

FALL 2011

RUMI SEMINAR

840:456:01

Time and Place: Thursdays, 3.55-6.45, with a ten-minute break half-way, Loree, Room 131, Douglass Campus

Professor: J. Mojaddedi **Office:** Loree, Room 104, Douglass Campus; jamojaddedi@hotmail.com

Office Hours: Thursdays, 10.30-12.00, at the professor's office, or by appointment.

Course Description:

Rumi is today the most well-known Sufi across the world. His legacy suggests that this is fully deserved, for he not only composed thousands of verses of the most revered mystical poetry but his disciples formed, on the basis of his teachings, a Sufi order that became highly influential for many centuries. Moreover, he has been considered for several centuries in much of the Near and Middle East, and Central and South Asia as one of the greatest ever Sufis. In this seminar, Rumi's writings will be examined and analyzed by focusing on primary sources in translation. This means that much of his mystical poetry and prose will be read closely, including Book One of the *Masnavi*, which is commonly referred to as "the Qur'an in Persian" and his orally-delivered teachings, entitled the "Fihe ma fihe."

Required Books:

Rumi, *The Masnavi: Book One*, tr. J. Mojaddedi, Oxford University Press, 2004

Rumi, *Signs of the Unseen*, tr. W. Thackston, Shambhala Publications, 1999

The specific readings for individual lectures from sources other than the required textbooks will be available as pdf files on e-Companion.

Course Requirements:

As this is a seminar course, attendance and participation are all the more important, as reflected in the final grade proportions allocated. Participating in discussion is just as important as being there. Your professor plans to be the least vocal member of the class after the introductory meeting.

Written responses on the readings: A minimum of 400 words (one side, single-spaced) of thoughtful comment/summary is required for at least ten of the weekly meetings. Specific guiding questions will be given to focus on, and each class will begin with one member presenting their own views. They therefore need to be sent by e-mail to the Professor before 12.00am of the night before the relevant class. This reading-response assignment will be graded as either a pass or a fail each time. In order to attain a pass, it must be submitted by e-mail before the deadline and constitute a substantial, thoughtful response (not just hot air).

Research Paper and Abstract: The 15-20 page (approx. 4,500-6,000 words) research paper is to be submitted during the final class of the semester.

Prior to that, an abstract and plan, including bibliography and section summaries (1,000 words), is to be submitted during the last class in October. The abstract itself constitutes 10% of the overall grade if submitted on time and in sufficient detail.

Late papers without an official Excused Absence will be penalized by one percentile per 24 hours, or part of a 24 hour period. Papers short of the minimum length specified will be penalized according to the number of words missing. Spelling and grammar will be taken into consideration in grading all papers, which should be typed double-spaced on letter size paper. The research paper and its abstract must be presented in hard copy, not by e-mail.

Final Grade Constituents:

15% attendance
15% participation,
20% response sheets
10% abstract and plan for research paper
40% 15-20 page research paper.

Grade Scheme: A=100-90, B+= 89-87, B=86-80, C+=79-77, C=76-70, D=69-65, F=64
An incomplete ("T" grade) will not normally be given for this course.

Course Outline and Reading Assignments

(Since this is a seminar course, this may be adapted according to the interests of class members on particular topics).

9/1 Intro

---NO MEETING ON 9/8 DUE TO MON/THURS REDESIGNATION OF CLASS DAYS---

9/15 Situating Rumi's Sufism

Omid Safi, "On the Path of Love," *Sufi* 78 (2010), pp. 22-38
J. Morris, "Situating Islamic Mysticism," in R. Herrera, ed., *Mystics of the Book*, pp. 293-334

9/22 Life and Works

Keshavarz, *Reading mystical lyric*, pp. 1-12

Aflaki, *The Feats of the Knowers of God*, selections
Lewis, *Rumi, past, present, East and West*, pp. 242-68, 128-33

9/29 Fihe ma fihe

Mojaddedi, *Beyond Dogma*, Chapter One
Rumi, *Signs of the Unseen*, Discourses 21, 22, 23, 29, 42, 44

10/6 Fihe ma fihe

Rumi, *Signs of the Unseen*, Discourses 3, 8, 28, 34, 38, 39
Rumi's 'Moses and Shepherd' from *The Masnavi: Book Two*

10/13 Fihe ma fihe

Rumi, *Signs of the Unseen*, Discourses 10, 11, 15, 16, 24, 31, 45 63
Mojaddedi, *Beyond Dogma*, Chapter Two

10/20 Rubaiyat and Ghazals

De Bruijn, *Persian Sufi Poetry*, pp. 6-19 (notes pp. 26-27), 51-83
20 quatrains from Omar Khayyam, *The Ruba'iyyat*
(<http://classics.mit.edu/Khayyam/rubaiyat.html>)
Lewis, pp. 391-93 (poems marked DR)
Hafez ghazals selection (tr. Mojaddedi)

10/27 Ghazals (*Abstract and plan for research paper due in class)

Rumi's Ghazals, tr. Arberry, Selection
Burgel, "Speech is a ship...", in L. Lewisohn, *The Heritage of Sufism*, Vol. 2, pp. 44-69
Keshavarz, *Reading Mystical lyric*, pp. 101-117

11/3 Introduction to Masnavi poetry; The Masnavi

De Bruijn, *Persian Sufi Poetry*, pp. 84-113
The Masnavi: Book One, pp. 3-23
Davis, "Narrative and Doctrine in the First Story of Rumi's *Mathnawi*," pp. 93-104

11/10 The Masnavi

The Masnavi: Book One, pp. 97-137

11/17 The Masnavi

The Masnavi: Book One, pp. 180-212

Nurbakhsh, *Psychology of Sufism*, pp. 11-56

Chittick, "Ebn ol-Arabi," pp. 6-14

---NO MEETING IN THANKSGIVING WEEK: WORK ON FINAL PAPER---

12/1 The Masnavi

The Masnavi: Book One, pp. 212-243

Mojaddedi, *Beyond Dogma*, Chapter Four

12/8 Mevlevi Order and Rumi Today (* research paper due in class)

Lewis, *Rumi, past, present, East and West*, pp. 458-66

R. Field, *The Last Barrier*, pp. 108-121, 141-155.