This course is an introduction to Islam, focusing on religious discourses and practices in their historical and contemporary dimensions. It critically engages with existing assumptions and representations of Islam and Muslims in contemporary media and the context of anti-Muslim hostility that has framed the production of knowledge in Islamic studies and beyond. Thematic units focus on the beliefs and practices of Muslims, the life and significance of the Prophet Muhammad, the centrality and interpretations of the Qur’an, the development and applications of Islamic Law, the Islamic mystical tradition, and the artistic production of Muslims. The guiding theme of our explorations will be how Muslims have constructed notions of normativity and authority in their various forms and religious expressions. Topics include the beliefs and practices of Muslims, the Prophet Muhammad, the Qur’an, Islamic Law, Sufism, Shi’ism, and modern politics.