



Sunday School SYLLABUS

Course Name: Survey of Contemporary Issues
Course Stage: Advanced
Stage Theme: Islam in the Contemporary World
Level: 9
Ages: 17-18 years
Version: 1.0

www.ghamidi.org/sunday-school

Al-Mawrid USA
Ghamidi Center for Islamic Learning

Overview:

The tragic incident of 9/11, recent violence and turmoil in many Muslim lands, and not-so-thoughtful responses of Muslim intellectuals on modern-day issues have raised many questions in the minds of sincere Muslims. In a traditional society, tradition is accorded centrality, but in today's world, reason plays a central role. The rational mind of this modern age is asking:

- “If Islam is the religion of peace, then why is terrorism associated with Islam?”
- “If the Quran gives equal status to men and women, then why are Muslim women oppressed in many Muslim societies worldwide, and is the husband allowed to beat his wife?”
- “How can a religion of mercy not allow a Muslim to pet a dog?”
- “If God has created all human beings, then why are people of the LGBTQ community not accepted in a Muslim society?”
- “If science explains everything, what do I need religion for?”
- “Can Islam respond to the challenges faced in the contemporary world?”
- “Is Islam even compatible with the modern world?”

This course is designed to answer these and similar questions raised in modern minds, in light of the Quran, Sunnah, and the rich, long tradition of Islamic scholarship. Contrary to common belief, Islam has provided fundamental guiding principles for various aspects of the Muslim individual and society, leaving the details of practical application to the human faculty of jurisprudence, so that different societies can apply the guiding principles of *Shariah* according to time and place.

Objective:

The main objective of this course is to survey contemporary issues and understand Islam's position on them. The foundational knowledge built in Levels 7 and 8 will be applied in this level first to appreciate the problem and then to understand Islam's approach to addressing it. Along the way, this course will also attempt to clarify some misunderstandings about Islam and present the correct perspective on these topics.

Delivery Method:

This course will be taught through various methods suitable for this age group. This includes weekly lectures, group discussions, multiple Q&A sessions, home assignments, and independent reading of other reference material. In addition to the lecture slides, students will be encouraged to read the handouts provided or other available reference material to discuss and probe deeper questions regarding the subject matter. Appropriate discussion forums will be created to enrich the course content, encouraging students to discuss relevant topics and enhance their understanding. Students can also bring in their questions for discussion in these forums.

Assessment:

Students will randomly be assessed on what they have learned after a few lectures through short quizzes, assignments, or projects.

Course Outline:

The following list comprises the suggested topics that will be covered in this course. Additional topics may be added based on students' interests. The discussion forum(s), reference reading material, and Q&A sessions will be added to the lesson plan or outline. These topics are not arranged by week, and some may take multiple sessions to cover fully.

***Note:** A weekly lesson plan or outline will be created based on these topics. The weekly lessons will incorporate practical aspects of the course, homework, and reference reading exercises.*

1. Introduction to the Course

- › Course Objectives
- › Topics Covered in the Course
- › Is Islam compatible with the modern world?
- › How can we benefit from this course?
- › Suggestions and input
- › Q&A

2. Quick Introduction to Islam and Islamic Sciences

- › The Sources of Islam
- › The Content of Islam
- › The Objective of Islam and Its Relationship to the Content
- › Summary of Beliefs in Islam
- › Summary of Moral Teachings of Islam
- › What is Shariah for? Why do we need laws given by God?
- › The Scope and Limits of Shariah
- › Fiqh and Ijtihad and the difference between them
- › Quick Recap
- › Q&A / Assignment

3. Dealing with Non-Muslims

- › Lecture
- › Open Discussion and Q&A

4. Islam and Terrorism / Jihad and Militancy

- › Lecture
- › Open Discussion and Q&A

5. Democracy or Caliphate?

- › Lecture
- › Open Discussion and Q&A

6. The Punishment for Apostasy

- › Lecture
- › Open Discussion and Q&A

7. The Punishment for Blasphemy

- › Lecture
- › Open Discussion and Q&A

8. Homosexuality and Interaction with LGBTQ

- › Lecture
- › Open Discussion and Q&A

9. Hijab

- › Lecture
- › Open Discussion and Q&A

10. Dating and Falling in Love

- › Lecture
- › Open Discussion and Q&A

11. Family Matters: Polygamy, Rights of Husband and Wife, Divorce, Halalah

- › Lecture
- › Open Discussion and Q&A

12. Some Misconceptions about Women in Islam

- › Lecture
- › Open Discussion and Q&A

13. Slavery and Sex with Slave Girls (Concubines)

- › Lecture
- › Open Discussion and Q&A

14. Music and other forms of Art

- › Lecture
- › Open Discussion and Q&A

15. Keeping Dogs

- › Lecture
- › Open Discussion and Q&A

16. Tattoos, Magic, and Witchcraft

- › Lecture
- › Open Discussion and Q&A

17. Pornography and Masturbation

- › Lecture
- › Open Discussion and Q&A

18. Islam and Modern Science: Theory of Evolution

- › Lecture
- › Open Discussion and Q&A

19. Atheism

- › Lecture
- › Open Discussion and Q&A

20. Misc. Topics: Cloning, Organ Donation, Sex-change operations, Cosmetic Surgery, Assisted Suicide

- › Lecture
- › Open Discussion and Q&A