UNDERGRADUATE COURSE DESCRIPTION

Term: Spring 2011
Instructor: Dr. Irfan A. Omar
Course #: THEO 2410
Section: 102 and 103/901 (Majors/Honors)
Course Title: Christianity in Cultural Contexts
Course Sub-Title: Christian-Muslim Dialogue

Description:

The course will begin with an introduction to the Qur’an, and the teachings and traditions of Islam. We will focus on the study of Islam in relation to Christianity. This comparative theological perspective will allow us to see the broader framework highlighting the need for and imperative of interreligious dialogue.

The central concern of the course will be to examine a variety of Christian experiences within the context of their engagement with Islam and Muslims. The course will be anchored in selected Christian-Muslim (formal) dialogues that began in March 1969 initiated by World Council of Churches (WCC) and the Pontifical Council of Interreligious Dialogue (formerly the Secretariat for Non-Christian Religions). Dialogues co-sponsored by Muslim organizations, like Al Albait Foundation and the World Islamic Call Society will also be discussed. We will examine in a historical sequence selected individual contributions of Muslim and Christian scholars at formal dialogues and the joint declarations that were issued from such meetings.

Selected dialogues will also provide the platform for discussion of Christian and Muslim perspectives on critical issues and theological themes that were the focus of those dialogues. The study of specific dialogues will be preceded by a discussion that will situate the new/recent efforts at interreligious dialogue and the circumstances surrounding the new commitment to advancing Christian-Muslim dialogue globally.

Requirements:

Each student in this course will be required to make a class presentation on a selected theme discussed in formal dialogues studied in this course. In addition to two exams (Midterm and Final), each student will write a five-page book report of an additional book selected from the list provided by the instructor.