

Zainab Alwani, Ph.D., is the founding director and the first Associate Professor of Islamic Studies at Howard University School of Divinity (HUSD). She is also the chair of the Master of Arts (Religious Studies) program at HUSD. Dr. Alwani received her Ph.D. in Islamic Sciences and Islamic Jurisprudence from the International Islamic University in Malaysia. Her Ph.D. dissertation focused on the implementation of the higher aims of Islamic law (Maqāṣid al Shari'ah) within the domain of the American Muslim family. She has authored and co-authored a wide variety of publications ranging from books, textbooks and book chapters, to scholarly articles. She is particularly interested in deriving methodologies for approaching the Qur'an, Sunna and Islamic jurisprudence in the area of women and family relations in Islam. She is currently the editor of the Journal of Islamic Faith and Practice, a scholarly peer-reviewed academic journal, published by the Islamic Seminary Foundation in partnership with IUPUI University Library.

Alwani is the first female jurist to serve on the board of the Fiqh Council of North America and currently serves as the Council's Vice-Chair. Currently, Alwani is working on a groundbreaking project regarding orphan care, the [Orphan Care Project](#).

She is an educator with over 25 years of teaching and curriculum development experience in Islamic Studies and Arabic. She designed and developed the Master of Arts program in Islamic Studies at the HUSD and continues to reinvigorate the holistic curriculum development. Prior to joining the School of Divinity, Alwani was the Program Director and Adjunct Professor of Arabic and Islamic Studies at the Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA), Loudoun Campus. She was also an Adjunct Professor of Arabic Studies at the School of Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins University. She developed courses in Arabic Studies that focused on the link between Islamic philosophy, language, and culture. She also taught Islamic history, inter-religious dialogue, and comparative religion at Wesley Theological Seminary and the Washington National Cathedral.

Some of her latest publications include: “*Transformational Teaching: Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) as a Teacher and Murabbī*.” in the Journal of Islamic Faith and Practice, Vol 2 No 2 (July, 2019). “*Teaching other faiths about Islam: A transformative journey*” In the special issue “Theological education between the times” of *Journal Cross-Currents*, June, 2019; the chapter book “*With ‘Ā’isha in Mind: Reading Sūrat al-Nur through the Qur’an’s Structural Unity*”; [Al-wahda al-binā’iyya li-l-Qur’ān/ The Qur’an’s Structural Unity: A Methodology for Understanding the Qur’ān in the Modern Day](#), in the [Journal of Islamic Faith and Practice](#), Vol 1 No 1 (2018); “*Maqāṣid Qur’āniyya: A Methodology on Evaluating Modern Challenges and Fiqh al-Aqalliyāt* (p 465–487), and “*Muslim Women as Religious Scholars: A Historical Survey*,” in *Muslima Theology: The Voices of Muslim Women Theologians*.”

She is currently working on a book on the ethical paradigm of the Quran and its application to critical family issues, such as divorce and marital challenges in the Muslim American community. She is also working on a series of articles stemming from the research on the relationship between sociocultural, civil and religious law in the area of foster care, guardianship and beyond in the American context. Alwani is a mother of four, and a grandmother of six. Her hobbies include spending time with her family, reading, writing and traveling.