

# RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

## The ordinariness of Australian Muslims

**Professor Kevin Dunn, Dean of the School of Social Sciences and Psychology, in partnership with the Islamic Sciences, and Research Academy of Australia, has been awarded a UWS Research Partnership grant to determine a sense of the broader Muslim community attitudes and experiences.**

'There are two dominant branches of scholarship on experiences of Muslims within western countries,' explains Professor Dunn. 'One branch examines Muslims' experiences of racism, and its negative consequences. A second branch assumes Muslim incompatibility with "Western values", focussing on radicalisation. That research samples at the deeper end of disaffection, reproducing discourses of non-integration. But there is no empirical evidence for widespread radicalisation or alienation. This project is conceptually anchored within the idea of "everyday multiculturalism", which has been championed by UWS researchers (Noble & Watkins et al). This approach emphasises the unproblematic nature of most cross-cultural encounters. We will analyse the attitudes and experiences of a wide array of Australian Muslims, explicitly moving beyond the marginalised or radicalised of these members of our community.'

A survey will be used to collect data from a broad representation of the Muslim community. The survey will cover experiences of racism, participation in the labour force, civics and the voluntary sector, religiosity and cross-cultural contact (including inter-faith contact). The survey will also collect data on attitudes, including senses of belonging and disaffection, cultural (and religious) tolerance, and views on relations between Muslims and non-Muslims.



The research will empirically test the contention of normal, integrated, ordinariness of Australian Muslims. The data is likely to be a counterweight to those discourses of disaffection and radicalisation that swirl in public commentaries, and which undermine trust and comfort among non-Muslims.

**Project Title:** The ordinariness of Australian Muslims: attitudes and experiences of Muslims

**Funding has been set at:** \$10,000

**Contact Details:** k.dunn@uws.edu.au

<http://www.uws.edu.au/ssap>

**February 2012**