



GRADUATION EDITION



(Pictured) The esteemed faculty and first graduating class of 2023

In This Issue:

First Graduation & Convocation P1

Photo Gallery P3-P4

Graduate Interview P5

Importance of Learning the Language of Allah P6

Summer Arabic Language Intensive P7



IQOU THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE HOLDS FIRST GRADUATION & CONVOCATION CEREMONY

IQOU Theological College held our inaugural Graduation and Convocation on May 18, 2023, on the beautiful, historic lawn of the future campus in Charlotte Court House, Virginia. After opening in 2022, we proudly presented the first graduating class with Certificates of Islamic Studies and Diplomas of Islamic Studies.

In a spectacular graduation processional, faculty and administration joined the graduates in a flag ceremony bearing the American flag along with a variety of international flags. Setting the theme for the event was the melodic opening Arabic recitation of Suratul Baqara, line 138, roughly translating to: "The Color of Allah! And whose color is better than Allah's. And we are to worship none but Him." In the welcome address, President of IQOU Theological College, Sheikha Syeda Zainab Adams Gillani,

(continued pg 2)

Graduation & Convocation

(Continued from page 1)

highlighted the distinction of the chosen passage, "Allah urges us in Holy Quran to absorb ourselves through and through in the color of Allah. And what is that color? That is Ilm-ud-Deen, Deenul Islam. The color of Allah is total dedication to Allah. The color of Allah is where we lose our own colors and nothing is left of us but 'Sibgatullah' (the color of Allah). IQOU Theological College endeavors to bring students from whatever colors they have and dye them in the color of Allah. That is our goal." The administration of IQOU Theological College described the inaugural graduating class as having excelled in their Islamic studies while exhibiting the mission



of the college to acquire beneficial knowledge that is centered in faith and spirituality so that students may live dynamic and healthy lives of leadership and community engagement. The keynote speaker, Honorable Khalifa Hussein Adams, reminded graduates that "each individual you encounter has a unique story and perspective to share. By actively listening and engaging with others, you can create bridges where there were once divides, and build a stronger, more compassionate society."

"OUR GOAL IS TO BECOME COLORED IN ALLAH'S COLOR."

President Sheikha Syeda Zainab Adams Gillani

Dr. Nahla Al-Saidi, Advisor to Shaikh Al-Azhar and Dean of the prestigious Al-Azhar College of Islamic Studies for International Students was eager to address the graduating class as the keynote speaker, but due to unforeseen circumstances was unable to attend and so she delivered a video message that is available on the college's website (iqou-college.org).

Nasirah Shabazz, who received a Certificate in Islamic Studies, offered encouraging words about her experience, "my path to IQOU Theological College grew from a love of seeking Ilm as I attended Muslim summer youth camps hosted by Banaatun Noor International. Those camps, founded by Hazrat El Sheikh Syed Mubarik Ali Shah Gillani (raheemahullah) allowed me to flourish. I knew the yearly camps were just the beginning for me to become an eager student of Ilm, but I never dreamed of achieving my education at an Islamic college."

The college held the graduation at the front doors of its future campus, the former J. Murray Jeffress Elementary School, a segregation-era building originally constructed just for African Americans. Our esteemed President Gillani reflected on the historical backdrop, "...you're sitting at a very historical campus which was built in 1952 during the years of segregation when people of color were not able to study in the same campus as European children or adults, and so this building was purposefully built for African American students which is why the blueprints say 'school for colored kids". In Islam, we don't call ourselves black people or white people or any other people. Our goal is to become colored in Allah's color. So this may have been the campus for colored children, but now this is the campus for people who strive to be colored in Allah's color." Please join us in congratulating the historical first graduating class of IQOU Theological College.





Nasirah Shabazz



Safiyah Abdulkhafid "Um Mansur" receiving Certificate in Islamic Studies from President Sheikha Zainab Adams Gillani



Abdul Mannaan Giles



Sufiyah Aisha Muqit Qadriyyah



Sanaa Abdulatheem



Saira Abdussabur

Graduate Interview: Shazia Abdul-Alim

How does it feel to be the first student to graduate with a Diploma in Islamic Studies?

I feel a strong sense of gratitude. When I first heard about the opening of IQOU Theological College I wanted to join immediately. I remember reading through the student catalog and seeing all the amazing courses. It felt too good to be true. Fast forward to now, I completed the Certificate in one semester and then continued to complete the Diploma, which feels surreal. I am just grateful to Allah that I was able to make it this far and my journey here hasn't ended.

What did you enjoy most about attending an Islamic College?

I really enjoyed gaining more knowledge about Islam. There are so many aspects of Islam and each class touched on a different aspect. All the knowledge has given me so much perspective on life and how to best be successful in this world and the next.

What was your favorite class?

I really enjoyed the Sufic Sciences I class. This course broke down some of the fundamentals of the Sufi way. We learned how the Sufic sciences are rooted in the Holy Quran and Sunnah and how important this science is to gaining nearness to Allah ta'ala, who is our only goal.

If you could describe your experience at IQOU in one word what would use and why?

I would say my experience has been enlightening. These classes have enlightened my heart and my life in many ways.



Pictured: Shazia Abdul-Alim receives 1st IQOU Diploma from President Gillani

What advice would you give to someone considering to attend IQOU Theological College?

For someone considering joining IQOU Theological College, I would say just join. It may not be the easiest and will require effort. However, in the end, you gain ilm (knowledge) which will be a benefit for you in this life and the next. I will add that you get out what you put in. Work hard!

What's next in your journey of gaining Islamic knowledge?

Studying here at IQOU Theological College unlocked within me a love for learning my deen. I wish to continue studying here at IQOU Theological College until I receive my bachelor's.

The Importance of Learning the Language of Allah



Dr. Nahla Al-Saidi with IQOU
Faculty member Alima Safiah
Salaam Al-Azharia

The Arabic language is an eloquent, expressive, and complex language that does not achieve its full meaning through translations into other languages. Allah says in Surah Yusef Ayah 2:

“إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ قُرْآنًا عَرَبِيًّا لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ”

“Indeed, We have sent it down as an Arabic Quran so that you may understand.”

The Holy Quran was sent down in Arabic and thus it is important for every Muslim to learn the Arabic language so that they may be able to fully understand the Quran Majeed. Ibn Abi Shaibah (ra) narrated that Sayyindina Umar (ra) said, “Learn Arabic, for it strengthens the mind and increases chivalry” (Al-Muqaffa Al-Kabir). “When studying Arabic it's important to keep the words of Sayyindina Umar (ra) in our minds so that we stay motivated by the direct benefits we can receive”, stated IQOU Faculty member Alima Safiah Salaam Al-Azharia.

Dr. Nahla Al-Saidi, Advisor to Shaikh Al-Azhar and Dean of the Al-Azhar College of Islamic Sciences for International Students, in a video address to the students of IQOU Theological College reiterated, “You must learn Arabic because the Quran is not understood except in the language of Arabic which the Glorious Quran was revealed in.”

Alima Durdana Shakir Al-Azharia, IQOU Faculty member, stresses the importance of learning Arabic stating, “Studying any Islamic science cannot be achieved without knowledge of the Arabic language because it is the language in which the original texts were written. Without the Arabic language, one is easy prey for those whose aim is to misguide or corrupt the Ummah of Rasulallah (peace be upon him).”

This summer, to provide the Ummah with the tools needed to learn and retain the language of Allah, IQOU Theological College is offering a Virtual Arabic Language Intensive taught by esteemed Azhar graduates and Arabic scholars. The participants will be immersed in a 5-week program that focuses on sharpening students' Arabic conversation, grammar, and writing skills. To register please visit www.iqou-college.org.



Click to Register

<https://forms.gle/mDr9vS4X7NTi7R99A>

IQOU Theological College

Summer



ARABIC LANGUAGE INTENSIVE

JUL 3 - AUG 3, 2023

Conversation Grammar Writing

- Beginning and Intermediate Levels
- Live Virtual Interactive Adult Classes
- Mon - Thu, 630-830p ET
- Al-Azhar affiliated texts & structure
- Fee: \$299, includes books

Our Instructors



Alim Mahmud A. Sabur, Al-Azhari



Alima Safiah A. Salaam, Al-Azharia



Ustadh Baseel Adeel, M.A. ELT

iqou-college.org