

**Jesus (عيسى عليه السلام) and Prophet Muhammad (محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم):**

### **The Grammar of Faith in Abrahamic Monotheism**

This course explores the life and ministry of Jesus and Prophet Muhammad through what we call the *grammar of faith*: the recurring moral, spiritual, and theological concepts that structure Abrahamic monotheism in the Qur'an and resonate across Biblical traditions. Through close reading of Qur'anic and Biblical narratives—including the stories of Adam (آدم عليه السلام), Noah (نوح عليه السلام), Abraham (إبراهيم عليه السلام), Moses (موسى عليه السلام), and others—participants will examine themes such as servanthood (*'ubūdiyyah*), the struggle with the self (*nafs* and *hawā*), God's mercy, grace and love (*rahma*), gratitude and ingratitude (*shukr* and *kufr*), and spiritual striving (*jihād*). The course also considers historical encounters between Christians and Muslims and how theological dialogue and political discourse have shaped mutual understanding and misunderstanding.

Core faculty for the course:



**Gulsum Kuchuksari** is a professor of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies who teaches in the Department of Critical Race, Gender and Culture at American University. She teaches at theological schools throughout the US, including Virginia Theological Seminary and Wesley Theological Seminary. She earned her PhD in Middle Eastern Studies from the University of Arizona and an MA in Islamic Studies and Christian-Muslim Relations from Hartford Seminary. She has also served as a Muslim and interfaith chaplain at college campuses and hospitals.



**Jeffrey Willetts** is the former founding Dean, Vice-President, and Professor of Divinity at the John Leland Center for Theological Studies, Arlington, VA, where he served for 18 years. In addition, Dr. Willetts has more than 25 years of experience in congregational ministry serving as senior pastor of many churches in VA. Dr. Willetts has authored or edited several theological and philosophical publications. He has served as the Book Review Editor for the International Journal for Philosophy of Religion.

**Course Format:**

The course meets weekly in a hybrid format, alternating between online and in-person sessions each week. Regular class sessions are held Thursday nights from 6:30–8:30 PM. To foster community and dialogue, there will be one or two Saturday morning reflection sessions, where participants can bring their breakfast while coffee is provided. These sessions are designed for discussion, engagement, forming meaningful friendships, and exploring interfaith projects and ideas for collaboration. Additionally, the course includes visits to houses of worship on a Sunday and a Friday, providing direct engagement with religious practice and sacred spaces.

Limited to 24 students

Scholarships are available for those registering as special student auditors.

For more information and questions please reach Gulsum Kuchuksari at

[gulsumgurbuz@gmail.com](mailto:gulsumgurbuz@gmail.com)