

Fall 2015 ISLAMIC MYSTICAL LITERATURE 01:840:372:01

Time and Place: Mondays and Wednesdays 1.40-3.00, Beck 111, Livingston Campus.

Professor: J. Mojaddedi, jamojaddedi@hotmail.com **Office Hours:** Wednesdays, 6.00-7.30pm, and other times, by appointment. My private office is on Cook/Douglass, but we can meet elsewhere. Meetings need to be appointment so we know where as well as when.

Course Description: This course will examine the literary output of Sufi mystics in the Islamic world. As a religion course, the main focus will be on mystical teachings, although attention will also be given to the literary genres represented, which include not only poetry of various forms and from diverse regions and periods, but also biography and the modern novel, all in English translation (from Arabic, Persian, and Turkish). Audio-visual resources shall be used to witness the performance of poetry in mystical rituals and in more popularized forms.

SAS Core Codes: Writing and Communication, Revision (WCr), Writing and Communication in a Discipline (WCd), Philosophical and Theoretical Issues (AHO)

Required Textbooks:

1. Driss Chraïbi, *Muhammad*, tr. Benabid, Rienner, 1998. ISBN: 978-0-89410-895-2
2. Attar, *The Conference of the Birds*, tr. Darbandi and Davis, Penguin Classics, 1984. ISBN: 978-0140444346
3. Elif Shafak, *The Forty Rules of Love*, Penguin, 2010. ISBN: 978-0141047188

Other Readings The specific readings for individual lectures, other than the required textbooks, are available as pdfs in the “Course Content” pages of Sakai, for you to download, print out, and bind, to serve as your own cost-effective course pack. These texts should be read in preparation before the specified class on the syllabus.

Sakai: Everyone needs to log in to the Sakai site for this course, at <https://sakai.rutgers.edu> and if anybody has problems with accessing Sakai, they should inform the professor as soon as possible, as it is necessary to use this facility to access readings and discussion forums.

Preparation, attendance and participation: Everybody enrolled is expected to attend classes, having already read the assignment indicated, and to contribute to discussions. This is a class about literature, so one should be prepared to read. Keeping up with readings is essential for following discussions in class. Written reading responses posted in Sakai forums will also form part of the final grade, for which see the “Reading Responses” section below. Attendance as well as active and informed participation in discussions are also rewarded in the final grade (see below). Attendance of a class can only be established by indicating your presence at the beginning and remaining in the classroom for the full duration, engaged with the discussions and not with the virtual world through electronic devices (e.g. phone, tablet, laptop), unless prior agreement has been obtained from the professor: anyone who needs to arrive late or leave early for an appointment should let the professor know beforehand so arrangements can be made for a seat near the exit in the small room, so as to minimize the disturbance to their classmates and the professor.

Absence Students are expected to attend all classes; if you expect to miss one or two classes, please use the University absence reporting website <https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/> to indicate the date and reason for your absence. An email is automatically sent to your professors. In cases where students must miss classes for longer than one week, they will always be directed to see a Dean of Students for assistance to help verify the circumstances.

An Excused Absence is necessary to avoid the penalty for a paper submission day (drafts as well as final paper). It can only be obtained by producing a doctor's note with the office's contact details, or a note from your dean.

Phones and Laptops: The use of electronic devices, including phones, laptops, tablets etc. is **not permitted** during class hours (1:40-3:00). Any violation of this policy results in a letter grade reduction of one's overall grade for attendance, so it is counterproductive to sit in the classroom and surf the net or text, and better to do it somewhere else more comfortably, if you cannot refrain. Exceptions will be made only after the production of a letter of support from the disability office. In this course, it is more important to engage in and follow discussions in class than to record data: there are no memory quizzes. This will be the 80-minute time period twice a week when you can escape from bondage to the screen, rest your eyes, nurture your inner faculties, share warmth with the people around you, and remember what it is like to be a whole human being.

Book Review Assignment (15% of total 100%): This course involves group work of various kinds. The first case will be a group review of Chraibi's *Muhammad: A Novel*, which will take place mostly on online forums in Sakai. All class members are expected to participate in the first three forums. The questions and prompts in these forums address the component parts of the assignment task, so the opinions and knowledge shared through brainstorming here will form the material for you to incorporate into your individual book review, for which the deadline is 1:40pm on Monday 21st September.

Reading Responses: After the classes on Chraibi's *Muhammad: A Novel*, when the add/drop period is over, the class will be divided into four groups: Groups A, B, C and D, and each group will be allotted five classes during the semester for which they are required to post reading-responses of more than 250 words in the appropriate Sakai forums by the deadlines of 6pm of the Saturday and Tuesday evenings, respectively, before the relevant class. This will be arranged in turn, so every four classes for each group.

These reading-response and comment assignments will be graded and in order to attain a pass they must be submitted before the deadline and constitute a substantial, thoughtful response with the sufficient amount of words. The discussion generated in this way will be developed further in the next class meeting.

Paper: each paper must be typed and submitted in hard copy and have a cover page and bibliography, which should consist of publications actually used for the paper. Academic sources will be provided, including books at the reserve desk of the library. Further reading requests are always welcome. Please beware that if you rely on web-sites as sources indiscriminately, you run the risk of using inappropriate non-academic sources, and in consequence attaining failing grades. The same applies if you use non-academic printed sources instead of the academic resources made available to you on Sakai and at the library. If you opt to do this, it is your responsibility to choose sources judiciously and to check with the professor if you have any doubts.

Paper Reviews: An important part of this course is fulfillment of the core writing requirements: Writing and Communication, Revision (WCr), Writing and Communication in a Discipline (WCd). To that end, the **November 18th class** (also marked on the schedule below) will be devoted to peer-reviewing an initial draft of the final paper. This will be a structured activity with a list of suggested improvements to be submitted along with the next draft to the professor for his feedback by that deadline of **1:40pm, November 30th** (also marked on the schedule below). The final submission will be at the start of the final meeting of the course **1:40pm December 9th**. The idea is to learn to respond effectively to editorial feedback from peers and the professor through successive drafts and revision, as well as to learn about writing through viewing how others have written on the same topic that you have written about.

Plagiarism will result in an immediate fail, so it is always wise to ask if uncertain about any of these issues, before handing in your paper, as with any other questions you may have about assignments. The Rutgers position regarding plagiarism and further relevant details are here: academicintegrity.rutgers.edu

Papers short of the minimum length will receive a grade lowered according to the number of words missing. Late papers without an official Excused Absence will be penalized by one point (out of the 40 for the paper) per 24 hours, or part of a 24 hour period (starting from the time the relevant hand-in class begins). Papers more than 7 days late will not be graded at all. It is the responsibility of the student handing in a paper late to make sure that it reaches the professor and to obtain confirmation of receipt on the day of its submission. Spelling and grammar will be taken into consideration in grading all papers, which should be typed double-spaced on letter size paper. The Writing Center at Rutgers offers help with writing papers before you submit them.

Final Grade Constituents:

10% (attendance)

5% (participation in discussions during class)

15% (at least 1,250-word book review assignment)

30% (Forum Posts)

40% total (Paper of at least 2,500 words, both in hard copy and also uploaded in Sakai for plagiarism scanning;)

– 10% of total 40% for paper for submitting on time for peer review a draft of at least 2,000 words;

– 10% of total 40% for paper for submitting next draft of at least 2,200 words on time with revisions list for professor's review).

Grading System: A=100-90, B+= 89-87, B=86-80, C+=79-77, C=76-70, D=69-65, F=64–

COURSE OUTLINE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

9/2 Introduction to Course and to each other

Unit 1: Chraibi, Muhammad: A Novel

9/9 Chraibi, *Muhammad* NO MEETING

To be read before:

Chraibi, pp. 13-41

Brown, *A New Introduction to Islam*, pp. 69-83.

9/14 Chraibi, *Muhammad*

To be read before:

Chraibi, pp. 43-63

Austin, "The Sophianic Feminine."

9/16 Chraibi, *Muhammad* (GROUP A)

To be read before:

Chraibi, pp. 65-90

Bowering, "Ideas of Time," only pp. 217-33

Unit 2: Early Arabic Sufi Poetry

*****9/21 Early Sufi Poetry (Submission of Write-up of Group Work Review Of Chraibi's *Muhammad*, deadline 1:40pm hard copy and Sakai upload)**

To be read before: (GROUP B)

Homerin, "Tangled words."

<http://www.princeton.edu/~arabic/poetry/> (browse this website, listen, read, watch, compare)

9/23 Hallaj, *Diwan*

(GROUP C)

To be read before:

“Hallaj,” in *Encyclopaedia Iranica* (<http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/hallaj-1>)

Ernst translations (samples from draft of forthcoming book.

Unit 3: Medieval Arabic Mystical Qasida Poetry

9/28 Ibn al-Farid 1

(GROUP D)

To be read before:

Homerin, *Umar Ibn al-Farid*, pp. 7-19, 123-133.

9/30 Ibn al-Farid 2

(GROUP B)

To be read before:

Chittick, “Ebn ol-Arabi.”

Homerin, *Umar Ibn al-Farid*, pp. 41-65

10/5 Aisha Ba’uniyah 1

(GROUP A)

To be read before:

Ba’uniyah, *Emanations of Grace*, pp. 11-27, 38-9, 40-2, 62-3

Ba’uniyah, *Principles of Sufism*, pp. 143-165 (odd pages [English]), 175-6

10/7 Aisha Ba'uniyah 2

(GROUP D)

To be read before:

Ba'uniyah, *Emanations of Grace*, pp. 51-2, 55-6, 80-2, 85-93

Ba'uniyah, *Principles of Sufism*, pp. 63-95 (odd pages), 170-2

Unit 4: Persian Ghazals

10/12 Hafez's Ghazals

(GROUP C)

To be read before:

Squires, tr., *Hafez*, pp. 10-11, 22-3, 27-8, 76, 78-9, 106-7

De Bruijn, *Persian Sufi Poetry*, pp. 51-83

10/14 Hafez's Ghazals

(GROUP A)

To be read before:

Squires, tr., *Hafez*, pp. 158-9, 257-9, 280, 289, 328, 356

"Hafez and rendi" (section of "Hafez" *Encyclopaedia Iranica* Article)

"Hafez's Poetic Art" (section of "Hafez" *Encyclopaedia Iranica* Article)

10/19 Rumi, *Divan* 1

(GROUP B)

To be read before:

Aflaki, *The Feats of the Knowers of God*, pp. 61-65.

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

Rumi, Ghazals (first three poems in document)

10/21 Rumi, *Divan 2*

(GROUP D)

To be read before:

Keshavarz, *Reading mystical lyric*, pp. 101-117.

Rumi, Ghazals (remaining poems in document)

Unit 5: Persian Masnavi Poetry

10/26 Attar's *Conference of the Birds 1*

(GROUP C)

To be read before:

Attar's *Conference of the Birds*, pp. 9-57 (the introductory notes on Attar and his poem. Then read the poem from v. 616 (Dear hoopoe, welcome...) until 1186 (The hundred problems...)).

De Bruijn, *Persian Sufi Poetry*, pp. 84-113

10/28 Rumi, Attar's *Conference of the Birds 2*

(GROUP B)

To be read before:

Attar's *Conference of the Birds*, pp. 57-124 (from v. 1187 (The Story of Shaikh San'an) to v. 2470 ("He understands," he said...))

Morris, "Reading the Conference of the Birds."

11/2 Attar's *Conference of the Birds 3*

(GROUP A)

To be read before:

Attar's *Conference of the Birds*, pp. 124-67 (v. 2471 (Another bird said...) to v. 3233 (A drop absorbed))

11/4 Paper Plan – **NO MEETING**

Select a title and make an initial plan of the paper. Post it in the Dropbox for the Professor

11/9 Attar's Conference of the Birds 4

(GROUP D)

To be read before:

Attar's *Conference of the Birds*, pp. 167-229 (v. 3234 (The Valley of the Quest) until end of poem)

11/11 Rumi, *Masnavi 1*

(GROUP C)

To be read before:

Masnavi Samples 1

Davis, "Narrative and Doctrine in the First Story of Rumi's *Mathnawi*."

11/16 *Masnavi 2*

(GROUP A)

To be read before:

Masnavi Samples 2

Karamustafa, "Speaker, voice and audience."

*****11/18 (DRAFT OF AT LEAST 2,000-WORDS OF FINAL PAPER DUE FOR PEER-REVIEW)**

*****Bring a pen with black ink to class. I'll explain.**

*****NO MEETINGS IN THANKSGIVING WEEK*****

Work on next draft

Unit 6: Shafak, Forty Rules of Love

*****11/30 (DRAFT OF AT LEAST 2,200-WORDS OF FINAL PAPER DUE AT 1:40PM FOR PROFESSOR'S FEEDBACK)**

Shafak, *Forty Rules of Love* 1

(GROUP B)

To be read before:

Elena Furlanetto, "The 'Rumi Phenomenon."

12/2 Shafak, *Forty Rules of Love* 2

(GROUP C)

To be read before:

Shafak, *Forty Rules of Love*, pp. 1-112

12/7 Shafak, *Forty Rules of Love*

(GROUP D)

To be read before:

Shafak, *Forty Rules of Love*, pp. 113-228

*****12/9 (FINAL VERSION OF PAPER DUE IN CLASS FOR GRADING)**

To be read before:

Shafak, *Forty Rules of Love*, pp. 229-350

*This syllabus is subject to modification for pedagogical and other reasons

