PROPOSED CHANGES TO DEGREE PROGRAMS IN THE
UNDERGRADUATE CATALOG, 2010-2012
or
LAW SCHOOL CATALOG, 2010-2012

NAME OF DEGREE PROGRAM(S):
BACHELOR OF ARTS WITH A MAJOR IN ISLAMIC STUDIES

EXPLAIN CHANGE(S) TO DEGREE PROGRAM:

• Make Islamic Studies 310, *Introduction to Islam* a required course without other options.
• Require six hours of Islamic Studies 372, *Topics in Islamic Cultures*.
• Reduce the additional upper-division Islamic Studies elective hours to three.
• Add Yoruba as an option for the foreign language requirement.

Indicate pages in the *Undergraduate Catalog* where changes will be made. 325

GIVE A DETAILED RATIONALE FOR CHANGE(S):

Our primary motivation underlying the above changes is to create a firmer demarcation between the Islamic Studies and Middle Eastern Studies degree plans and thereby to graduate students with a base of knowledge about Islam throughout the world, rather than Islam in the Middle East.

Our first step in reaching this goal is to add a general religious studies component to the degree plan, allowing students to choose from introductory courses on religious theory, comparison, or philosophy. Any one of these courses will provide students with methodological and analytical skills that will provide a foundation for the study of Islam and Islamic cultures. Dr Martha Newman, chair of Religious Studies, agreed in a conversation with Dr Kamran Aghaie, director of the Center for Middle Eastern Studies, around May 2009 to make these courses regularly available to Islamic Studies majors.

We will also require students to take six hours of Islamic Studies 372. This course number will be reserved for topics covering Islamic cultures outside of the Middle East, while two new topics courses—Islamic Studies 373, *Topics in Middle Eastern Islamic Cultures*, and Islamic Studies 368, *Conference Course in Middle Eastern Islamic Cultures*—will be restricted to topics focused on Islam in the Middle East. By creating this division in the course inventory and requiring six hours of Islamic Studies 372, we will ensure that at least one quarter of a student’s coursework covers Islamic cultures outside of the Middle East. We have consulted with Dr Akbar Hyder of Asian Studies who often teaches courses on Islam outside the Middle East; he agreed in a conversation
with Dr Kamran Aghaie around May 2009 to offer these courses with increasing regularity or, when offerings are scarce, to be available to supervise students in conference courses on topics in Islamic cultures.

To accommodate the new requirements, the additional upper-division Islamic studies coursework will be reduced to three hours.

Finally, the addition of Yoruba further bolsters our goal to expand the Islamic Studies program to encompass Islamic cultures around the world. Islam has deep roots in the Middle East, South Asia, and Africa. While we already allows students to study the Middle Eastern languages of Arabic, Persian, and Turkish, as well as the South Asian language of Urdu, we do not currently allow any relevant African languages to apply to the Islamic Studies major. Yoruba is spoken in Nigeria, Benin, and Togo, all nations with substantial Muslim populations, so it serves as a justifiable language of study for an Islamic Studies major.

**SCOPE OF THE PROPOSED CHANGE(S):**

Does this proposal impact other colleges/schools? If yes, then how?

No.

Has the other college(s)/school(s) been informed of the proposed change? If so, please indicate their response.

Person communicated with: n/a
Date of Communication: n/a

Will this proposal change the number of required hours for degree completion? If yes, please explain.

No.

Does this proposal involve changes to the core curriculum (42-hour core, signature courses, flags)? If yes, please explain.

No.

**COLLEGE/SCHOOL APPROVAL PROCESS:**

(Circle yes or no)

Department: Yes Date: June 23, 2009
College: Yes Date: 
Dean: Yes Date: 

Please include a draft of the catalog copy on an attached page. The draft should be based on the text of the current catalog available at [http://www.utexas.edu/faculty/council/pages/catalog_chgs/catcopy.html](http://www.utexas.edu/faculty/council/pages/catalog_chgs/catcopy.html).
On page 325, under the heading DEGREES, in the MAJORS AND MINORS subsection of the College of Liberal Arts chapter of the Undergraduate Catalog, 2008-2010, make the following changes:

Islamic Studies

Major: Twenty-four semester hours of coursework in Islamic studies, including [twenty-one] eighteen hours of upper-division coursework. The coursework consists of

1. Islamic Studies 310, Introduction to Islam [or Islamic Studies 311 (Topic 2: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam: An Introduction)].


3. Nine hours in Islamic Studies 340, Topics in Islam.

4. Six hours chosen from Islamic Studies 372, Topics in Islamic Cultures.

5. Twelve Three additional hours of upper-division coursework in Islamic studies.

No more than six hours in upper-division conference courses may be counted toward the major.

Students must complete the equivalent of at least two years in Arabic, Persian, Turkish, [or] Urdu, or Yoruba. Credit used to fulfill this requirement may also be used to fulfill the foreign language requirement.