Islam in the Global Context Speaker Series
Islam in North America

This talk is the first part in a public monthly speaker series, hosted by UNC, which draws on the Duke and UNC academic communities. The talks are open to all.

Calling People to Islam: African American Muslims in the Public Sphere

Zaid Adhami will address his research on mosque culture in Southern California, focusing specifically on communal attitudes and orientations towards public participation and civic engagement, which will also serve as a provocative introduction to the role of religion in the American public sphere. In addition, Zaid will provide a general overview of mosque activism, focusing on an African American congregation in Los Angeles where he conducted fieldwork and discuss how they understand the role of Islam and Muslims in the public sphere. Interpreting his ethnographic work through the lens of African-American Muslims' historical experience and memory, he will suggest that da‘wah, or religious "calling" and propagation, is a central concept in the communal imagination of public participation and political engagement. Conclusions drawn from this work will provide a convincing argument that pushes us to broaden the horizons of our imagination concerning the range of what is considered properly "political" or "public."

January 27 6pm GEC 1005

Zaid Adhami is a first-year PhD candidate in the Department of Religion at Duke University, with a major in Religion and Modernity and minors in Islamic Studies and Anthropology. His research currently explores the intersections of American Islam, religion in the public sphere, religious epistemology, and ethical formation. He received his B.A. in Philosophy & Religious Studies and his M.A. in Sociology at Stanford University.