



SHI' ISLAMIC STUDIES

Prospectus

5TH INTENSIVE COURSE



University of Religions and Denominations

AUGUST 2017- QOM, IRAN



SHI'A INTENSIVE COURSE

UNIVERSITY OF RELIGIONS AND DENOMINATIONS



PROSPECTUS

1 - DESCRIPTION

Shi'i Islam, with its rich and extensive history, has played a crucial role in the evolution of Islam as both a major world religion and civilization. Shi'a Muslims account for approximately 15 percent of the total Muslim population in the world. Shiism has the greatest influence in the contemporary world in Iran where nearly 90 percent of Muslims are Shiites.

The Shi'a Intensive Course endeavors to enhance scholarly attention to Shi'i Islam and offer an original and insightful understanding of its history, doctrines and practices. The Shi'a Intensive Course will combine the academic examination of Shi'i thought that existed for 1400 years, as well as the current political, social, and religious concern of Shi'a society in Iran. It aims to offer an informed and scholarly Shi'a perspective on traditional and contemporary issues that affect Muslims and non-Muslims alike. This immersive course provides 32 hours of academic lectures and discussion per week, along with the chance to take part in reflective events and visits to make the best of your international experience.

Studying at URD Shi'a Intensive Courses is the perfect way to broaden your academic and cultural horizons at an Iran-leading university and is a fantastic option to enjoy one of the world's most unique cities. Our social programs let you experience the best of the city, while our class schedules give plenty of opportunity to explore Shi'i Islam in Iran. You could even opt for an extra 4-day tour of Isfahan and Tehran to truly immerse yourself in the vibrant atmosphere that Iran has to offer.

The whole program is accredited by the University of Religions and Denominations. Participants will attend in pre-planned workshop and lectures presented in English and a special certificate will be awarded to each participant upon the successful participation and meeting program requirements.



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2- COURSE STRUCTURE

Shi'a Intensive Course comprises of 3 parts as follow:

Academic Workshop

This 1-week workshop in Qom designed to equip participants with the foundational knowledge, spiritual understanding, and critical thinking skills required to understand Shiism in the contemporary world. The workshop aims to connect scholars from a variety of disciplines and different countries to study the concept and role of Shi'a Islam in the modern Iran.

The class topics aim to immerse participants into the rich intellectual and spiritual traditions of Shi'a Islam in order to provide them with the holistic grounding and vision of Shi'a in Iran. Topics will include Shi'i Doctrines, Rituals, Ethics, Mysticism, Political Thought and Contemporary Challenges. The goal is to not simply provide an academic overview of the subjects, but to continuously put these various aspects into conversation with the Shi'a Islamic thought. Participants are expected to gain the opportunity to discuss contemporary Islamic issues with renowned scholars in their respective fields and expert participants from various disciplines.

Social Program

In Social Program we are taking full advantage of our location at one of the pinnacles of Shiite Civilization, Qom. For those interested in Shi'i Islamic Studies, very few places are as exciting as Qom. The city is counted as one of the focal centers of the Shi'a both in Iran and around the globe, and is considered holy as it embraces the Fatema Mæ'sume Holy Shrine. Qom is the largest center for Shi'a scholarship in the world, and is a significant destination that attracts around 15 million pilgrims from across the country and the region yearly.

The social program lets you experience the best of Qom in the spare time. With our handpicked social activities, you can explore the history, beauty and religious atmosphere of Qom, while taking part in your class schedules. From unmissable sightseeing of Holy Shrine and Jamkaran Mosque to the Imam Khomeini's house and meeting with Grand Ayatollahs of Hawza, the social program brings to you an enriching adventure to complement your academic course.

Cultural Tour

For those who pursue to enrich their experience of Iran, this optional 4-day tour of Iran would be of interest. Follow in pilgrims' footsteps and explore the history of old Persia and the spirit of the new Iran. Discover magnificent monuments, artworks, and sights and deeper insight into this ancient land.



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3- PROPOSAL SCHEDULE

| Day | Theme | Classes | | | Social Program |
|-----|--|--|---|---|--|
| | | 9:00- 10:45 | 11- 12:45 | 14- 15:45 | |
| 1 | <i>Opening and Introduction</i> | <i>Opening</i> | <i>Shi'a Origins and Branches</i> | <i>Shi'a and Islamic Revolution of Iran</i> | <i>Imam Khomeini's house Holy Shrine</i> |
| 2 | <i>Shi'a Doctrines</i> | <i>Sources of Shi'a Thought</i> | <i>Imamate Doctrine</i> | <i>Mahdism Doctrine</i> | <i>Jamkaran Mosque</i> |
| 3 | <i>Shi'a Rituals</i> | <i>Mourning and Festivals Ceremonies</i> | <i>Prayers and Pilgrimages</i> | <i>Guest Lecturer</i> | <i>Holy Shrine</i> |
| 4 | <i>Shi'a Ethics and Mysticism</i> | <i>Shi'a Ethics</i> | <i>Shi'a Irfan</i> | <i>Guest Lecturer</i> | <i>Mar'ashi Najafi library</i> |
| 5 | <i>Shi'a Daily life</i> | <i>Social Program: A Day With Families</i> | | | |
| 6 | <i>Shi'a Authority and Political Thought</i> | <i>Shi'a Political Thought</i> | <i>Shi'a Authority, Ijtihad and Fatwa</i> | <i>Guest Lecturer</i> | <i>Meeting with Grand Ayatollah</i> |
| 7 | <i>Shi'a and Contemporary Challenges</i> | <i>Shi'a and Women</i> | <i>Shi'a and Dialogue</i> | <i>Guest Lecturer</i> | <i>Hawza Ilmiah</i> |

* Class: All classes will be taught using a combination of lectures and discursive discussions.

** Guest Lecturer: Participants with high academic background on Iran, Shiism or Islamic Studies are warmly welcome to present a lecture out of their research project or field of study to share their ideas with other participants. We are honored to have up to 4 Guest Lecturers in our workshop schedule.



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4- HOW TO APPLY?

Eligibility

The Shi'a Intensive Course is open to scholars, professors and students from all around the world. The program is designed for academics and professionals from various academic background, who are interested in expanding their understanding of Islam, Shiism and Iran. Individuals from a wide range of academic and/or professional interests are welcome to apply.

Application Steps

1. Complete and submit the application form.
2. Upload your CV and a scanned copy of your passport via the course website or email. Please make sure that the documents are clearly labelled with your name.
3. An email will be sent to confirm the receipt of your application and you will be prompted to provide any information/document which remains at this time.
4. If your application meets our requirements, you will be issued with a conditional offer of a place upon the course.
5. In order to accept this offer, you will be required to provide a deposit payment of €80. The deposit payment will count towards your Intensive Course package payment.
6. If you wish to be allocated a place during our first allocation round, please ensure that your deposit is received no later than early registration deadline.
7. As soon as we receive the deposit you will be issued with an unconditional offer to participate in Shi'a Intensive Course, and, shortly after, you will be invoiced for the balance of your fees.
8. Full payment will be received at your arrival in Iran by cash.



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5- FEES AND FELLOWSHIP

A number of fee packages are available for the Shi'a Intensive Course. All fee packages include academic tuition, accommodation, meals and refreshments, airport transfer service for pick-up and drop-off, travel insurance, site visits, etc. Let's say all local expenses of your trip are included in fee packages.

Please note that the visa application fees and international flight fees are not included in fee packages.

If you submit your application and deposit before early registration deadline, you can claim our special early bird rate. We also offer a range of special rates for applicants at our valued partner institutions.

Standard and Special Rates

| Package | Duration | Standard Fee | Early Registration Fee | Partner Institutions Fee |
|---|----------|--------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Workshop & Social Program | 7 days | 980 USD | 882 USD | 833 USD |
| Workshop & Social Program & Cultural Tour | 11 days | 1460 USD | 1314 USD | 1241 USD |

* A 10% early bird discount is available to applicants who submit their application and deposit before the early registration deadline.

** A 15% discount is available for applicants from valued partner institutions.

Fellowship

We believe that Shi'a Intensive Course should be affordable for all applicants. With the support of URD, we are providing several partial financial aid available for applicants who are interested in the course and eligible for attending the workshop and yet may not be able to attend the Shi'a Intensive Course without financial support.

A limited number of scholarships are available, equal to a standard fee waiver of 30%, or 20%. Scholarships are not applicable to the early registration or partner institution fee packages.



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6- VISA INFORMATION

The University of Religions and Denominations does provide full visa sponsorship for all confirmed applicants. As in every other country, visa process is subject to background checks by related authorities. The visa approval process usually takes up to eight weeks after applicants are notified of their successful application. However, please note that we cannot guarantee the exact length of the process, since this is totally outside of the University's control or jurisdiction. Once the visa approvals have arrived, candidates will be notified in due time to refer to Iranian diplomatic or consular representations in their countries in order to receive their visas.

Steps in Detail

1- There will be a formal application extracted from your application form to be sent to the Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs which authorizes the consulate for visa issue.

2- The output will be an authorization letter which will be transmitted to the Iranian Consulate which you have indicated in the form. We will give you this letter's reference code (Visa Authorization Code) with which you will be able to collect your visa. This code is only valid to the mentioned consulate and only for 3 months from the date of issue. However, you may request us to forward it to another consulate in case of emergency.

3- Having the reference code, you will refer to the consulate with your passport (which must be valid for the next 6 months), the completed visa application form (which can be picked from the consulate or be downloaded from their website), 2 new passport size photos, the visa fee (which depends on your nationality) and the authorization reference code, (Always check the needed documents with the consulate, as there may be differences from one consulate to another.) You may also be able to send the documents and receive the visa by mail. Contact the consulate for more details.

4- Let us know the feedback. Inform us if the visa collection process was straight forward or you faced problems. If there is any problem, we will remain with you for solving it until you receive the visa.



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7- TAILORED COURSES

The University of Religions and Denominations is dedicated to offering premier academic programs and courses that deliver effective and innovative learning for our participants. We are open to suggestions from other international institutions that may wish to host or co-host tailored intensive courses at the University of Religions and Denominations.

There is the option to adapt our existing courses, adjusting time, length, and content to meet the needs of your group. Or, we can work with you to create a new course to suit your requirements. If you prefer, we are happy to host programs led by faculty from your own institution.

The Intensive Courses team can help you design a tailored package which can include academic tuition, accommodation, field trips, and site visits, as well as an organized social program. We can offer a wide range of subjects taught by professors and specialist lecturers.

Outside of the classroom, optional social activities and trips may be added so that your group can enjoy the beautiful and vibrant cities of Iran. There is scope to have activities tailored solely to the needs and specifications of your group.

Examples of courses include:

Partnering with The Education University of Hong Kung to create bespoke course of "Discovering Iran" (December 2016) for a group of students from Hong Kung.

Partnering with Islamic School of Art and Tehran University to create bespoke course of "Wisdom of Islamic Art" (September 2016) for a group of professors and scholars from 13 various nationalities.

A two-week joint, continuing professional development course on "Comparative Theology", in partnership with the University of Paderborn (Germany) and St. Joseph's University (Lebanon) during 2012- 2014.

If you would like to enquire about creating a tailored course, please contact us. We look forward to welcoming you to the University of Religions and Denominations.



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8- OUR TEAM

Program Supervisor

Mahdi Salehi, Director of International Relations and Cooperation at the University of Religions and Denominations.

Program Director

Ahmad Moghri, Ph.D. candidate in Comparative Religious Studies at the University of Religions and Denominations.

Academic Committee

Dr. HamidReza Shariat Madari, Assistant Professor, Faculty of Shiite Studies.

Dr. Imdat Turan, Assistant Professor, Faculty of Shiite Studies.

Dr. Talebi Darabi, Assistant Professor, Faculty of Religions.

Mohammad Sadegh Aboutalebi, Faculty of Religions.

Program Coordinator

Shahaboddin Oudi, Ph.D. candidate in Study of Religion at the University of Religions and Denominations.

Contact Us

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5th Intensive Course on
**SHI' ISLAMIC
STUDIES**



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