

Course Syllabus

Course Title: Objectives of Islamic Law

Study Program: Islamic Studies

ECTS Credits: 4

Course Status: Mandatory

Course Code: 412

Contact Hours: 2+0

Academic Year: 2026-2027

Semester: VIII

Professor: Dr. Violeta Smajlaj

Short Course Description

This course provides an introductory overview of the Objectives of Sharia, from the origin of the concept and its theoretical development to the contemporary reality of its independence as a distinct discipline, separate from Usul. It also presents a comprehensive perspective on the importance of purpose-oriented thinking as a methodological approach to rationalizing contemporary ijtihad and reducing the scope of disagreements among Islamic legal scholars on specific jurisprudential issues.

The course sheds light on the historical phases of the objectives of Sharia and examines the impact of intellectual, social, and political developments in Muslim societies on the evolution of this field. It covers the theory, practice, history, and leading figures in this discipline, as well as the methods for identifying objectives, while exploring the possibility of benefiting from research methodologies in contemporary social sciences to uncover these objectives and verify their fulfillment.

Furthermore, the course addresses the main themes of the science of al-Maqasid, from the emergence of the concept of legal purposiveness to the role of objectives in contemporary fatwas and the challenges faced by this modern approach to Islamic law in today's world. The topics include definitions, methods of identification, and processes of development of the objectives of Sharia from their inception to the present day, as well as the relationship of this discipline with other sciences by examining their similarities and differences, with particular focus on the relationship between ends and means in terms of their variability.

Course Objectives

- Equipping students with basic knowledge of the objectives of Sharia. The student will explore the concept, its origins, stages of development, its structure, its relationship with other disciplines, and with various worldviews that resemble it
- Developing skills to analyze the reasons behind the increased interest in the objectives of Sharia in contemporary Islamic thought.
- Enhancing critical thinking in evaluating arguments based on relevant evidence from Islamic sources. Since the development of legal thought is an ongoing process, it requires the attention of every generation to achieve sound understanding.
- Enabling students to write essays and engage in discussions on various topics in the fields of Fiqh and Usul in a clear, well-reasoned, and persuasive manner, both orally and in writing.
- Familiarizing students with the methods of identifying the objectives of Sharia and their connection to research methodologies in contemporary social sciences, as well as with ways of verifying the extent to which these objectives have been fulfilled.
- Understanding the importance of the objectives of Sharia in contemporary ijtiḥād.
- Analyzing and critically evaluating the relationship between ends and means in terms of stability and change.

Intended Learning Outcomes:

After completing the course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the main themes of the Objectives of Sharia;
- Describe the processes of development, methods of identifying objectives, and various perspectives;
- Identify the characteristics of the field, its prominent figures and personalities, as well as its influence on other disciplines;
- Compare different viewpoints studied throughout the course;
- Discuss topics within the field based on well-founded arguments, reaching clear and objective conclusions;
- Defend the positions of Sharia-based purposiveness as conceptualized by its founders;
- Present critical perspectives on each topic debated by scholars in the field, arriving at more substantiated conclusions;
- Apply the acquired knowledge in their religious and social interactions.

Teaching Methodology:

The course will be conducted primarily through lectures, supported by the use of a projector to help students better understand the material. Students will be encouraged to actively participate through interactive discussions, questions, and analyses during the lectures. In addition, seminars and various essays will be organized, to be presented both individually and in groups, along with self-assessment tests. Students will also have the opportunity to consult with the instructor during their preparation, receiving guidance aimed at achieving high-quality learning outcomes and results.

Course Content:

Week 1: Course introduction, syllabus overview, teaching methods, organization, and general review; Maqāṣid as a universal human phenomenon, not only divine.

Week 2: What do “Objectives of Sharia” mean? How does this term differ from similar concepts? Interactive discussion comparing related concepts.

Reading: Course materials prepared by the professor (pp. 1–4); Ahmed Er-Rejsuni, *Objectives of Islamic Law* (pp. 25–45); Valon Myrta, *Conceptual Introduction to the Objectives of Sharia*, Bulletin.

Week 3: Historical development of the objectives of Sharia: the notion before al-Shāṭibī. Discussion on the need for objectives of Sharia.

Reading: Ahmed Er-Rejsuni, *Objectives of Islamic Law* (pp. 49–98); Xhasir Avde, *Intentions of Sharia as Philosophy of Islamic Law* (pp. 30–63).

Week 4: Themes and foundations of the Objectives of Law; distinction between objectives of law and objectives of the responsible parties.

Reading: Course materials (pp. 8–10).

Week 5: Origins and literature: beginnings of the science of the Objectives of Law; key works and sources.

Reading: Course materials (pp. 16–19).

Week 6: Categorization of objectives.

Reading: Course materials (pp. 22–28); A. Er-Rejsuni, *Objectives of Islamic Law* (pp. 193–228).

Week 7: Methods for identifying the objectives of Sharia.

Debate: applying research methods from social sciences.

Reading: A. Er-Rejsuni, *Objectives of Islamic Law* (pp. 228–230 & 409–428); Course materials (pp. 21–22).

Week 8: Identifying interests through human reasoning; reflections and exercises on previous

objectives lessons, including examples from Quranic verses and Hadith to extract

and classify their types.

Reading: A. Er-Rejsuni, *Objectives of Islamic Law* (pp. 353–408).

Week 9: General norms of the objectives of law.

Reading: Course materials (pp. 29–32).

Week 10: Types of difficulties and clarifying those related to *taklīf*.

Reading: Course materials (pp. 33–39).

Week 11: Means of preserving objectives (existence and prevention of loss).

Reading: Course materials (p. 40).

Week 12: Objectives of Islamic Law: preservation of human rights; relationship between ends and means: stability and change.

Reflection and review of previous lessons.

Week 13: Relationship of objectives with legal arguments.

Reading: Course materials (pp. 42–47)

Week 14: Interconnection of maqāsid with other Islamic disciplines; review of seminar papers.

Reading: Valon Myrta, *Unpublished Paper*.

Week 15: Reality of Ijtihad in implementing objectives; definition of ijthad in application, criteria for applying objectives with examples of each basic objective.

Reading: Course materials (pp. 48–51); A. Er-Rejsuni, *Objectives of Islamic Law* (pp. 487–504).

Week 16: Benefits of applying objectives in jurisprudence; application in different branches of jurisprudence and contemporary issues; examples of rulings derived from maqāsid; reflections and course conclusion.

Reading: Course materials (pp. 51–52).

Assessment Criteria and Components:

Class Participation and Attendance 10%

Seminar Paper 20%

Midterm Exam 30%

Final Exam 40%

Total 100%

Required Reading:

1. Course materials prepared by the professor
2. Ahmed Er-Rejsuni, *Objectives of Islamic Law*. Bujar Hoxha (transl.), Shkup: Logos-A, 2015.
3. Xhasir Avde, “The Intentions of Sharia as a Philosophy of Islamic Law”. Shaban Sulejmani (transl.), Shkup, 2015.
4. Valon Myrta, “A Conceptual Introduction to the Objectives of Sharia”, *Buletin*.

Recommended Reading:

1. Esh-Shatibi. *El-Muwafaqat*. Abdullah Deraz (ed.), Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyyah.
2. Muhamad Tahir bin Ashur. *Maqasid al-Shari`ah*. Muhamed El Misavi (ed.).
3. Ismail al-Hasani. *Nadhariyat al-Mekasid inde Muhamed Tahir bin Ashur*. Washington: El Ma'hed al-Alami li al-Fikr al-Islami, first edition, 1995.
4. Numan Jugajm, *El-Muharrar fi Maqasid al-Shariaf*, Amman: Daral-Nefais, 2019.