

## World Religions in Greater Indianapolis Teaching Module

**Teacher Name:** Barry LeBlanc    **Humanities Discipline:** Introduction to Ethics (PHIL 102)    **Date:** June 10, 2016

**World Religion:** Islam                      **Teaching Module Title:** Islamic Ethics and Social Issues

*Note: This module is intended as one lesson in a multi-lesson, auto-instructional unit on Religion & Ethics. (The unit is one of several Term Assignment options; others include Term Paper, Presentation, and Ethics at the Movies.) All of the content is accessed and completed on Blackboard.*

### Teaching Module Goals:

Through answers to questions, the student will demonstrate an understanding of the following ethical issues as they pertain to Islam:

1. Divine Command theory
2. How a religion may enhance morality
3. Terrorism and the ethos of killing
4. Abortion and other reproductive issues
5. Homosexuality
6. Polygamy
7. Crime and just punishment

### Assigned Readings and Websites:

PHIL 102 Introduction to Ethics required textbook:

Louis Pojman, *How Should We Live? An Introduction to Ethics*

- pp 89-105 ("Religion and Ethics")

Other books / websites:

John Bowker, *World Religions: The Great Faiths Explored & Explained*

- pp174-195 ("Islam")

*Encyclopedia of Islam and the Muslim World*, ed. Richard C. Martin (MacMillan, 2004)

- "Ethics and Social Issues," vol. 1, pp224-230
  - "The Question of Abortion," p227-228
  - "Other Reproductive Issues," pp228-229
  - "Ethics and Sexuality," p230
- "Polygamy," vol. 2, p552

The American Muslim, ["Fiqh Council of North America Issues Fatwa Against Terrorism"](#)

Bridging Cultures Bookshelf, ["Sharia' from Oxford Islamic Studies Online"](#)

- Criminal Law
- Modern Developments

### Reading Quiz Questions:

1. One of the criticisms of Divine Command Theory (DCT) is that “it seems to make morality into something arbitrary” (Pojman, p95). Which (if any) of the moral commandments in [Qur’an 17:22-37](#) lend themselves to this criticism and why?
2. Essay: Pojman identifies five ways that morality may be enriched by religion (pp98-103). How is each of these expressed in Islam? For example, how does anticipation of a coming Day of Judgment (Bowker, p178) express the belief that cosmic justice will prevail in the universe?
3. According to [“Fiqh Council of North America Issues Fatwa Against Terrorism”](#), which statement is *false*?
  - A. All acts of terrorism targeting civilians are *haram* (forbidden) in Islam.
  - B. It is *haram* for a Muslim to cooperate with any individual or group that is involved in any act of terrorism or violence.
  - C. In Islam, terrorism is considered to be the “greater jihad.” [CORRECT]
  - D. It is the civic and religious duty of Muslims to cooperate with law enforcement authorities to protect the lives of all civilians.

To answer questions 4-7 below, read the articles from *Encyclopedia of Islam and the Muslim World* specified above.

4. Most classical Muslim jurists consider a fetus in the first \_\_\_\_\_ after conception to be nonviable (at which time, according to theological doctrine, it is believed that ensoulment occurs).
  - A. 28 days
  - B. 8 weeks
  - C. 3 months
  - D. 120 days [CORRECT]
5. Essay: How does the above belief in a post-conception date of ensoulment affect decisions in Muslim societies regarding abortion and the use of fertilized embryos for experimental purposes?
6. T/F: Homosexuality is strictly forbidden by the majority tradition of Islamic ethics. [TRUE]
7. Which best expresses the teaching of Islamic law regarding polygamy?
  - A. Islamic law forbids polygamy.
  - B. Islamic law encourages polygamy.
  - C. Islamic law favors monogamy but permits polygamy. [CORRECT]
  - D. Islamic law is silent regarding polygamy.
8. Short Answer: According to [‘Sharia’ from Oxford Islamic Studies Online](#) (scroll to “Criminal Law”), what is the penalty for each of these “crimes against God” as specified in the revealed text:
  - A. Theft [ANSWER: amputation of the right hand]
  - B. Drinking wine [ANSWER: 80 lashes]
  - C. Committing fornication [ANSWER: 100 lashes or death]
9. Fill-in-multiple-blanks: Complete this sentence from the last paragraph of [‘Sharia’ from Oxford Islamic Studies Online](#): “While most Muslim countries continue to refer in their constitution to the sharia ... the actual interpretation and content of the sharia seem to allow for [ANSWER: greater variation], with some developments embracing [ANSWER: traditionalism] and others [ANSWER: modernized reform].”