

Course Syllabus

Course: Hadith III – Criticism in Hadith

Study Program: Islamic Studies

Number of ECTS Credits: 7

Course Status: Compulsory

Course Code: 303

Contact Hours: 3+2

Academic Year: 2026/2027

Semester: V

Instructor: Prof. Assoc. Dr. Musa Vila

Brief course content

This course covers the causes that led to the emergence of hadith criticism, the experts in this field, and the challenges they faced in filtering and distinguishing authentic hadiths from apocryphal ones. It also includes the etymology and terminology of the concepts of this science, which are highly specific and through which criticism is applied to the chain of transmission and the text of hadith. The first part focuses on criticism of the transmitters of hadith, while the second part deals with criticism of the text itself. We also address methods of textual analysis, rules, and practical examples. Furthermore, it includes a study related to the compatibility of the Sunnah with contemporary realities and other related issues.

Course objective:

The aim of this course is to assist students in researching prophetic traditions, extracting prophetic sayings from the original source books where they are recorded, reading them correctly, understanding unfamiliar words, and deriving conclusions and rulings related to religious and legal issues. It also aims to familiarize students with the methodology of hadith scholars in addressing the two main components of hadith: 1. Knowledge of the analysis of the chain of transmission (isnād), where students will learn how hadith scholars confronted various challenges and succeeded in filtering hadiths from fabricated and weak reports. Rules will also be covered so that students become thoroughly acquainted with issues related to chains of transmission—who is considered a reliable, weak, or anonymous transmitter, and when their reports may be used as evidence. Students will also become familiar with the concepts of criticism and evaluation, as well as their levels among hadith scholars. 2. Knowledge of hadith text analysis: we address the scientific methodology of textual analysis used by hadith scholars, highlighting methods, rules, and practical examples. Students will also learn about the compatibility of hadith with contemporary realities—how to understand the context of hadith in terms of time, place, the objectives of Islamic law, thematic aspects, causes of narration, semantic, linguistic, religious, and conventional dimensions. The study of this course aims to provide students with direct exposure to the methodology of hadith scholars and experts in the use of hadith as evidence in religious and life matters. In this material, students will also have the opportunity to personally engage in class exercises of classifying and filtering hadiths from fabricated and weak sayings.

Expected learning outcomes

After completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. To describe the historical development of hadith from the time of Muhammad (peace be upon him) to the stage of its codification in books, which later became a basis for argumentation.
2. To compare the tireless work of hadith scholars with that of contemporary researchers.
3. To discuss the most appropriate form for implementing hadith in practical life.
4. To defend prophetic sayings from doubts and accusations that may be directed against sacred traditions.
5. To present a brief overview of how a researcher can practically reach the sources of prophetic sayings in hadith collections.
6. To memorize a considerable number of prophetic statements exactly as the Prophet said them, in Arabic text with translation into Albanian.

Teaching methodology:

1. Teaching will be conducted in the form of lectures, dominated by oral explanation while also including a practical component.
2. Students will be encouraged to engage in interactive discussions in order to learn the most appropriate methods of argumentation with prophetic traditions.
3. Seminars and semester papers will be organized, allowing students to practically learn how to prepare scientific topics supported by evidence.
4. Ideas will be exchanged through discussion, including acceptance of differing opinions, which will encourage students to be more active during lectures.
5. In the practical aspect, the instructor will accompany students to the faculty library where we will become acquainted with the primary books of hadith, commentaries on hadith, works on transmitters of hadith, and the scientific methodology of hadith scholars.

Course content:

Week one:

- 1. The causes that influenced the emergence of the science of hadith criticism.**
- 2. Protecting transmissions from omissions, forgetfulness, and concessions.**
- 3. Protecting transmissions from the addition of fabricated words and intentional accusations.**

4. Analysis of the syllabus from beginning to end.
Literature: (Book: "Scientific Criticism in Hadith," pages 01–23)

Week two:

1. What is meant by accusation and evaluation and their definitions.
2. Conditions that must be fulfilled for a transmitter of hadith.
3. The methodology of the Qur'an and Sunnah regarding the criticism of transmissions.
4. What is accepted from criticism and evaluation among hadith scholars.
Literature: (Book: "Scientific Criticism in Hadith," pages 23–46)

Week three:

1. The contradiction between the science of criticism and the science of evaluation.
2. Rules regarding the contradiction between criticism and evaluation.
3. Considering the methodology of scholars in their criticism and evaluation.
4. Each generation of critics has its own level of rigor and neutrality.
5. Criticism of those who possess religious reputation is not accepted.
6. Some transmitters from whom hadiths were narrated by Bukhari and Muslim.
Literature: (Book: "Scientific Criticism in Hadith," pages 47–63)

Week four:

1. Anonymity of the transmitter.
2. Whether transmission from an anonymous person is accepted in terms of name, identity, and genealogy.
3. Anonymity of the transmitter's condition.
4. Rules regarding anonymity.
Literature: (Book: "Scientific Criticism in Hadith," pages 70–82)

Week five:

1. Emphasis on the concepts of criticism and evaluation.
2. Terminology of evaluative expressions.

3. Terminology of critical expressions.
Literature: (Book: "Scientific Criticism in Hadith," pages 83–96)

Week six:

1. The levels of criticism and evaluation according to Imam Al-Dhahabi.
2. The levels of criticism and evaluation according to Ibn Hajar.
3. Evaluation and criticism as evidence in judicial matters.
Literature: (Book: "Scientific Criticism in Hadith," pages 97–105)

**Week seven:
First colloquium.**

Week eight:

1. Scientific methodology in the analysis of hadith texts.
2. Methods used by hadith scholars in explaining the text.
3. Definitions in textual criticism.
4. Detecting texts that contain irregularities.
Literature: (Book: "Scientific Criticism in Hadith," pages 106–123)

Week nine:

1. Detecting weaknesses in the text and types of weaknesses.
2. A hadith text contradicting the Qur'anic text.
3. A hadith text contradicting an authentic hadith.
4. A hadith text contradicting historical facts or common sense.
Literature: (Book: "Scientific Criticism in Hadith," pages 124–138)

Week ten:

1. Compatibility of the Sunnah with contemporary reality.
2. The meaning of contemporary reality.
3. Issues that help in understanding the Sunnah.
4. Understanding the Sunnah in the light of semantic, linguistic, religious, and conventional aspects.
Literature: (Book: "Scientific Criticism in Hadith," pages 140–166)

Week eleven:

1. Causes of variations in hadith transmissions.
2. Repetition of events.
3. Transmission of hadith based on meaning.
Literature: (Book: "Scientific Criticism in Hadith," pages 169–175)

Week twelve:

1. Differences in memorization abilities.
2. Transmission of hadith in abbreviated form.
3. Presence of the transmitter in part of the hadith.
4. Error of the transmitter.
5. Lying.
Literature: (Book: "Scientific Criticism in Hadith," pages 176–188)

Week thirteen:

1. Regarding the criticism of hadith scholars in the general evaluation of the companions.
2. The high status of the companions.
3. Evidence from the Qur'an and Sunnah that value the companions.
4. Rejection of the status of the companions due to some having committed major sins and the response to such claims.
Literature: (Book: "Scientific Criticism in Hadith," pages 191–222)

Week fourteen:

1. The impact of hadith on disagreements among jurists.
2. When hadith is applicable for action.
3. Whether a hadith must be authentic to act upon it.
4. Verification of the hadith text.
5. Imams have their own chains of transmission in their arguments.
Literature: (Book: "Scientific Criticism in Hadith," pages 227–254)

Week fifteen:

1. Harmonization of some controversial hadiths.
2. The hadith about the purity of water.

3. **The ruling on praying behind any imam.**

4. **The hadith comparing faith with major sins.**

Literature: (Book: “Foundations of Hadith,” pages 226–234)

Evaluation criteria and components:

Participation and engagement in lectures – 10%

Seminar paper – 20%

Intermediate test – 30%

Final exam – 40%

Total – 100%

Required literature:

1. **Kritika shkencore në hadith**, Prishtina, 2004.

2. **Bazat e hadithit**, Prishtina, 2009.

3. **Shkëndijat pejgamberike**, Skopje, 2002.

4. **Sherhu Iel el hadith**, Jeddah, 1995.

5. **Errefu ve Tekmil fi el Xherrhi ve Tadili**, Mektebe Ibn Tejmie, 1987.

More literature:

1. **Menhexh diraset el-esanid ëel hukmu alejha** – “Methodology of studying chains of transmission and ruling on them,” first edition, Jordan, 1997.

2. **Et-tesëir el-fenni fil hadith en-nebeëij** – “Technical facilitation in prophetic hadith,” first edition, Beirut, 1998.

3. **El-Ilelu fil hadith** – “Defects in Hadith,” first edition, Amman, 1980.

4. **El-feëaidu el-munteka min Fet’hil Bari** – “Selected benefits from Fath al-Bari and other works,” first edition, Medina, 1990.

5. **Hyrje në shkencat e hadithit** – “Introduction to the sciences of hadith,” Skopje, 2017.

6. **Ulumul Hadith** – “Sciences of Hadith,” Dar al-Fikr, Syria, 1986.

7. **Tedribu Rravij** – “Training of the Narrator,” Dar al-Aqidah, Egypt, 2008.

Student workload			
Activity	Teaching hours	Days/Weeks	Total
Lecture	3	15	45
Exercises	1.6	15	25
Seminar paper		10	10
Consultation with the instructor	2	15	30
Homework	1	10	10
Individual study			10
Preparation for the final exam			20
Evaluation time			10
Projects, presentations, etc.	1	15	15
Total			175

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