

SC-532 - Hadith: History, Methodology, and Texts
Hartford International University

Spring 2024
M 7:00 – 8:50pm
(HYBRID SYNCHRONOUS)

Instructor: Suheil Laher
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Office Hours: By Appointment

Course Description

Compilations of hadith, or words attributed to the Prophet Muhammad, are the second most important form of scripture, or religious text, in the Islamic scholastic tradition. Hadith are an essential source of deriving Islamic law and determining what is deemed as Sunna or a model of proper Islamic practice based on prophetic precedent. In addition, hadith are critical to understanding the Qur'an and many of its general injunctions, which would be otherwise ambiguous without the correlating explanations found in hadith sources. This course will analyze the basic foundations of hadith studies (ʿulūm al-ḥadīth) which are essential to a well-grounded understanding of this important field of Islamic Studies. A progression of the various elements related to hadith studies such as hadith terminology, the legislative authority of the Sunna, methods of collecting and preserving hadiths, important transmitters, canonical hadith sources, hadith classification, weak hadiths, and forged hadiths, will be presented over the course of the semester to build a solid understanding of the role of hadith in shaping the Islamic scholarly tradition. This study of the scholastic aspects of hadith studies will culminate with thematic readings of hadith texts, including an exploration of relevant contemporary issues such as debates regarding the authenticity of hadiths in Western scholarship.

NOTE: This course is piloting the new 2-hour weekly lecture, supplemented by an additional one hour of non-lecture instruction (in the form of recorded student presentations, and online forum discussions on Canvas).

Course Objectives

- Understand the history of hadiths
- Recognize that hadiths are of varying reliability, and understand the Muslim scholars' criteria for evaluating their authenticity
- Understand the different perspectives on hadith in Western scholarship
- Examine the role of hadith as a source of Islamic theology, law and ethics, second to the Qur'an
- Analyze the contents of hadiths with a view to appreciating deductions that can be made from them, and identify potentially problematic issues
- Explain some of the contemporary debates among Muslims regarding particular hadiths
- Develop a holistic view of the field of hadith, useful to personal confidence and/or assisting in pastoral advice
- Be able to list prominent books of hadith, and distinguish which of them are intended for specialists and which are intended for laymen

Program Learning Outcomes

- To demonstrate foundational and critical knowledge of one’s own religion
- To demonstrate knowledge and skills for dialogical and constructive engagement with diversity.
- To demonstrate the ability to relate theory and practice in the social contexts in which a religion’s communities exist.

List of Texts

Required

- Jonathan A. C. Brown. *Hadith: Mohammad’s Legacy in the Medieval and Modern World*. Available on [DTL](#).
- Brown, Jonathan AC. *Misquoting Muhammad: The Challenge and Choices of Interpreting the Prophet’s Legacy*. (Oneworld, 2014). Available on [DTL](#).
- Ibn Daqīq al-Īd, Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī. *A Treasury of Hadith : A Commentary on Nawawi’s Selection of Prophetic Traditions*. Translated by Mokrane Guezzou. Leicestershire: Kube Publishing, 2014. Available on [DTL](#).
- Additional required readings will be made available to students.

Recommended

- Siddiqi, Muhammad Zubayr. *Hadith Literature Its Origin, Development & Special Features* (ITS, 2012).
- Muhammad `Awwamah. *Influences of Ḥadīth Upon Differences of Opinion Amongst the Jurist Imams*. (Turath, 2014)
- Ibn Rajab al-Ḥanbali. *The Compendium of Knowledge and Wisdom*. (Turath, 2007)
- M. Akram Nadwi. *Al-Muḥaddithāt : The Women Scholars in Islam*. (Interface, 2018)
- Mustafa Siba`ee. *The Sunnah and Its Role in Islamic Legislation*. (IIPH, n.d.)

Assessment

Participatory Attendance	10%
Weekly Quizzes	20%
Video Presentations (2)	20%
Forum Discussions	15%
<i>Isnad</i> Project	15%
Final Project	20%

- **Attendance:** You must attend class regularly and promptly. More than two absences will reduce your grade in the course, unless there are extenuating circumstances.

- **Video Presentations:** Each student is required to sign up for TWO presentations, of 15-20mins each. Presentations should be video-recorded and uploaded for the instructor and other students to watch. Further instructions will be provided.
 - **Presentation #1:** based on one of the 40 Nawawi hadiths. No two people are allowed to present on the same reading, so if there is reading you really want to present it, then sign up ASAP; it is first-come-first-served. The presentation should:
 - Summarize the main points / themes addressed in the hadith(s) assigned
 - Include relevant comments from a book of hadith commentary
 - Show that you have thought about the hadith(s) for yourself, and so you should include some analysis or critique or questions raised.
 - Include a slideshow (Powerpoint, Google Slides, etc). You must upload a PDF of your slideshow to the Canvas course website by 6pm on the day of your presentation.
 - **Presentation #2:** should present the life of a narrator of hadith (preferably from the Sahaba), along with reflections / lessons from their life.

Rubric for Grading of Presentations:

Capable, succinct summary of material	75%
Timing You will lose points if your presentation is less than 10mins, and more than 17mins	5%
Time Management Did you cover all your material in the allotted time?	5%
Visual Aesthetics	5%
Critical Analysis Analysis, or critique, or questions raised	10%

- **Forum Discussions:** Each student will post
 - TWO reflections per week.
 - TWO reflections on each of the asynchronous topics

One reflection should be 100-250 words, to the Online Forums, and should either (i) respond to one of the assigned prompts, or (ii) show that the student has read and thought about the assigned readings(s) for that week. The other reflection should be 50-100 words and should be a response to another student's posts.
- **Weekly Quizzes:** will consist mostly of multiple choice and/or short-answer questions
- **Isnad Project:** Each student will prepare an isnad tree / diagram, capturing the details of multiple chains of narration for the same hadith. Suggestions for hadiths, resources for isnad details, and software, will be shared by the instructor.
- **Final Project:** Students will select a thematic topic (in fiqh, spirituality, etc), then find relevant Quranic verses and hadiths, and write an article on the chosen theme incorporating the hadiths (with explanations of the hadith *matn* where relevant). Students are encouraged to choose a topic that is relevant to their interests and/or professional goals. The final project

report is expected to be **1,250-1,750 words** long.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism, the failure to give proper credit for the words and ideas of another person, whether published or unpublished, is strictly prohibited. All written material submitted by students must be their own original work; where the words and ideas of others are used they must be acknowledged. Additionally, if students receive editorial help with their writing they should also acknowledge it appropriately. For more details on the Seminary's Plagiarism policy, see: <https://www.hartsem.edu/current-students/policies/>

CLASS OUTLINE

Date	Topic	Readings
1/23	Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none">The 10 Preliminarieshadith, sunna, sira	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Brown, ch. 1, 16-30Siba`ee, ch. 1, 73-91 (PDF provided)
1/30	Transmission & Collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Brown, ch. 2, 31-48 (remainder optional)
2/6	Hadith Terminology and Criticism	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Brown, ch. 3, 83-123 only (remainder optional)100 Fabricated HadithsRecommended: Israr Khan, <i>Authentication of Hadith: Redefining the Criteria</i> (IIIT, 2010), I-XXIVOptional: Brown, Jonathan AC. "The rules of Matn criticism: There are no rules." <i>Islamic Law and Society</i> 19, no. 4 (2012): 356-396.
2/13	Sunni Canon Non-Sunni Hadith	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Brown, ch. 4, 150-178Zaidis and HadithSelections from Usul al-KafiIbadi HadithOptional: Etan Kohlberg, "Shi'i Hadith," in Beeston, Alfred Felix Landon, ed. <i>Arabic literature to the end of the Umayyad period</i> (Cambridge University Press, 1983), 299-307
2/20	Hadiths in Theology	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Brown, ch. 6, 205-217Summary of Ibn al-Jawzi, <i>Anthropomorphist Tendencies amongst the Hanabila</i>, (tr. Merlin Swartz),Fatwa #1: Can Aahaad Hadiths be accepted with Regard to `Aqeeda?

Date	Topic	Readings
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fatwa #2: Establishing Matters of Aqida with Hadith Ahad, • Article: What the Scholars Say About Khabar al-Ahad and Aqeeda,
2/27	Hadiths in Law	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brown, ch. 3, 124-132 • Brown ch. 5, 179-204 • Ibn Yusuf, <i>Fiqh al-Imam</i> (White Thread, 2003), ch II-2, 55-64.
3/6	Hadiths in Ethics and Sufism <u>Isnad Assignment Due</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brown, ch. 7, 218-233 • Christopher Melchert, "The Piety of the Hadith Folk," <i>International Journal of Middle East Studies</i>, Vol. 34, No. 3 (Aug., 2002), pp. 425- 439.
3/13	Modern Western Views on Hadith	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brown, ch. 9, 254-305 • Optional: Harald Motzki, <i>Hadith: Origins and Developments</i>, 15-33
3/20	Modern Eastern Views on Hadith	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brown, ch. 10, 306-339 • Summary of Daniel Brown's, <i>Rethinking Tradition in Modern Islamic Thought</i>. • Israr Khan, <i>Authentication of Hadith: Redefining the Criteria</i> (IIIT, 2010), I-XXIV
3/27	NO CLASS	
4/3	Modern Controversies (1): Jihad, Women Leaders, Marriage Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brown, <i>Misquoting</i>, ch. 4, 127-176
4/10	Modern Controversies (2): Honor Killings, Apostasy, Female Imams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brown, <i>Misquoting</i>, ch. 5, 193-218, 223-234 (remainder of chapter optional) • Brown, <i>Misquoting</i>, ch. 7, 290-310 (remainder of chapter optional)
4/17	Politics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brown, ch. 8, 234-253 • The Event of Ghadir Khumm (Twelver perspective) • Hadith of Ghadir Khumm [A Sunni Perspective] • Sahih Muslim, Book of Leadership, #4701 – 4806 (PDF provided)
4/24	Portents of End Times <u>Final Project Due</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sunan Abi Dawud, "Book of Battles"
A S Y	Education & Da`wa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abu Ghuddah, <i>Prophet Muhammad the Teacher</i>, tr. Ml. Mohamed Mohamedy (Karachi: Zam Zam, 2003), 7-39

Date	Topic	Readings
N		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mufti Muhamad Sajjad, <i>The Fiqh of Da`wah Commentary on 40 hadiths</i>, (As-Suffa Institute, 2012), 133-139 excerpt
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R	Women and Hadith	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Muhammad Zubayr Siddiqi, <i>Hadith Literature: Its Origin, Development & Special Features</i> (Islamic Texts Society, 1996), 117-123. <li>• Sayeed, Asma. "Women and Ḥadīth Transmission Two Case Studies from Mamluk Damascus." <i>Studia Islamica</i> (2002): 71-94. <li>• Shaikh, Sa'diyya. "Knowledge, Women and Gender in the Hadīth: A Feminist Interpretation." <i>Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations</i> 15, no. 1 (2004): 99-108.
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Inner States		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sulami, 40 Hadith on Sufism
The <i>Shama'il</i> Genre		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tarek Ghanem, "The Genre of Love and Beauty: al-Sham'ail," (article on website) <li>• Shama'il al-Tirmidhi, chapters on dress, drink, laughter, sense of humor, sleeping, worship, humility, character, modesty (available on internet, PDF provided)

Note: Syllabus is subject to change. Instructor will inform students about any changes.