



# THE FOUR SCHOOLS

## A History of Islamic Law & the Madhhabs

USL 101 | Spring, 2026

**Instructor:** Shaykh Chad Earl

**Office Hours:** By appointment only

**Instructor Email:** [TaqwaDirector@PlanoMasjid.Org](mailto:TaqwaDirector@PlanoMasjid.Org)

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**Class Times:** Wednesday, 7:00 – 9:30 PM

**Class Location:** Allen Masjid

### PREREQUISITES

Successful completion of MRF 101 – Introduction to Learning the Sacred Sciences. Students who have not fulfilled the prerequisite are welcome to audit this class. To see the audit policy, please visit the web site: <http://planomasjid.org/marifa/marifa-audit-policy>.

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this course the students will trace the development of Islamic Law from the era of the Prophet ﷺ through the early generations until the emergence of the Four Schools of Sunni Jurisprudence. Class discussion will include:

- Fiqh During the Era of the Prophet ﷺ
- Fiqh During the Era of the Companions
- Fiqh During the Era of the Successors
- The Life & Times of Imam Abū Ḥanīfa
- The Life & Times of Imam Mālik
- The Life & Times of Imam Shāfi‘ī
- The Life & Times of Imam Aḥmad
- Causes of Disagreement Among Scholars
- *Ijtihād & Taqlid* in Islamic Law

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. To understand the value of the Four Schools in Sunni Islam
2. To appreciate the existence of scholarly disagreement

### TEXTBOOKS

**Recommended:**

1. al-Sayis, Muhammad Ali, *A History of Islamic Jurisprudence*. DKI.
2. Abu Zahra, Muhammad, *The Four Imams*. Dar al-Taqwa.

## CLASS POLICIES

1. You have the option to audit this course or take it for credit. If you choose to audit the course, you must abide by the Marifa Audit Policy outlined on the web site.
2. Make every possible effort to be on time! Coming late or leaving early can leave you with misunderstandings about what is discussed during class. If you are late or absent, be sure to listen to the class recording before the next class.
3. You are expected to read the assigned portion of the textbook before coming to class. Not doing so will disqualify you from asking questions during class.
4. You may use electronic devices exclusively for class-related purposes. Cell phones must be silenced during class.
5. Use your full name during all Zoom sessions. Do not use nicknames or fake names. Names that are not on the roster will be removed from the meeting.
6. All assignments must be submitted on time. No exceptions allowed.
7. No make-up exams will be permitted without a documented excuse. Students who miss an exam with a legitimate excuse must email me as soon as possible.

## COURSE ASSESSMENT & GRADING

Final Exam will be posted at the end of the course.

*Note: Your final grade must be higher than 70% in order to receive credit for this course.*