

Introduction to the Undergraduate Programme of Islamic Studies

The Undergraduate Islamic Studies Programme relates to the scientific study of Islam, and in particular to the its textual tradition, as written and developed within its various historical and cultural contexts. It approaches Islam from many angles - religion, culture, politics, society, and history - using the methodological tools corresponding to each scientific discipline (interpretation, translation and critical analysis of texts, theology, the study of religion, sociology, anthropology and law). The Programme of Studies will offer in-depth training in subjects such as Muslim cultures, Quranic studies and Muslim traditions, the religious and political status of Islam over time, its legal systems, and issues that arise from the entry of Muslims into the secular legal systems of European countries. It will thus also approach questions of human rights, religious freedom, Islam's long established relationship with Eastern Christianity, interreligious dialogue, the characteristics of the various Muslim societies whether majority or minority, and religious, literary, artistic and political forms of expression.

The purpose of the course

The course aims to:

- Provide high-level training in the scientific field of the study of Islam, religion and culture.
- Develop the language skills of students in those languages relevant to the subject of study, especially Greek and Arabic, along with the relevant scientific terminology. In parallel, for all those who wish, and depending on their research interests and professional goals, there will be offered the possibility of learning the Persian language and Ottoman calligraphy.
- Offer the opportunities for students to acquire skills in religious crisis management and constructive resolution. Courses on interreligious and intercultural dialogue and the interaction throughout history between Christianity and Islam are thus a central element of the programme of studies.
- Provide theological education at university level

a) to Muslims who are prospective teachers in Western Thrace (according to Article 53 of law 4115/2013 on *religious instructors of the Muslim minority in Thrace and on strengthening of Muslim attendance at public schools in Thrace*). Graduates of the Programme of Islamic Studies, of the Theology School of Aristotle University of Thessaloniki will have the right, pursuant to the said article 53 of l. 4115/2013, to teach Islam in public schools in Thrace to Muslim students.

b) to other interested parties, graduates and non-graduates, who seek specialization in Islamic studies to strengthen and broaden their learning and professional orientation. Such graduates will not have the same professional rights as Muslim graduates, but they will be sufficiently specialized in Islamic issues, religion and culture to form a pool of qualified scientists to staff various organizations and institutions.