

Module Title: The Authority of Evidence in *ʿIlm al-Uṣūl*

Module Code: USLHUI

Course Duration: 34 Weeks

Teaching Method: 4 units/week

Credits: 15

Overview:

This module aims to critically assess the third chapter of Shaykh Mūḥammad Riḍā Muẓaffar’s *Uṣūl al-Fiqh*, which focuses on the discourse on *Mabāḥith al-Ḥujja* (discussion on epistemic validity). This module will define what is meant by authority in accordance with Shīʿī legal theory. Furthermore, it will also critically evaluate the authoritativeness and epistemic validity of the sources from which it is possible to derive Islamic law.

Syllabus:

- Study of the discussion on epistemic validity (*Mabāḥith al-Ḥujja*) from the third volume of Shaykh Muẓaffar’s *Uṣūl al-Fiqh*. This will include the study of Muẓaffar’s introduction to the discussion on epistemic validity, and an examination of the epistemic validity of the primary four-fold Shīʿī categorisation of sources and other secondary sources.
- A critique of the traditional discourse as presented by orthodox jurists of Islamic law.
- Discussion and application of the contemporary developments in philosophy of knowledge and epistemology.

Learning outcomes:

On completion of this module, the successful student will be able to:

- Critically and independently discuss and debate topics and discourses in *Mabāḥith al-Ḥujja* from the third volume of Shaykh Muẓaffar’s *Uṣūl al-Fiqh*.
- Independently critique the orthodox positions related to this topic.
- Develop their research skills through comparative studies between classical Muslim legal theory and contemporary philosophy of knowledge and epistemology.

Assessment Weighting:

- 50% Assignment in Semester ONE
- 50% Exam in Semester TWO

Learning Materials:

Core Texts:

- Al-Muzaffar, M. R., (2004), *Uṣūl al-Fiqh*, Qom: Intishārāt Ismaʿīliyyān

Further Reading:

- Abu Zahra, M., *Uṣūl al-Fiqh al-Islāmī*
- Kamali, M. H., (1991), *Principles of Islamic Jurisprudence*, Cambridge: Islamic Texts Society
- Pollock's 'Epistemology'