



# MELLON POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIP/TENURE- TRACK ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF ISLAMIC STUDIES

## Department of Religious Studies

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### *Position*

The Department of Religious Studies at Occidental College invites applicants for a tenure-track Assistant Professor appointment in Islamic Studies, the first year of which will be a reduced teaching load Mellon Postdoctoral Fellowship starting in Fall 2023.

This search is part of Occidental's new multi-year Mellon Faculty Diversity Initiative (MFDI), an initiative that aligns with the College's Equity and Justice Agenda, to intensify our efforts to hire a cluster of Arts and Humanities faculty whose work focuses on race and/or social justice and whose background, expertise, and experiences will contribute to diversifying Occidental's faculty. The successful candidate will join the second of three MFDI cohorts with a total of nine positions in the Arts and Humanities. As part of the MFDI program, the members of the cohorts will be provided enhanced mentoring, professional development, and a greatly reduced teaching load in the postdoctoral year, prior to transitioning to the tenure-track and the start of the tenure clock.

We are seeking applications from scholars of Islamic Studies. Your area of specialization and time period are open, but we especially encourage applicants whose work is theoretically forward, engaging approaches such as decoloniality, race and ethnicity, gender and sexuality, disability studies, material culture, science and technology studies, etc. We will give preference to candidates who add to the methodological and theoretical breadth of current department faculty and whose courses could be cross-listed with other departments on campus.

Candidates should be able to teach a wide range of courses attractive to liberal arts students, including courses that introduce students to the diversity of lived Islamic belief and practice; that consider Islam as a system of knowledge, politics, and culture; and that situate Muslim communities within their local, regional, and transnational contexts. You will also share the department's orientation to teaching the study of religion (which you can read more about on [this page](#) of our departmental website).

Candidates should be able to teach the department's rotation of required courses (a theories/methods course and a course that guides majors through their senior thesis research and writing); able to contribute courses to the College's [first-year seminar program](#) (with preference given to candidates with training and experience in writing and research instruction); and able to teach courses that meet the [Core requirements](#), especially the pre1800 Core requirement. You will be thoughtful in their pedagogical approaches, and will seek continually to improve your teaching. Strong candidates will have, or show potential for, an active and sophisticated research agenda, and be willing to mentor undergraduate research.

The teaching load during the first year of the postdoctoral fellowship will be 1/1. After the fellowship year, the position will convert to a tenure-track assistant professor position with a teaching load of 2/2 in the second year of the appointment, and a regular teaching load of 3/2 thereafter. The successful candidate will be a strong teacher and mentor, have an active research agenda, participate in departmental planning and leadership, and contribute to College-wide service.

### ***Required Qualifications***

- Applicants should have expertise in Islam, with some training in Religious Studies;
- Applicants should hold a Ph.D. by the time of appointment;
- Evidence of excellence in undergraduate teaching (whether as primary instructor or teaching assistant);
- The potential for an active research agenda;
- Fluency in relevant research languages;
- Demonstrated commitment to working effectively with students from minoritized and marginalized communities, with plans to continue their pedagogical development as part of this position.

Candidates should submit a complete application package electronically to [islamicstudies@oxy.edu](mailto:islamicstudies@oxy.edu), including the following required materials (as separate, clearly labeled files):

- A cover letter  
In your letter please describe your interest in teaching at Occidental, your teaching experience, your research, and the theoretical and/or methodological approach(es) of your teaching and research.
- Curriculum Vitae
- A list and brief descriptions of courses you could teach at Occidental

Approximately one paragraph for each course. Each course description should give us a clear sense of what a student in the course would study, do, and learn. For example, your course descriptions might specify the learning goals, units/themes of the course, readings, assignments, etc.

- Candidate Statement on Commitment to Inclusive Excellence

This statement provides your unique perspective on your past and present contributions to and future aspirations for promoting diversity, inclusion, equity, and justice in your professional career. This should include your demonstrated commitment to, past evidence of, and future plans for creating equitable opportunities for learning and mentoring especially for students from marginalized and minoritized groups. The purpose of this statement is to help the department identify candidates who have professional experience, intellectual commitments, and/or willingness to engage in activities that could help the College contribute to its mission in these areas.

- List of three references with relevant contact information, with at least one who can speak to teaching experience and effectiveness.

Do not submit these letters with your initial application. If you advance to the finalist phase, you will be asked to have each of your three references submit a letter of recommendation. Please ask your references to be prepared to submit a letter should you move forward to this phase of the search.

Upon receipt of a complete application package, you will receive a demographic questionnaire. You must complete this questionnaire by September 18 to move forward in the search process.

Please direct all questions about the position to Department Chair Dr. Holmes-Tagchungdarpa at [tagchung@oxy.edu](mailto:tagchung@oxy.edu) or (323) 259-1354.

### **Application Deadline and Review Timeline**

To be considered, your application materials must be received by September 15, 2022 at 5pm PST.

Candidates selected for the semi-finalist round will be asked to submit additional materials: evidence of teaching effectiveness (which can include teaching evaluations, peer teaching observations, awards or other recognition, or whatever else candidates deem appropriate; a sample syllabus; and a sample of scholarly writing. And they will be asked to have each of their three references submit a confidential letter of recommendation. Semi-finalists will be contacted by October 17, with semi-finalist interviews being held via videoconference between October 24 and 28.

### **The Department and College**

The Department of Religious Studies at Occidental College strives to help students develop into informed, compassionate, critically thinking community members who are able to contribute to respectful public discourse in our increasingly global world. You can read more about our intellectual commitments on [this page](#) of our website. We strive to support students and uplift communities that are underrepresented in the study of religion. For more on our commitment to marginalized communities and our departmental practices, see [this page](#) of our website. As a department committed to supporting the academic excellence of our diverse student body, we seek candidates equipped to advance the College's mission through teaching, scholarship, and/or service.

### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Occidental is an Equal Opportunity Employer and does not unlawfully discriminate against employees or applicants on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, breastfeeding or related medical condition, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, age, marital status, physical disability, mental disability, medical condition, genetic characteristic or information, military and veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by state or federal law. Occidental is strongly committed to increasing the diversity of the campus community and the curriculum, and to fostering an inclusive, equitable, and just environment within which students, staff, administrators, and faculty thrive. Candidates who can contribute to this goal through their teaching, research, advising, and other activities are encouraged to identify their strengths and experiences in this area. Individuals advancing the College's strategic equity and justice goals and those from groups whose underrepresentation in the American professoriate has been severe and longstanding are particularly encouraged to apply.

Salary is commensurate with experience and qualifications. The College offers moving expense reimbursement (up to \$5000, taxable according to current IRS regulations), start-up funds, and a reduced teaching load in the first and second years of appointment. A comprehensive benefits package is available that includes: excellent health, dental, life, and retirement benefits; tuition benefits for the employee, spouse, domestic partner, and

dependents; use of gym facilities and the College Library. For a detailed description of benefits, please visit <https://www.oxy.edu/offices-services/human-resources/benefits-information>.

All qualified applicants will be considered for employment, including those with criminal histories, in a manner consistent with the requirements of applicable state and local laws, including the City of Los Angeles' Fair Chance Initiative for Hiring Ordinance.

Occidental College is committed to working with and providing reasonable accommodations to applicants with qualifying disabilities. If, because of a disability, you need a reasonable accommodation for any part of the application or employment process, please contact Human Resources ([hr@oxy.edu](mailto:hr@oxy.edu))