

World Religions in Greater Indianapolis Teaching Module

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Humanities Discipline: History

Date: May 10, 2016

World Religion: Islam

Teaching Module Title: Muslim American Ideas of American Identity

Teaching Module Goal:

To explore American identity from the perspective of its Muslim citizens. What does it mean to be an American? Is it a political identity? A cultural identity? Or something else? How has it changed or stayed the same over time?

Assigned Readings and/or Websites:

Muslims in America: A Short History by Edward E. Curtis IV

Study Questions and/or Discussion Prompts for Students:

1. What was the Ahmadiyya movement? What was and is its view of American identity?
2. The Moorish Science Temple and the Nation of Islam demanded equal rights in the United States, but neither thought that African Americans were culturally American. If they weren't American, what were they?
3. How did participation in mosques after World War II encourage Muslim immigrants to identify with American middle class values?
4. What was W. D. Mohammed's view of American identity?
5. Why did some Muslims criticize U.S. foreign policy in the second half of the 20th century? Is it American to criticize the U.S. government? Compare and contrast with past examples.
6. How did Muslim American views of the United States change or stay the same after 9/11?

Written Assignments and/or Assessment Instruments:

Write a 5-6 pp. paper that compares and contrasts different notions of American identity from the point of view of its Muslim citizens. Be sure to include the voices of Muslims who offer criticism of and even disassociate with American identities as well as the voices of the Muslim American majority, which embrace political and cultural identities as Americans. Most importantly, show how these views of American identity stayed the same or changed over time.