

**Zainab Alwani, Ph.D.** is 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. 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 Shariah*) within the domain of the American Muslim family. Her work focuses on Quranic Studies, women scholarship and family law. She is particularly interested in deriving methodologies for approaching the Qur'an, Sunna and Islamic jurisprudence in the area of women and family relationships. She is currently the Editor-In-Chief of the *Journal of Islamic Faith and Practice*, a scholarly peer-reviewed academic journal, published by the Islamic Seminary Foundation in partnership with IUPUI Indiana University. 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.

She is the President and Chairwoman of Glass Lamp Institute, a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping individuals connect with, reflect upon, and implement the teachings of the Quran in their daily lives. Through Glass Lamp Institute, Alwani is developing a growing body of work centered on Taddabur al-Qur'an—a methodology for deepening one's relationship with the Quran through reflection, contemplation, and practice. Her current initiatives also include the Orphan Care Project, a pioneering effort aimed at reviving the central role of orphan care in Islam through education and research.

She is an educator with over 30 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. In addition, Dr. Alwani has a vast wealth of experience and an in depth understanding of Middle Eastern and North African literature, culture, geography, history and religious issues which provides her students with a true appreciation and comprehensive perspective of Islam as a religion and culture. She passionately engages with her students in exploring, learning and writing about the greatness of the cultural heritage of African Americans, the African Diaspora and Africa as people and civilization. She has been able to significantly improve her students' critical thinking skills and encourage them to continue their journey in exploring the practice of Islam in different cultures, communities and societies. Her effective teaching style has enabled her to receive outstanding student evaluations, recognition, and respect from faculty and experts in the field. She has been invited by different national and international academic and religious universities and institutes to lecture and teach around the world. In 2017, Alwani established Zainab Alwani Islamic Studies Endowment Scholarship Fund to support and highlight the work of the HUSD students.

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.

In addition to her teaching activities, she presented papers and speeches at different national and

international colleges, universities and institutions. She made great headway in publications. Her research and publications contribute and advance the scholarly debate on women, gender, and family relations within an Islamic framework and on the relationship between civil and religious laws in the area of family. Alwani seeks to forward paradigms for religious and civic reform that are not only religiously legitimate but are also culturally responsive to contemporary challenges. Her research and publications contribute and forward the scholarly debate on women, gender, and family relations within an Islamic framework and on the relationship between civil and religious laws in the area of family. She strongly promotes the role of Muslim women as religious scholars who must actively be engaged with the primary sources including the Qur'an and Sunna. Promoting scientific and comprehensive methodologies on approaching the Quran and Sunna is one of her main contributions to advance the Qur'anic studies. Through her teaching and publications, her scholarly influence to the inter-religious studies reveals her serious commitment to forward a theology of tolerance and understanding. Alwani authored and co-authored a wide variety of publications in English and Arabic ranging from books, peer reviewed book chapters, to scholarly articles.

She has authored and co-authored a wide variety of publications in both English and Arabic ranging from books, textbooks and book chapters, to scholarly articles. Some of her latest publications include: Article: Self-purification in the Holy Qur'an: An analytical study of the specificity of the prophetic role in establishing and applying it. *Humanities & Natural Sciences Journal*, (2025). A methodology of dealing with the contemporary issues facing the Muslim family: The Milk banks; *Contemporary Islamic Thought Journal*, (2024). *Travelers on the Straight Path: Truth Seekers*, in the *Journal of Islamic Faith and Practice*, (2024); *Fiqh Council of North America, Oxford Research Encyclopedia*, (2023); *Establishing a Just Society through a Qur'anic Lens*, *Journal of Black Religious Thought*, (2022); *Transforming the Self, Family, and Society through a Qur'anic Ethos*, in the *Journal of Islamic Faith and Practice*, (2022); From Baghdad to Leesburg: A Leader of al-Ta'aruf (2020); "Teaching other faiths about Islam: A transformative journey" In the special issue "Theological education between the times" of *Journal Cross-Currents*, June, 2019; "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). The chapter book "With 'Ā'isha in Mind: Reading Sūrat al-Nur through the Qur'an's Structural Unity, 2019;" *Al-waḥda 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* (2014), and "Muslim Women as Religious Scholars: A Historical Survey," in *Muslima Theology: The Voices of Muslim Women Theologians*."

Alwani is currently working on two articles and a book. The two articles will be published in the fall 2025. The book discusses 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 social, 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 nine. Her hobbies include spending time with her family, reading, writing and traveling.