What is the Digital Islamic Studies Curriculum?
The Digital Islamic Studies Curriculum (DISC) is a Mellon Foundation–funded initiative that provides a truly global perspective on Islam and the Muslim world to students at member institutions of the Big Ten Academic Alliance (BTAA)—until recently, known as the Committee on Institutional Cooperation (CIC). The curriculum will offer a broad set of courses that investigate Islam as a religion, as a civilization, as a myriad of cultural and historic traditions, and as the basis in some settings for political ideology.

What kind of compensation and support do faculty members teaching for the DISC receive?
In order to attract and fairly compensate faculty participants, we offer a one-time, $10,000 development grant per faculty member per course. We require that the faculty member receiving this grant teach this course at least twice over a four-year period.

To further promote an optimal live-synchronous teaching and learning experience for both faculty and students—contingent upon reaching certain nominal enrollment thresholds—we will provide: (1) based on the size of enrollment, funding for a graduate student instructor/teaching assistant (GSI/TA) to the host campus for each course offered and (2) based on the size of enrollment, funding will be provided for one adjunct lecturer per course to the receiving campuses. Funding disbursements for GSIs/TAs, adjunct lecturers and other non-incidental transactions supporting DISC activities will be facilitated via subcontract between the University of Michigan and the relevant participant university that hosts or receives a DISC course.

Units responsible for disbursing DISC funds at hosting and receiving universities vary from institution to institution. If a subcontract has already been set up between the University of Michigan and your DISC partner university but you remain unsure of the unit responsible for facilitating disbursing funds to your relevant department/program/center please contact the DISC Project Coordinator by email Digital.Islam@umich.edu or phone 734.615.9558 for university specific details.

Faculty members teaching for DISC receive multiple layers of support at the institutional, administrative, technical, financial and instructional level. All BTAA institutions with a faculty coordinator participating in DISC have institutional support from the Deans of Literature, Arts and Sciences.

What is generally expected of faculty members participating in DISC?
Participating faculty are expected to develop a new course, or to adapt an existing one that meets the curricular needs of DISC. Participating faculty should also create supplementary online materials and engage regularly in video conferencing with students. Because virtual courses entail different forms of both teaching and learning, participating faculty are also expected to engage in a training session at their host campus to facilitate their adjustment.

To alleviate the disjunctive nature of distance learning, and thus, to improve the quality of communication among instructors and students and to improve the effectiveness of teaching, cluster visits to receiving institutions will be facilitated (and paid for by DISC). Cluster visits encompass opportunities for both faculty and graduate student instructors from the host campuses to visit students at the distance campuses at least once per semester. The number of visits that faculty and graduate student instructors are expected to make, therefore, will depend on the size of the cluster; this is another rationale for keeping the size of clusters relatively small.
**Who retains the intellectual property rights for the course?**
Intellectual property rights over the course material offered as part of DISC are retained by the professor who offers the course. This includes any intellectual property rights to any recorded course material. Each course will be digitally recorded and the faculty member teaching the course retains the intellectual property rights over the course material provided.

**How does it affect the experience for students at the host university?**
The Digital Islamic Studies Curriculum (DISC) offers all participating students the unique opportunity for collaboration and engagement with students at other member universities of the Big Ten Academic Alliance (BTAA). With the inclusion of students from partnering institutions via CourseShare, the in-classroom experience for students at the host/teaching institution will differ only slightly from the traditional course experience. Student experiences will vary based upon how the hosting faculty member chooses to adapt an existing course, or develop a new course, that effectively lends itself to the CourseShare model.

**How would it affect the time at which the courses are taught?**
The times and dates when DISC courses are taught will follow the schedule of the host/teaching institution that is sharing the course. Students are responsible for adhering to the academic calendar of the host/teaching institution. Adjustments to the course times and dates can be made at the discretion of the faculty member offering the course from the host/teaching institution. It is important to note that the BTAA spans both the Eastern and Central time zones when faculty, graduate instructors and lecturers are planning for DISC courses and also for students when enrolling in the courses. Faculty and students should also note the discrepancies in the academic calendar (e.g., holiday breaks, exam schedules, start/end of terms, etc.) between the host/teaching institution and the receiving institution when planning for and enrolling in DISC courses.

**How would it affect the classroom I teach in, i.e., do I have to teach in a special classroom?**
The type and availability of classrooms with technology enabling CourseShare varies among the BTAA institutions. Some institutions have a number of classrooms with built-in videoconferencing equipment, while others have a blend of classrooms equipped with videoconferencing equipment and portable technologies facilitated by specialty staff that enables CourseShare in otherwise unequipped classrooms. For more information on a specific BTAA institution’s CourseShare technological offerings please contact the CourseShare Coordinator and/or technology staff of the institution in question.

**How is the course development funding distributed to the host faculty member?**
There is general flexibility in how course development funding can be distributed. The funding offered to the host faculty member can be distributed as a stipend. Please note that due to variance in university policies throughout the BTAA, methods of funding distribution may vary and that the funding distribution described here may not apply to all participating institutions.

**How much extra work teaching these courses is there for faculty?**
Estimates for extra teaching responsibility will vary for faculty members. CourseShare courses do, however, take more time commitment than the traditional university course. Some examples of likely additional time commitments include: possible course modifications, altering slides or presentation materials, planning meetings, additional students and coordination with graduate student instructors or lecturers.

**What is the procedure for grading?**
Faculty members from the host/teaching institution can delegate portions of grading responsibility as permitted by the grading policy of the host/teaching institution and the receiving institution. However, the faculty member leading the course from the host/teaching institution is responsible for final grade approval.
CourseShare – Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

My specialized seminar would appeal to students at another BTAA institution, and my department chair has encouraged me to make it available through CourseShare. What do I do next?
First, you should contact the Project Coordinator of the Digital Islamic Studies Curriculum (DISC) and share pertinent course details. Please also request the “DISC CourseShare Checklist” from the Project Coordinator to provide up-to-date guidance on the necessary steps to facilitate the sharing of a course as part of DISC. The Project Coordinator will email the BTAA Contact and share the following details for the course:
• Course number and name of course
• Course start and end dates
• Course meeting times
• Method of course delivery (online, videoconference, Breeze, etc.)
• Professor name and email address
• 1-2 paragraph course description
• Course pre-requisites
• Target student audience (relevant disciplines, undergraduate and/or graduate)
• Syllabus, if available
• Number of seats available, if known

BTAA staff will alert deans and faculty contacts at the BTAA institutions and ask them to promote the potential CourseShare course. The instructor and/or the DISC Project Coordinator should also send an email with these details to colleagues at other BTAA institutions, inviting them to recruit interested students. This peer to peer promotion will best facilitate the course sharing partnership.

How do BTAA students find out about CourseShare courses?
The DISC Project Coordinator, BTAA staff, the instructor, and Department Contacts promote potential CourseShare courses via emails, distribution lists, flyers, departmental newsletters, etc. Interested students are advised to connect with the DISC Project Coordinator, Department Contacts and/or the BTAA staff.

Is CourseShare limited to BTAA institutions?
CourseShare courses are shared between two or more BTAA institutions. Additional non-BTAA schools may become involved in a CourseShare course but BTAA staff only provides guidance to faculty and coordinate enrollment for students at participating BTAA institutions.

How do students at the receiving institution enroll?
The receiving faculty liaison will work with the relevant university/department contact (varies at each BTAA institution) in order to assign a local course number for the course. The students will enroll in the course as they would enroll in any local course, using the student registration system at their own institution. The Registrar Contacts will share enrollment information via a secure online site to enroll the students at the host/teaching campus. The receiving students will show up in the host/teaching instructor's course roster as local students, and they will be given access to requested course technologies and resources such as the library, online course management system, e-reserves, etc.

How are CourseShare courses evaluated?
In many cases, host/teaching instructors administer their routine course evaluation forms (electronically or on paper) as they ordinarily would. These can also be administered to remote students, if desired. Receiving departments may also elect to administer their own course evaluation forms with their local students. In addition, the BTAA office routinely surveys all participating CourseShare students and instructors regarding their satisfaction with their CourseShare experience and seeking feedback about improving the program and processes. The courses will also be evaluated annually in BTAA meetings composed of the faculty liaisons representing the Digital Islamic Studies Curriculum.