
How Muslim Students Negotiate their Religious Identity and Practices in an Undergraduate Setting

By Hadia Mubarak

Published on: May 08, 2007

Hadia Mubarak is a senior researcher at Georgetown University's Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding. In 2004, Mubarak was the first female to be elected as president of the Muslim Students Association of the US and Canada (MSA) since its establishment in 1963. Hadia's publications include "Young and Muslim in Post 9/11 America" (The Brandywine Review of Faith & International Affairs Vol. 3, No. 2), and "Breaking the Interpretive Monopoly: A Re-Examination of Verse 4:34" (Hawaa Vol. 2, Issue 3).

Organization of Muslim Campus Life

Muslim student life did not gain an organized presence in the U.S. until the creation of the first national Muslim student organization in 1963, the Muslim Students Association of the U.S. and Canada (MSA). When 75 Muslim students representing ten colleges attended the first MSA meeting at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign, their goal was to create a network of students that would serve as a source of support, religious learning and spirituality for Muslims throughout their college years. At the time, MSA founders traveled for days on Greyhound buses, trekking from as far as New York to San Francisco in order to meet Muslim students and help them establish an MSA chapter on their respective campuses.¹ Today, there are over 600 MSA chapters with memberships that range from 60 to 600 students at most public and private academic institutions in the U.S. and Canada.

During the first three years of the organization's existence, the MSA National publications reflected the mission of its founders to maintain and perpetuate members' religious consciousness and observances, so that students could work towards the betterment of Muslim societies when they returned to their countries of origin. After 1965, however, the MSA significantly reoriented its philosophy: instead of preparing international students for the time when they would be called upon to lead their societies 'back home,' it began to focus on integrating Muslims within the social fabric of American society, preparing students to lead the nascent communities of Muslims in North America. There was no longer any mention of 'returning home' in MSA publications.² Rather the organization's leaders began to lay the foundation for the institutionalization of Islam in America, making Islam accessible to the average American.

Today, MSA chapters symbolize the face of Islam on their campuses by raising religious awareness, opening doors of interfaith dialogue and providing a platform for Muslim students to share their common beliefs and practices. The presence of an MSA chapter on campus has a significant impact on the college experience of Muslim students. While the religious commitments of Muslim

students can drastically vary, most students who join an MSA chapter do so for similar reasons: to better understand their own religion, to meet other Muslims and to come to terms with their identity as American Muslims. The presence of an active MSA chapter often facilitates this goal.

While MSA chapters have come to serve many functions, one of its most important roles is as a source of support and information on Islam for Muslim students themselves. Muslim students entering college undergo the same struggle of identity and purpose as most American college students. According to a study by the Higher Education Research Institute, 76% of students are “searching for meaning and purpose in life.”³ As college marks the beginning of a life on their own, students are often confronted with deep and often perplexing questions regarding their purpose in life, beliefs and identity for the first time. The college experience gives students a unique opportunity to question nearly everything, especially the “deeper questions of authenticity and identity, of meaning and purpose, or spirit and spirituality.”⁴

Second-generation American Muslims have come to embrace their religion in more visible ways than their parents. As Geneive Abdo documents in *Mecca and Main Street: Muslim Life in America after 9/11*, many Muslim women who were born and raised in the U.S. are choosing to wear the headscarf even if their mothers didn't. An increasing number of young Muslims are attending Islamic schools, conferences and lectures, and developing a stronger affiliation with their religion and co-religionists. Muslim student associations are proliferating in high schools and colleges. According to the MSA national website, nearly 150-200 new MSA chapters were created between 1994 and 2005.⁵ Similarly, mosques are playing a greater role in the social lives of Muslims, expanding their traditional roles as a place of worship to include social, educational and vocational activities that cater to the diverse needs of its members, such as computer classes for adults, basketball games for teenagers, and town hall meetings on political candidates for local elections.

Not all Muslim students in American universities have an in-depth knowledge of Islam. For some, identification with Islam is limited to having Muslim-sounding names and participating in major religious holidays. Many Muslim students gravitate towards the MSA in the hopes of finding answers to the questions they face. For example, at Florida State University, where I served as MSA officer for three years, although many of the students who joined our MSA knew very little about Islam and did not practice the tenets of the faith, they were still very interested in learning about Islam and desired to become a part of the Muslim student peer group. While Islam was never something they seriously studied or considered prior to college, their college experience offered them the opportunity to connect with their religion in a way they did not experience previously.

An important factor in changing or maintaining one's religious commitment in college is the student's peer group, as S. J. Henderson demonstrates.⁶ As students become friends with other Muslims who are committed to their faith, attend study circles on Islam, and participate in religious activities with fellow peers (for the first time, for some students), their experience with MSA becomes a defining moment in their lives, where their commitment to Islam transforms from

being just a cultural affiliation or a family tradition to becoming a faith of personal conviction and devotion.

Rehan Seyan underwent her own religious revival when she enrolled at Stony Brook University in Long Island, New York.⁷ Unlike many of the non-practicing Muslims who come from secular families, Rehan actually came from a conservative Muslim family. Her family taught her to avoid the indulgences of her public high school friends, from drinking to premarital sex. Influenced by peer pressure, Rehan drifted further from Islam than her parents approved. The stricter they were with her, the more depraved Rehan felt. All of that changed when she went to college forty-five minutes away from home. For the first time, Rehan felt like she was in the spotlight as a Muslim American. Feeling the urge to defend Islam, Rehan became active in the MSA, attending mosque prayers and religious lectures. By February 2003, Rehan decided to cover her hair. “After I covered, I changed. I didn’t want to hang out with the night people anymore. I felt I wanted to give people a good impression of Islam. I wanted people to know how happy I am to be a Muslim.”⁸

Promoting Religious Awareness

As Islam has come to dominate international attention after 9/11, the details of Islamic tenets, law and history have become the subject of wide interest and scrutiny in the media, the classroom, university lectures, and among the general student body. Responding to these issues has proven a complex affair for Muslim students on college campuses. As Trinity College’s first Muslim chaplain, Sohaib Sultan, explains, it can be challenging for students to explain themselves – whether responding to a misinformed professor’s comment in class or answering complex theological and political questions posed by curious students.⁹ “It’s intimidating for many students to take on that role and have to answer for other Muslims,” Sultan says.

On the other hand, this challenge has compelled Muslim students to gain a deeper knowledge of their faith, whether for the sake of educating peers and responding to unrelenting questions on Islam, or for the sake of sustaining their own belief. For example, Adriana Nordin Manan, the president of Colby College’s MSA, said she would never have joined a Muslim club back home in Malaysia. However, when she enrolled in Colby College, she found herself a religious minority in a university where there were only a handful of Muslims. Being a minority fueled Manan’s motivation to educate her classmates about her religion.¹⁰

Thus, Muslim student organizations have gained an increasing level of importance as bastions of Islamic knowledge. Muslim student leaders no longer have the luxury of conducting ‘MSA business as usual,’ which usually consists of organizing regular meetings, social activities and a few events a year. In the current political climate, Muslim student leaders have been forced to engage questions of central importance to their faith, ranging from terrorism and human rights to women and legal reform. Where Muslim students have failed to rise to the occasion and contribute to the debate, they have become marginalized. For the most part, however, the pressure mounted on Muslim student organizations has given rise to an increased number and quality of programs, more competent leadership and a willingness to engage issues that have not been traditionally discussed within American Muslim groups.

While promoting awareness of Islam has always been an objective of MSA, it has taken on a heightened level of importance in recent years. MSA chapters across North America hold an annual Islam Awareness Week (IAW) during the month of November. On many college campuses, IAW has given way to Islam Awareness Month (IAM) as activities increased in popularity and demand. During this time, MSA chapters set up an information booth on Islam, host lectures, and sponsor activities such as Islamic Jeopardy, art displays or film festivals that engage students who are interested in learning about Islam. At the information booth, MSAs make available free copies of the Quran and literature related to frequently asked questions about Islam, such as ‘Who is Mohammad?’, ‘How does Islam treat women?’, ‘What does Islam say about human rights?’, and ‘Do Muslims believe in Jesus?’ By raising the level of religious awareness and discourse on campus, MSAs have played an important role in fostering respect and tolerance for religious pluralism.¹¹

Beyond the goal of raising religious awareness, MSAs have also taken advantage of these activities to dispel misconceptions and stereotypes. The University of Texas MSA organized a film festival displaying short films on Muslims, to counter the stereotypical portraits of Muslims in Hollywood films. One film focused on breaking down stereotypes with humorous parodies. The main character, a stereotypical southerner named Cleatus, asked questions about many common misconceptions of Islam, such as the idea that Islam is a religion of violence.¹² “The purpose of Islam Awareness Week is to educate people about the tenets of Islam and to combat anti-Muslim sentiment,” MSA outreach coordinator Bassem Tariq told the *Daily Texan*. “They [Muslim students] have seen a lot of anti-Muslim sentiment on the UT campus.”¹³

Such sentiment exploded into violence on a nearby campus only a few days before UT’s IAW, when a Muslim woman was allegedly attacked on the Baylor University campus on April 1, 2006. The *Waco Tribune Herald* reported that a man tore off her headscarf, pushed her to the ground and kicked her repeatedly, breaking her ribs. “Islamophobia has sort of increased,” Tariq said. “Now it’s sort of more pervasive.”¹⁴

IAW has also become an important way for Muslim students to engage larger debates over Islam and Muslims. According to Sohaib Sultan, Muslim students’ intimidation or lack of credentials might discourage them from contributing to the discourse or from taking on controversial topics, such as women in Islam, jihad or the nature of Prophet Mohammad’s character. Instead, through the judicious selection of speakers and topics, IAW presents an opportunity for MSAs to weigh in on the debate in a credible and effective way. For example, Trinity College’s MSA invited distinguished scholar Jane I. Smith, an expert on American Islam and a professor of Islamic Studies and Christian-Muslim relations at Hartford Seminary, to discuss the role of women in Islam for their IAW in April 2006. “In America,” Smith said, “Muslim women are not confined to the home, and they have all kinds of opportunities for participation in public life, in ways that women don’t always have in other places. ... American Islam for the most part welcomes this, and encourages women to claim their role in society.”¹⁵

The *Hungry For Change* Ramadan Fast-a-thon has been one of the most popular means by which Muslim students share their faith with other students. Starting off as a small event at the University of Knoxville in Tennessee in 2001, it eventually became a nationwide initiative in which hundreds of universities currently participate. In 2006, over 230 universities took part in MSA National's annual Ramadan Fast-a-thon to celebrate Islam's emphasis on social justice, philanthropy, and sacrifice. An interfaith initiative, the Fast-a-thon encourages non-Muslim students to fast for one day in the month of Ramadan – during which time Muslims fast from dawn to sunset – to experience living in the shoes of a Muslim. For each student who pledges to fast, local businesses make a donation. MSA students then donate the proceeds to a local food shelter or soup kitchen.¹⁶ MSA chapters raise an average of \$100,000 per year for local emergency food shelters.

A non-Muslim student journalist who participated in the Fast-a-thon at the University of Texas at Austin commented, “Notwithstanding the recent vitriolic debates about diversity education on campus, the Fast-a-thon is a bona-fide opportunity for non-Muslims to broaden their horizons. It doesn't cost anything, nobody gets indoctrinated and everyone can still use their elective hours to take ‘History of Rock and Roll.’ All that and free food, too...On a campus that's hungry for intercultural understanding, this is a great way to fill the gap.”¹⁷

Religious Accommodation

At times, Muslim students struggle to reconcile their religious requirements with the pursuit of a higher education. A central issue is their need of certain accommodations that can facilitate the practice of their faith on college campuses. The growing religious consciousness of young Muslims has encouraged them to observe Islamic practices more strictly than they have in the past. As the number of Muslim students on college campuses has increased in the last decade, Muslim students have become increasingly vocal in requesting that university administrations accommodate their religious needs.

Of all religious requirements, the ability to fulfill Islam's religious mandate to pray five times a day is of primary concern to Muslim students. Securing a clean and relatively quiet space to pray their daily prayers on campus is perhaps the most important religious accommodation that Muslim students seek in college. According to MSA National's Muslim Accommodations Task Force, as of 2004, there were 120 prayer spaces in American and Canadian universities.¹⁸

Muslim students' requests for prayer space on college campuses in North America have brought a number of questions to the forefront of public discourse over the role of religion in institutions of higher education: What responsibilities, if any, do universities have to accommodate the religious needs of their students? How does a secular academic institution maintain a balance between fulfilling students' request for religious accommodation without displaying favoritism towards one religion over another? When can a strict interpretation of the ‘Establishment clause’ *restrict* rather than *protect* students' right to the free exercise of religion?

To date, the responses of universities have varied widely, from Georgetown University's creation of

a permanent prayer space for its Muslim students to McGill University's eviction of Muslim students from their makeshift prayer space in Peterson Hall. Often the response depends on the university's religious or secular orientation, its commitment to multiculturalism, and its interpretation of the First Amendment or, in Canada's case, The Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

The two-year saga that played itself out at McGill University in Montreal offers insight into the issues that characterize this debate. On June 2, 2005, the university administration stated that it planned to remodel the basement of Peterson Hall – where nearly 200 Muslim students offered daily prayers – into an archeology lab. The administration claimed that an agreement signed with the MSA in 1998 to allow Muslim students to pray there had expired and would not be renewed. Although Muslim students lobbied for an alternative prayer space and met with key administrators on several occasions, the university refused to provide a prayer space to the students on the grounds that it is a secular institution. McGill spokesperson Joe Zackon said, "...We're being asked continually to provide space for a particular religious group when we're a secular institution that doesn't provide space for any other religious group – and shouldn't be."¹⁹ Although the issue had been brewing for some time, it reached its climax when administrators changed the lock to the basement to prevent students from praying there.

McGill University's administration claimed that Muslim students' request for accommodation amounted to seeking special privileges. "[The MSA] wants special treatment; they want special privileges," Jennifer Robinson, McGill's Vice-Principal (Communications), said.²⁰ "Basically we don't believe we have a legal obligation to provide this particular group with a religious space on campus."²¹

The Quebec Human Rights Commission dismissed this argument when it ruled in March 2006 that one of Canada's largest engineering schools, The École de Technologie Supérieure, affiliated with the University of Quebec, must provide a prayer space on its campus for Muslim students, who had been praying in a stairwell. The commission rejected the school's argument that it did not have to accommodate religious practices because it is a secular institution. "The secular nature of an institution doesn't remove its obligation to accommodate students in their religious needs," said Marc-André Dowd, the commission's interim president, at a news conference. The Centre for Research-Action on Race Relations and the Muslim Council of Montreal had filed a complaint in 2003 on behalf of 113 students, who also said their association was denied official recognition because it was a religious organization. The engineering school said it would comply with the Commission's decision.²²

This issue is not a new one to Muslim students. As MSA National President during 2004-2005, I received countless complaints from MSA chapters about universities' unwillingness to provide a prayer space for Muslim students and in some cases, high school principals' refusal to let Muslim students form a Muslim organization on campus. Similarly, as MSA president at Florida State University from 2002-2003, my request for a prayer room for Muslim students was also denied by the Student Government Association because it allegedly violated the separation of church and state.

The argument of those opposing religious accommodation usually runs along these lines: if a university provides a prayer space on campus for Muslims, it must do so for all other religious denominations; if it allows Muslims to be excused for their religious holidays, then it must allow other religious groups to be excused for their own holidays; if it offers *halal* meat in the campus cafeteria, it must accommodate the dietary regulations of all student religions. Thus, it is more convenient for the administration not to accommodate any religious group's need than to take the risk of accommodating one group and neglecting another. While this argument seems to make sense on the surface, it fails to consider a number of important factors.

First, opponents of religious accommodation ignore state-institutionalized preferences for Judeo-Christian traditions that are a product of both history and the dominant cultural reality. For example, neither Jewish nor Christian students have to request on-campus facilities for Sabbath rituals or for the Sunday service, because Saturday and Sunday are already off-days at nearly all American and Canadian institutions of higher learning. Furthermore, most Christian holidays are already recognized as official holidays at most U.S. or Canadian universities; students of those faiths do not need to request to be excused from classes on Christmas or Easter. Hence, if a professor refuses to excuse a student from a mid-term exam during *Eid Al-Adha* on the basis of religious neutrality, that same professor fails to realize that students of religions with a longer institutionalized presence in this country are already afforded this right by virtue of the country's observance of major Christian religious holidays. When Muslim students request an on-campus facility to fulfill their religious mandate to perform five daily prayers or request to be excused from class on mid-Friday to attend the *jum'a* service (an obligation for all adolescent males), they are not seeking privileges, but rights that have already been afforded to students of religions that are in the majority.

Second, opponents of religious accommodation who use the justification of "impartiality" often confound "equality" with "sameness." The Quebec Commission on Human Rights eloquently articulated this point when it defended Muslim girls' right to wear headscarves in public school. The Commission argued that schools and institutions – public or private – are legally obliged to "reasonably accommodate" people's religious needs which arise from their right to equality. The concept of reasonable accommodation is premised on the fact that although people are equal, they are not identical. Individuals' circumstances, backgrounds, and religious requirements vary, and thus necessitate different types of accommodations. For example, employers must allow pregnant female employees or disabled employees certain accommodations that other employees might not need.

This confusion between "equality" and "sameness" was evident during the French debate on banning headscarves in public schools. French officials compared the wearing of a headscarf by a Muslim female student to the wearing of an "ostentatious cross" by a Christian student. Assuming that both were equally significant in meaning to the adherents of both faiths, officials proceeded to apply an interpretation of secularism that ultimately deprived Muslim girls of their right to worship freely. Similarly, in the case of prayer spaces, officials often assume that if students of other religions can do without an on-campus prayer space, then Muslim students should also be able to do without it.

Once one understands the significance of praying five times at set periods of the day for Muslim students, one begins to understand why facilitating a space to pray in is integral to Muslim students' ability to freely practice their religion. First, Muslims believe that performing the prayer is an indication of one's commitment to Islam. A prophetic tradition explicates that performing prayers is the litmus test for who is truly a Muslim. Praying five times a day distinguishes those who have accepted faith from those who have rejected it, according to one tradition. In fact, some extreme theological positions posit that Muslims who do not pray (five times during the set periods) have essentially left Islam. Since these prayers must be fulfilled within a specific time period, students sometimes have a limited amount of time between classes to offer these prayers and need a place that is conveniently located near classrooms. In fact, the lack of proper facilities or accommodation for Muslim students to pray their five prayers often forces students to choose between fulfilling their religious responsibilities or their academic ones.

At Florida State University, for example, some students felt too timid or shy to pray in public areas due to the unnecessary exposure it would place upon their individual faith. Some MSA students acknowledged that they simply "made up" their prayers when they returned home at the end of the day, although they would have missed the specific time range in which the prayers must be fulfilled. Muslim students who were religiously committed usually found an empty hallway or room in the Student Union in which to pray. It was not uncommon, however, for a well-meaning individual to stop the student and ask, "Do you need help?" or "Are you looking for your contacts?"

There are some success stories. Muslim students at Henry Ford Community College in Michigan persistently lobbied their university administration for a permanent room where students could pray. At first, their request was denied because the Muslim student population was too small and because of concerns of violating the separation of church and state. However, as the MSA membership grew from 5 members to 350 and students took initiative to work with the university, the Dean of Student Affairs eventually approved an MSA Activity Room, which is conveniently located on campus and provides sufficient space for students to pray. In 2003, Ohio State University established a prayer room for Muslim students in the Student Union; and in the spring of 2004, California State University Long Beach followed suit and established a centrally located prayer room in the Student Union's Cultural Center.²³ At the same time that McGill University shut down its Muslim prayer space, nearby Concordia University was expanding a dedicated prayer room that its Muslim students have been using since the early 1980s.²⁴

Seeking Leave for Religious Holidays

Beyond securing a place to pray, Muslim students have sought the right to participate in their religious holidays, *Eid Al-Fitr*, which signals the end of Ramadan, and *Eid Al-Adha*, which signals the end of *hajj*. In 1995, Syracuse University was the first university to officially recognize *Eid* as a university holiday.²⁵ When Imam Ahmed Kobeisy became a volunteer chaplain and member of the Syracuse Chaplain's Council in 1990, he realized that while the university officially recognized the holidays of some faith communities, it did not recognize Muslim holidays. Kobeisy proposed

that the university's Calendar Committee add the two Muslim holidays. The Committee felt that two days were too much, so they negotiated with the Muslim student community to only include *Eid Al-Fitr*.

In 2004, Muslim students at SUNY Albany presented the University Senate with a compelling case to convince them to put the *Eid* holidays on the academic calendar. They pointed to the demographics of the school's Muslim student population, the university's history of recognizing other religious holidays, and cases of bias against the Muslim population. In spring 2004 SUNY Albany passed Bill 0304-28, which called to suspend classes on both *Eids* during the 2004-2005 academic year.²⁶ The bill's success marked a milestone for Muslim students in America, as SUNY Albany was the first public academic institution to officially recognize the Muslim holiday.²⁷ In 2002, the University of Toronto's Provost Office issued a memo requesting university staff to take into consideration the *Eid* holiday when scheduling exams, tests and other academic activities, such as labs.

Impact of 9/11

In the post 9/11 climate, American Muslim students have been confronted with a sense of perpetual displacement in the psyche of the American public. Although they were born and raised in this country, they came to realize for the first time that they were not in fact perceived as American in the eyes of the general public. As their religious beliefs became a reason for their incrimination, as their organizations and places of worship became the target of vandalism and hate crimes and as they were perceived as potential threats to the security of their *own* nation, Muslim students felt that their very identity as Americans was subjected to scrutiny, challenge and mistrust. At universities across the United States and Canada, Muslim Student Association chapters filed case after case of incidents of physical assault, verbal harassment, vandalism to their prayer areas or campus offices and at the very least, expressed sentiments of insecurity and intimidation.

Despite the daily onslaught and the feeling of double victimization, MSA chapters remained vigilant in speaking out against the barbaric attacks of 9/11 that took away the lives of thousands of victims. They participated in vigils and spoke at churches, college and high school classrooms, and community-wide events to convey the authentic teachings of Islam, which prohibit killing civilians and command mercy, justice and compassion. In recent years, MSAs have expanded their platform to include 'raising political awareness' as a critical component of their purpose.

Muslim students realized that they could not have an honest or constructive dialogue on U.S.-Muslim relations unless students were aware of the political conditions of the Muslim world. MSA National established the Political Action Task Force (PATF) in 2001, which signaled a national shift towards greater political involvement. Prior to this move, a few MSAs were still reluctant to participate in the political process in America. However, the last remnants of this exclusivist ideology quickly dissipated in the post 9-11 climate.

While the political views of Muslim students vary, most Muslim students find themselves united on

major political issues that affect Muslims domestically and abroad. American Muslims have come to realize that unless they began to speak up for themselves, others will continue to speak up on their behalf and in doing so, will continue to mischaracterize the image of Islam and Muslims. Thus, MSA National has taken a stand in encouraging students to become more politically engaged at the university, local and national level. It supports voter education initiatives, direct advocacy campaigns, lobbying, and other efforts that help strengthen the voice of Muslim students on a political and social level. As MSA chapters are leading the way towards greater respect, tolerance, religious awareness and diversity on college campuses, they have helped create an atmosphere that is more conducive to the academic growth and spiritual development of students.

Endnotes

¹ According to *Al-Ittihad*, vol. 3, no. 1, the president of MSA visited universities in Philadelphia, Washington, D.C., Stanford, Berkeley, Fort Collins, Manhattan, and Champaign in 1966. See "Visits to the Local Chapters," *Al-Ittihad*, vol. 3. no. 1 (September 1966): 37.

² Yusra Gomaa writes at length on this topic in her unpublished BA Thesis, "The Muslim Students Association of the US and Canada: Transient Students or Envoys of Islam in North America?" University of Chicago, 2006.

³ "College Students Show High Levels of Spiritual and Religious Engagement." *Spirituality in Higher Education*. University of California Higher Education Research Institute. Press release 21 Nov. 2003.

⁴ Chickering, A. W., Astin, A. W. & Higher Education Research Institute. "The initiative for authenticity and spirituality in higher education." Paper presented at the NASPA - Gathering at the Gateway - Renewing Our Spirit, St. Louis, MO. March 2003.

⁵ <http://www.msa-national.org/media/support/>

⁶ Henderson, Steven James. "The Impact of Student Religion and College Affiliation on Student Religiosity" (Diss. *University of Arkansas*: 2003), p. 51.

⁷ Abdo, Geneive. *Mecca and Main Street: Muslim Life in America after 9/11* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 30-31.

⁸ Ibid. 30-31.

⁹ Pulley, John. "A Connecticut Muslim in King James' Court." *The Chronicle of Higher Education* 51:36. 13 May 2005: Page A48.

¹⁰ Qiumby, Beth. "Finding fellowship on campus; Religious clubs gain following among students at Maine schools." *Portland Press Herald*. 9 Dec. 2006: pg. C1.

¹¹ MSA National Brochure.

- 12** Sondgeroth, Jessica. "U. Texas Muslim students confront stereotypes through films" *Daily Texan* 17 April 2006.
- 13** Sauser, Katherine. "Expert says women honored in Islam at U. Texas speech." *The Daily Texan* 14 April 2006.
- 14** Sauser, Katherine. "Expert says women honored in Islam at U. Texas speech." *The Daily Texan* 14 April 2006.
- 15** Taylor, Frances. "'Islam Awareness Week' Aims to Promote Understanding." *Hartford Courant* 4 April 2006.
- 16** The Ramadan Fast-a-thon. Muslim Students Association National.
http://www.fastathon.org/participating_organizations.htm 27 Aug. 2006.
- 17** Edwards, Jeremy. "Taste Islam by Fasting for a Day." *Daily Texan Online*. 29 Oct. 2003.
- 18** "How to Establish a Prayer Room on Campus." *Muslim Students Association National: Muslim Accommodations Taskforce Series* (Falls Church, VA: Muslim Students Association National, 2004), p. 6.
- 19** "Muslims still seeking prayer space at McGill." CBC News 3 Jun. 2005.
<http://www.cbc.ca/canada/montreal/story/2005/06/03/qc-muslims20050603.html> and Schneider, Heidi. "Tough times for McGill's Muslim women: Without a place to pray, Muslim women at McGill pray in turn and in private, separate from men." *McGill Daily*.
- 20** Ginsberg, Josh. "McGill may face human rights complaint next week as Muslims pray in the snow." *McGill Daily* 28 Nov. 2005. <http://www.mcgilldaily.com/view.php?aid=4565>
- 21** Aubin, Benoit. "McGill's prayer problem: Devout Muslims say the university owes them a special room." *MacLean's* 17 Nov. 2005.
http://www.macleans.ca/education/universities/article.jsp?content=20051121_116019_116019
- 22** Birchard, Karen. "Canadian Engineering School Ordered to Provide Prayer Space for Muslims." *The Chronicle of Higher Education* Vol. 52, Issue 31 (7 April 2006): Page A49.
- 23** "How to Establish a Prayer Room on Campus." *Muslim Students Association National: Muslim Accommodations Taskforce Series*. Pp. 9-11.
- 24** Aubin, Benoit. "McGill's prayer problem: Devout Muslims say the university owes them a special room." *MacLean's* 17 Nov. 2005.
http://www.macleans.ca/education/universities/article.jsp?content=20051121_116019_116019
- 25** "How to Achieve Islamic Holidays on Campus." *Muslim Students Association National: Muslim Accommodations Taskforce Series*, p. 9.

26 "How to Achieve Islamic Holidays on Campus." *Muslim Students Association National: Muslim Accommodations Taskforce Series*, p. 10.

27 *Ibid.*

28 "How to Achieve Islamic Holidays on Campus." *Muslim Students Association National: Muslim Accommodations Taskforce Series*, p. 12.