Religion. In *Following Muhammad: Rethinking Islam in the Contemporary World* (62-69). Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press. |
| **8** | This book attempts to explain one of the most visible, controversial, and least understood emblems of Islam. This chapter focuses on the many factors that Muslim women consider when they determine whether or not to veil. | * Amer, Sahar. (2014). Politics and the Sociocultural Practices of Veiling. In *What is Veiling?* (56-73). Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press. * + 2 pages from the chapter “What do Progressive Muslims Say,” pages 48-50, please read the subheading “Progressive Muslims and the Diversity of Veiling Practices. |

**READING GUIDE 1  
*Resource: Prince Among Slaves  
Ramadan: A centuries-old American tradition, Khaled Beydoun***

1. The **Prince Among Slaves** website provides educational modules on topics such as “African Muslims Enslaved in the United States” and “Islam and the Blues.” Please take a while to browse the information on the website. Think about how the experience of African Muslims and non-Muslims was different. For example, many of the Muslims enslaved were literate and identified as intellectuals due to their Islamic education, challenging the prohibition of a slave’s ability to read and write. (<http://princeamongslaves.org/module/muslimsinus.html?page=1>)

2. List at least three examples from the Beydoun article that demonstrate the multi-culturalism of Muslims in America.

3. Why is it important to recognize that Ramadan is not necessarily a “new American tradition” as the Los-Angeles imam commented, but rather one deeply entrenched in U.S. history?

**READING GUIDE 2  
*Laying the Groundwork for American Muslim Histories: 1865-1965, Sally Howell***

1. Why was it important to North American Muslims to establish mosques between the 1920s and the 1960s? Why are communal spaces important, to members of different faiths and to groups of people in general?

2. Did any of the countries of origin/Muslim immigrant groups mentioned surprise you? Why or why not?

3. Muslims around the world live in many different countries (both in Muslim-majority countries, and non-Muslim majority countries), and different communities with a large variety of histories and cultures. Thus, Muslim communities live in diverse social, cultural, and political circumstances, all producing significant variety in the way that they understand and live out Islam. Briefly compare and contrast this understanding in two of the different branches of Islam mentioned (Sunni, Shi’i, Ahmadiyya movement, Moorish Science Temple of America, Nation of Islam). This may require extra research.

**READING GUIDE 3  
*American Muslims in the Contemporary World: 1965 to the Present, Abdullah Zain***

1. What does the author mean by the phrase, the “Americanization of Islam”?

2. How has the issue of race affected the lives of American Muslims?

3. All religions grapple with the world around them as societies and technologies change. How are Muslim Americans blending old and new identities?

**READING GUIDE 4  
*Ramadan: a guide to the Islamic holy month, Aisha Gani  
Statement by the President on the Occasion of Ramadan, Barack Obama***

1. Summarize the holy month of Ramadan: why is this month important to Muslims? What does the fasting entail?

2. What did you find most interesting or surprising in Aisha Gani’s article on Ramadan?

3. What impact do you think President Obama’s commemoration of Ramadan has on relations with the Muslim community? What about members of other faiths (for better or for worse)?

4. In Obama’s address, he remarks, “Doctors, lawyers, artists, teachers, scientists, community organizers, public servants, and military members, each night will all break their fasts together in cities across America.” Why does he point out these various professions?

**READING (FILM) GUIDE 5  
*Film: Cedars in the Pines***

1. Compare the experience of the two waves of Lebanese immigrants, one beginning in the early 1900s, and the other in the 1970s. What challenges did they face?

2. Culture is defined as the characteristics and knowledge of a particular group of people, including language, religion, cuisine, social habits, music and arts. What aspects of Lebanese culture did the community maintain in North Carolina? What aspects of culture were assimilated?

3. The film discusses the presence of the Arabic language in different generations of immigrants. How does language provide a connection to community, a shared identity?

4. How did various Lebanese immigrants view the American Dream? What is the American Dream for immigrants in America today? How do our students view the American Dream today?

**READING GUIDE 6  
*Pluralism Project: The Five Pillars, Calligraphy and Islamic Design, Halal Food***

1. What is the purpose of *salat*, or daily prayer, in Islam?

2. According to the Met Museum, “[calligraphy](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/cali/hd_cali.htm) is the most highly regarded and most fundamental element of Islamic art.” Why is the written word so important in Islam? What might be the effect of showing examples of Islamic calligraphy and/or other forms of art in your classroom?

3. What is the relationship between Halal and Kosher food?

4. After reading the section on Halal food, please visit the website mentioned and explore the Halal offerings in the Triad under the “Browse North Carolina” section (<http://www.zabihah.com/reg/VwIFRx0axF>). Have you ever noticed any of these restaurants, grocery stores, etc.?

**READING GUIDE 7  
*Approaching Islam in terms of Religion, Carl Ernst***

1. This text goes beyond the Five Pillars of Islam and discusses the three concepts that are essential to Islamic religious thought (*islam, iman and ihsan*). How do these factors represent both external and internal aspects of faith?

2. The media has focused on modern Islamic reform movements. It is important to remember that these movements “represent only one tendency in contemporary Islamic thought.” Why does the author consider the term, “fundamentalism,” to be problematic and confusing?

3. Why is it important to understand the vocabulary that adherents of a faith use when discussing their religion? What difficulties are presented in the process of translation?

**READING GUIDE 8  
*Politics and the Sociocultural Practices of Veiling, Sahar Amer***

1. Other than religious piety, there are many factors that may determine whether or not a Muslim woman will choose whether or not to veil. Please describe two different factors that a woman might consider.

2. Compare and contrast the practice of veiling in two of the following countries (Afghanistan, Egypt, Iran, Pakistan, Saudia Arabia, Senegal, Turkey, and Yemen.

3. What are varying motives of “Progressive Muslim” women who decide to veil? What are motives of women who decide to not veil? (note: please refer to pages 48-50 of the book).