

The Center for Study of Islam in India

I. The Mission

The Center for the Study of Islam in India (CSII) at American Islamic College advances rigorous, interdisciplinary scholarship on the historical, intellectual, cultural, and contemporary dimensions of Islam and Muslim life in India and their contributions to society at large.

Grounded in the values of academic freedom, scholarly integrity, and pluralism, the Center seeks to document, analyze, and disseminate knowledge through research, teaching, public scholarship, and digital engagement.

Through this work, CSII contributes to and helps shape global discourse on Islam in India—centering centuries of intellectual tradition and contemporary lived experiences, engaging the Indian Muslim diaspora and the wider Muslim world, and fostering more nuanced conversations on pluralism, identity, and democratic life.

II. The Strategic Context: Why Now?

The Vacuum

A global diaspora of 32 million Indians (including 5 million Indian Americans and 500,000 Indian American Muslims) lacks a complementary institutional home to validate and share their heritage with global Muslims to address contemporary challenges.

The Majoritarian Pivot

India's shift toward exclusionary ideologies increasingly influences Western and diaspora discourses, often exporting majoritarian narratives that misrepresent a long history of pluralism.

Academic Neglect

Current Islamic Studies programs often underrepresented the vast literature about Islam in India, leaving a significant void in Western understanding of South Asian Islamic contributions.

III. Strategic Pillars: How the Center Works?

CSII advances its mission through three integrated pillars:

Rigorous Scholarship

We are building the leading academic platform dedicated to the study of Islam in India: its origins, evolution, and contemporary realities, positioning this field as essential to global Islamic studies.

Media & Narrative Leadership

Through digital archives, publications, podcasts, and visual storytelling, the Center actively shapes public understanding, countering majoritarian narratives, and brings nuance, depth, and historical grounding to global conversations that could reach an audience of nearly 2 billion Muslims worldwide.

Diaspora & Global Engagement

CSII serves as a “virtual intellectual home” for the Indian Muslim diaspora, which creates space for connection, contribution, and exchange with the broader global Muslim community. This in turn validates their identity, lifts up their history and provides a platform for the sharing of their intellectual capital with the broader global Ummah.

IV. Why this Matters?

Defending Pluralism

The Indian Muslim experience offers one of the world’s most important case studies in pluralism, coexistence, and democratic engagement. Elevating this tradition strengthens broader global conversations about minority rights and shared civic life.

Global Intellectual Bridge

By reviving and amplifying the legacy of influential scholars and thinkers that are foundational to Indian Islam and indispensable for the wider Muslim world, the Center connects past intellectual traditions to present-day challenges—making them accessible and relevant across geographies.

Institutional Leadership: The Center for the Study of Islam in India positions the American Islamic College of a critical and underdeveloped field, pioneering the establishment of the first dedicated North American institution to host a dedicated platform for one of Islam’s most significant global populations.

V. Expected Outcomes

A Shift in Global Discourse: More accurate, nuanced, and widespread representation of Indian Muslims in academic, media, and public conversations.

Educational Innovation: Development of hybrid certificate courses, credit-bearing courses, and the exploration of degree programs that educate the next generation of scholars and community leaders.

Cultural Revivification, Preservation, & Access: A digital-first archive that secures centuries of intellectual and cultural heritage against erasure and makes it accessible to scholars and the global public.