

## COURSE SYLLABUS

### Building Abrahamic Partnerships (CM-650)

May 29 to June 5, 2005

Program Coordinator: **Prof. Yehezkel Landau**, Faculty Associate in Interfaith Relations

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**Course Faculty:** Prof. Yehezkel Landau, Prof. Kelton Cobb, Prof. Ingrid Mattson, Prof. David Roozen, Prof. Dale Bishop, Imam Yahya Hendi, and Rabbi Sheldon Lewis

**Area of Curriculum:** Interfaith Relations

**Course Overview:** Hartford Seminary, building on its strengths as an interfaith, dialogical school of practical theology, has designed this innovative program to be a practical resource for Jews, Christians, and Muslims who seek a solid foundation in interfaith ministry. The format is an 8-day intensive training program, beginning with an informal dinner on May 29 and ending with a closing dinner on June 5.

**Course Rationale and Objectives:** Our society needs a new kind of religious leadership, grounded in a particular tradition and, at the same time, able to interact effectively with other faith communities. This is especially true given the prevalence of fear and mutual suspicion, exacerbated by violence committed by religious extremists. We need to develop educational strategies to overcome the ignorance that leads to prejudice, which in turn leads to dehumanizing contempt, which in turn breeds violence.

The goals of the course are fourfold:

- Educating participants about the beliefs and practices of the three Abrahamic traditions
- Creating a supportive learning community in which clergy, lay ministers, religious educators, and chaplains can forge mutually beneficial relationships across communal boundaries
- Helping participants acquire pastoral skills useful in interfaith ministry
- Developing leadership strategies for promoting interfaith relations in our pluralistic society

**Course Content:** Topics for discussion and shared experiences will include:

- Presentations clarifying the tenets and practices of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam
- Historical overviews of the three traditions and how they have interacted in history
- Shared text study using source material from all three traditions, including prayers

- Visits to a mosque, a synagogue, and a church for worship and subsequent discussion of those liturgical experiences
- Demographic and sociological data on Jewish, Christian, and Muslim communities in America
- Skills and sensitivities needed to establish and sustain effective interfaith partnerships
- The role of the media in creating images of one another, and strategies to counter negative media stereotypes
- Developing ideas for joint interfaith projects in local communities

**Methods of Delivery:** Lectures, panel discussions, text study, videotapes, facilitated conversations, visits to houses of worship, shared meals

**Methods of Assessment:** For those taking the course for credit, class participation will count for 20% of the course grade; a daily journal of one's reflections on the experience will count for an additional 30% of the grade; and a final paper approximating 15 double-spaced pages will count for 50% of the grade. **The paper and the journal reflections are due by September 1, 2005.** The final paper should relate to one of the two broad themes addressed by the course: theoretical approaches to improving interfaith relations, and practical strategies or initiatives aimed at promoting Abrahamic partnerships. It is recommended that a student consult with one or more of the course faculty before writing the final paper, to get input on how to approach the intended topic and what resources to use in researching it.

### **Course Schedule and Readings:**

**Sunday, May 29:** Informal **opening dinner**, 7 p.m., in the Meeting Room. "Before" questionnaires will be handed out for completion by the following morning.

**Monday, May 30:** **Morning session**, 9 a.m. to 12 noon

Welcome by course faculty; explanation of course objectives and requirements

Self-introductions through interfaith exercise (facilitated by Prof. Yehezkel Landau)

Challenges confronting interfaith activists today (course staff):

Ideational obstacles to mutual affirmation (exclusivism, dualism, apocalypticism)

Fears (of being wrong, of being viewed as inferior, of leaving one's comfort zone, of looking ignorant, of making social mistakes, of having one's identity undermined, of losing an adversarial Other and discovering a new partner, of going against the consensus and being ostracized by one's own community, of losing a job or promotion, even of physical harm)

Social and economic disincentives, especially in congregations that do not reward interfaith commitments

Lack of partners, especially in one's own community; feeling isolated; finding allies and spiritual companions "outside" rather than inside

Rewards and benefits from interfaith relationships:

Spiritual enrichment, intellectual stimulation, emotional bonds with new friends and

colleagues, a broader sense of community and identification  
Vocational gratification, opportunities to heal historic wounds, rectify  
misunderstandings and grievances, build a better society  
General principles and guidelines for conducting interreligious conversation

SUGGESTED READING: "*The Dialogue Decalogue: Ground Rules for Interreligious, Interideological Dialogue*" by Leonard Swidler, *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*, 20:1, Winter 1983 (September, 1984, revision); NOT WITHOUT MY NEIGHBOUR: ISSUES IN INTERFAITH RELATIONS by S. Wesley Ariarajah, Geneva: WCC Publications, 1999, chapters 1, 2, and 3

**Afternoon session**, 1:30 to 4:30 p.m.

Interfaith text study (course staff): understanding the ambivalence of sacred texts, the exclusive as well as inclusive dimensions, the peaceful and the intolerant/violent messages, using selected passages from the Hebrew Scriptures, New Testament, and Qur'an and from the oral/post-scriptural traditions (texts to be distributed)

SUGGESTED READINGS: THE AMBIVALENCE OF THE SACRED: RELIGION, VIOLENCE, AND RECONCILIATION by R. Scott Appleby, Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers; "*Violent Faith*," by Kelton Cobb, in SEPTEMBER 11: RELIGIOUS PERSPECTIVES ON THE CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES, edited by Ian Markham and Ibrahim M. Abu-Rabi', Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2002, pp.136-163; THE DEATH AND RESURRECTION OF THE BELOVED SON: THE TRANSFORMATION OF CHILD SACRIFICE IN JUDAISM AND CHRISTIANITY by Jon D. Levenson, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993; THE SACRIFICE OF ISAAC IN THE THREE MONOTHEISTIC TRADITIONS, edited by Frederic Manns, Jerusalem: Franciscan Printing Press, 1995; VIOLENCE AND THE SACRED by Rene Girard, Baltimore/London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979; THE BIBLE, VIOLENCE, AND THE SACRED: LIBERATION FROM THE MYTH OF SANCTIONED VIOLENCE by James G. Williams, New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1991; CONSTANTINE'S SWORD: THE CHURCH AND THE JEWS by James Carroll, Boston/New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2001; THE ART OF FORGIVENESS: THEOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS ON HEALING AND RECONCILIATION by Geiko Muller-Fahrenholz, Geneva: WCC Publications, 1997.

**Evening session**, 7 to 9:30 p.m.

A panel discussion on "*What Do We Mean by Spirituality?*" co-led by Imam Yahya Hendi, Rabbi Sheldon Lewis, and Rev. Donna Manocchio, Associate Minister of Rocky Hill Congregational Church, U.C.C. Topics to be addressed include: language as a medium of spiritual devotion, including gender-specific references to the Divine; silence, meditation, chanting, and body movement as alternative modes; liturgical commonalities and differences in styles of prayer; how prayers in one tradition are heard/experienced by adherents of another, especially prayers that refer to the Other(s)

SUGGESTED READINGS: A GUIDE TO JEWISH PRAYER by Rabbi Adin Steinsaltz, New York: Schocken Books, 2000; MAN'S QUEST FOR GOD by Abraham Joshua Heschel, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1954; ENGENDERING JUDAISM by Rachel Adler, Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1998; SHE WHO DWELLS WITHIN: A FEMINIST VISION OF A RENEWED JUDAISM by Lynn Gottlieb, New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1995; JEWISH PRAYER: THE ORIGINS OF THE CHRISTIAN LITURGY by Carmine Di Sante, Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1991; PRAYING THE PSALMS by Walter Brueggemann, Winona, MN: Saint Mary's Press, 1986; THE INTERIOR CASTLE or THE MANSIONS by St. Teresa of Avila, Rockford, Illinois: TAN Books and Publishers, 1997; THE SINGER AND THE SONG: AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF THE SPIRIT by Miriam Therese Winter, Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1999; PRAYING WITH ICONS by Jim Forest, Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1997; MUSLIM DEVOTIONS by Constance E. Padwick, Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 1996; MY SOUL IS A WOMAN: THE FEMININE IN ISLAM by Annemarie Schimmel, Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 1998; MUSLIM PREACHER IN THE MODERN WORLD by Richard T. Antoun, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989.

**Tuesday, May 31: Morning session, 9 a.m. to 12 noon**

Continuation of interfaith text study, positive and negative passages from each tradition.

**Lunch break** (food to be provided), 12 noon to 1:30 p.m.: PowerPoint presentation on "*Scriptural Commonalities in the Hebrew Bible, New Testament, and Qur'an*" by Imam Yahya Hendi

**Afternoon session, 1:30 to 4:30 p.m.**

Continuation of interfaith text study and discussion, until the break.

After the break (3 to 4:30 p.m.): "*Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Congregations in America: A Survey of Current Trends*" (presentation and discussion facilitated by Prof. David Roozen)

READING: "*Meet Your Neighbors: Interfaith Facts*" booklet, Faith Communities Today/Hartford Institute for Religion Research, 2003

SUGGESTED READING: THEY AND WE: RACIAL AND ETHNIC RELATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES (5<sup>th</sup> Edition) by Peter I. Rose, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1997.

**Evening session, 7 to 9:30 p.m.**

A panel discussion on "*Jewish-Christian-Muslim Relations Today*" featuring Hartford Seminary Dean Ian Markham, Prof. Ingrid Mattson, and Prof. Yehezkel Landau, offered in conjunction with Trinity Episcopal Church, Hartford.

**Wednesday, June 1: Morning session, 9 a.m. to 12 noon**

Introduction to Jewish beliefs and practices, Biblical/Rabbinic tradition, and contemporary Judaism in its different forms (Prof. Yehezkel Landau and Rabbi Sheldon Lewis).

READING: BASIC JUDAISM by Rabbi Milton Steinberg, San Diego and New York: Harcourt, Inc., 1975.

SUGGESTED READINGS: JEWISH LITERACY by Joseph Telushkin, New York: William Morrow and Company, 2001; JUDAISM: REVELATION AND TRADITIONS by Michael A. Fishbane, New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1987; THE JEWISH WAY: LIVING THE HOLIDAYS by Rabbi Irving Greenberg, New York: Simon & Schuster, 1988; STANDING AGAIN AT SINAI: JUDAISM FROM A FEMINIST PERSPECTIVE by Judith Plaskow, New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1991; ON WOMEN AND JUDAISM: A VIEW FROM TRADITION by Blu Greenberg, Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1981; LIVING JUDAISM by Rabbi Wayne Dosick, New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1998; FINDING OUR WAY: JEWISH TEXTS AND THE LIVES WE LEAD TODAY by Barry W. Holtz, New York: Schocken Books, 1990; THE JEWISH APPROACH TO GOD: A BRIEF INTRODUCTION FOR CHRISTIANS by Rabbi Neil Gillman, Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights Publishing, 2003; JEWISH SPIRITUALITY: A BRIEF INTRODUCTION FOR CHRISTIANS by Rabbi Lawrence Kushner, Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights Publishing, 2001; TALKING TO THE OTHER: JEWISH INTERFAITH DIALOGUE WITH CHRISTIANS AND MUSLIMS by Rabbi Jonathan Magonet, London/New York: I. B. Taurus, 2003.

**Afternoon session, 1:30 to 4:30 p.m.**

Stereotypes and misunderstood aspects of Judaism, including: election/chosenness, Torah as "sacred teaching" rather than legalistic rules; the land and state of Israel, the connection between Zionism and Judaism.

Video: two reports (from CNN and Israel television) on the Open House Center for Jewish-Arab Coexistence in Ramle, Israel, with commentary by co-founder Prof. Yehezkel Landau

SUGGESTED READINGS: ISRAEL: AN ECHO OF ETERNITY by Abraham Joshua Heschel, New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1969; A LAND OF TWO PEOPLES: MARTIN BUBER ON JEWS AND ARABS, edited with commentary and new preface by Paul Mendes-Flohr, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2005; IN THE LAND OF ISRAEL by Amos Oz, London: Flamingo/Fontana Paperbacks, 1983; VOICES FROM JERUSALEM: JEWS AND CHRISTIANS REFLECT ON THE HOLY LAND, edited by David Burrell and Yehezkel Landau, New York/Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1992; AT THE ENTRANCE TO THE GARDEN OF EDEN: A JEW'S SEARCH FOR HOPE WITH CHRISTIANS AND MUSLIMS IN THE HOLY LAND by Yossi Klein

Halevi, New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002; THE END OF DAYS: FUNDAMENTALISM AND THE STRUGGLE FOR THE TEMPLE MOUNT by Gershom Gorenberg, New York: The Free Press, 2000; HOLY WAR, HOLY PEACE: HOW RELIGION CAN BRING PEACE TO THE MIDDLE EAST by Rabbi Dr. Marc Gopin, New York: Oxford University Press, 2002; *HEALING THE HOLY LAND: INTERRELIGIOUS PEACE-BUILDING IN ISRAEL/PALESTINE* by Yehezkel Landau, PEACEWORKS No. 51, Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace, September, 2003; "Jews, Muslims, and Peace," by Yehezkel Landau and Yahya Hendi, CURRENT DIALOGUE, No. 41, June-July, 2003, Geneva: World Council of Churches, pp. 12-13; HEALING ISRAEL/PALESTINE by Rabbi Michael Lerner, San Francisco: Tikkun Books, 2003.

**Evening** Panel Discussion, 7 to 9:30 p.m.

A conversation on "*Religion and the Media*" with guest resource people: Anisa Mehdi, TV documentary producer, and Frances Grandy Taylor, religion writer for the HARTFORD COURANT

**Thursday, June 2: Morning session**, 9 a.m. to 12 noon

Introduction to Christian beliefs and practices, including an overview of different Christian churches and rites (Prof. Kelton Cobb and Prof. Dale Bishop)

**READING:** CHRISTIANITY: A WAY OF SALVATION by Sandra S. Frankiel, New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1985.

**SUGGESTED READINGS:** TO BEGIN AT THE BEGINNING: AN INTRODUCTION TO THE CHRISTIAN FAITH by Martin B. Copenhaver, Cleveland: United Church Press, 1994; "Dietrich Bonhoeffer," and "Psalm Eight" from THE DEATH OF ADAM: ESSAYS ON MODERN THOUGHT by Marilynne Robinson, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1998, pp. 108-125 and 227-244; CREDO by William Sloane Coffin, Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2004; MY STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM, MEMOIRS by Hans Kung, Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2003; PRACTICING OUR FAITH: A WAY OF LIFE FOR A SEARCHING PEOPLE, edited by Dorothy C. Bass, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1997; MANY MANSIONS: A CHRISTIAN'S ENCOUNTER WITH OTHER FAITHS by Harvey Cox, London: William Collins Sons & Co., 1988; COMMON PRAYERS: FAITH, FAMILY, AND A CHRISTIAN'S JOURNEY THROUGH THE JEWISH YEAR by Harvey Cox, Boston/New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2001; MUHAMMAD AND THE CHRISTIAN: A QUESTION OF RESPONSE by Kenneth Cragg, London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1984; THE MONKS OF TIBHIRINE: FAITH, LOVE, AND TERROR IN ALGERIA by John W. Kiser, New York: St. Martin's Press, 2002; JOHN PAUL II IN THE HOLY LAND: IN HIS OWN WORDS, edited by Lawrence Boadt, CSP, and Kevin di Camillo, New York and Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2005.

**Afternoon session, 1:30 to 4:30 p.m.**

Stereotypes and misunderstood aspects of Christianity, including: the doctrine of the Trinity; the Passion and Crucifixion of Jesus; and the meaning of evangelism (mission or witness?) (Prof. Kelton Cobb and Prof. Dale Bishop)

SUGGESTED READINGS: THE MEANING OF JESUS: TWO VISIONS by Marcus J. Borg and N. T. Wright, New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1999; PAIN AND POLEMIC: ANTI-JUDAISM IN THE GOSPELS by George M. Smiga, New York/Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1992; "The Rehabilitation of Mission," presentation by Prof. Dale Bishop delivered at Hartford Seminary, February 12, 2004.

**Evening session, 7 to 9:30 p.m.: *Sensitivities and Skills for Interfaith Partnerships***

What kinds of communications skills are required for establishing and sustaining interfaith relationships? How can we listen more compassionately, suspend judgment, give empathy, and speak with sensitivity to the Other's situation? To what should we give attention in reaching out to, or hosting, someone from another faith community?-- e.g., language that honors the Other, sacred calendars, prayer times, dietary restrictions, etc. How do we find common ground, or at least agree to disagree respectfully, on controversial issues such as proselytizing, shared worship, and intermarriage? (Facilitated by Prof. Dale Bishop, Imam Yahya Hendi, and Rabbi Sheldon Lewis)

**Friday, June 3: Morning session, 9 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.**

Introduction to Muslim beliefs and practices (Sunni and Shi'a), with attention given to cultural variety within the Islamic *umma* (community) (Prof. Ingrid Mattson and Imam Yahya Hendi)

READING: THE HEART OF ISLAM: ENDURING VALUES FOR HUMANITY by Seyyed Hossein Nasr, New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002.

SUGGESTED READING: ISLAM AND THE MUSLIM COMMUNITY by Frederick M. Denny, Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, 1998; WHAT EVERYONE SHOULD KNOW ABOUT ISLAM AND MUSLIMS by Suzanne Haneef, Chicago: Kazi Publications/Library of Islam, 1996; READING THE MUSLIM MIND by Hassan Hathout, Burr Ridge, IL: American Trust Publications, 1995; THE COMPLETE IDIOT'S GUIDE TO UNDERSTANDING ISLAM by Yahiya Emerick, Indiana: Alpha Books, 2002; UNDERSTANDING ISLAM: A GUIDE FOR THE JUDAEO-CHRISTIAN READER by Jerald Dirks, Maryland: Amana Publications, 2003; THE FAITH AND PRACTICE OF AL-GHAZALI by W. Montgomery Watt, Chicago: Kazi Publications, 1982; THE STORY OF A MOSQUE IN AMERICA by Dr. Faroque Khan, Westbury, NY: Islamic Center of Long Island, 2001; DAUGHTERS OF ANOTHER PATH: EXPERIENCES OF AMERICAN WOMEN CHOOSING ISLAM, by Carol L. Anway, Lee's Summit, MO: Yawna Publications, 1996; TO BE A EUROPEAN

MUSLIM by Tariq Ramadan, Leicester, UK: The Islamic Foundation, 1999; MUSLIMS AND JEWS: BUILDING A HOPEFUL FUTURE, edited by Norman Hosansky and Mazhar Jalil, Columbus, OH: The Islamic Foundation of Central Ohio, 2003.

**Mid-day:** Visit to Mosque in Berlin, CT (hosted by Imam Prof. Ali Antar), followed by lunch and discussion

**Afternoon session,** 3 to 4:30 p.m.

Stereotypes and misunderstood aspects of Islam, including: rights and opportunities for women, Greater and Lesser Jihad, attitudes towards non-Muslims, and concepts of the afterlife. (Prof. Ingrid Mattson and Imam Yahya Hendi)

**SUGGESTED READINGS:** QUR'AN AND WOMAN: REREADING THE SACRED TEXT FROM A WOMAN'S PERSPECTIVE by Amina Wadud, New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999; "BELIEVING WOMEN" IN ISLAM: UNREADING PATRIARCHAL INTER-PRETATIONS OF THE QUR'AN by Asma Barlas, Austin: University of Texas Press, 2002; WINDOWS OF FAITH: MUSLIM WOMEN SCHOLAR-ACTIVISTS IN NORTH AMERICA edited by Gisela Webb, Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2000; "*Islamic Ethics of Killing and Saving Life*," special issue of THE MUSLIM WORLD, guest editor Jonathan E. Brockopp, Vol. LXXXIX, No. 2, April 1999; REBELLION AND VIOLENCE IN ISLAMIC LAW by Khaled Abou El Fadl, Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press; NONVIOLENCE AND PEACE BUILDING IN ISLAM: THEORY AND PRACTICE by Mohammed Abu-Nimer, Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2003; "*Stopping Oppression: An Islamic Obligation*," by Ingrid Mattson, in SEPTEMBER 11: RELIGIOUS PERSPECTIVES ON THE CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES, edited by Ian Markham and Ibrahim M. Abu-Rabi', Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2002, pp. 101-110; QUR'AN, LIBERATION & PLURALISM by Farid Esack, Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 1997; "*Islam*" in THE DEATH AND AFTERLIFE BOOK by James R. Lewis, Canton, MI: Visible Ink Press, 2001, pp. 200-203.

**Saturday, June 4:** Visit to Beth David Synagogue (Modern Orthodox, Rabbi Yitzchok Adler) or Congregation Beth Israel (Reform, Rabbi Stephen Fuchs) for Sabbath morning prayers, followed by *kiddush* (light meal) and discussion at Beth David Synagogue

**Sunday, June 5:** Visit to Immanuel Congregational Church (Rev. Ed Horstmann) or Trinity Episcopal Church (Rev. Don Hamer) for Sunday worship, followed by lunch and discussion at Hartford Seminary

**Late afternoon,** 4 to 6 p.m.: Open discussion with representatives from the local Jewish, Christian, and Muslim communities; "After" questionnaires distributed

**Evening,** 7 to 9:30 p.m.: **Closing dinner and farewells...*SHALOM, SALAMAT, PEACE***