

FALL 2017

ISLAMIC MYSTICAL LITERATURE 840:372:01

**Time and Place:** Wednesdays 1.10-2.30, Murray Hall, Room 114, College Ave Campus.

**Professor:** J. Mojaddedi, jamojaddedi@hotmail.com **Office Hours:** Wednesday, 2:45-4pm, and at other times, always by appointment. (My private office is on Cook/Douglass, Room 104 of the Loree Building, but I can meet on College Ave – this is why office hours are by appointment, so we know where and when we are meeting.)

**Course Description:**

This is a hybrid course that examines the rich literary output of Sufi mystics in the Islamic world. As a religion course, the focus is on the mystical teachings, but these are rarely unrelated to the literary genres represented, and so they, too, are explored. The genres to be studied include not only poetry of various forms and originating from diverse regions and periods, but also biography and the modern novel, all in English translation (from Arabic, Persian and Turkish). Audio-visual resources will be used at every opportunity.

The course is divided into five units.

Unit 1: Chraibi's *Muhammad: A Novel* involves group work focusing on a pithy novella (a required book for this course) written in poetic prose about the 24 hours before Muhammad becomes a Prophet receiving revelation. The first written assignment for this course is a review of this book based on questions that will be discussed in group work both online and in class before the deadline of September 27<sup>th</sup>, 5pm.

Unit 2: "Arabic Sufi Poetry" examines Arabic Sufi poetry, by focusing on the *qasidas* of Hallaj, the most prolific early Sufi poet, and also the poetry of Ibn al-Farid, who is widely celebrated as the greatest Arab Sufi poet ever.

Unit 3: "Persian ghazals" examines the most widespread form of poetry in the Islamic world, the *ghazal*, through the most well-known Sufi poets in translation worldwide, Rumi and Hafez.

Unit 4: "Persian *masnavi* poetry" looks in detail at Attar's *Conference of the Birds* (a required book for this course) and also briefly at Rumi's *Masnavi*, in order to see contrasting styles of using the *masnavi* form, and to witness more of Rumi's subversive poetic style.

Unit 5: "Shafak's *Forty Rules of Love*" looks in detail at this bestselling Turkish novel ever written through its English translation (a required book for this course). Since one of the two interweaving narratives of this novel is the biography of Rumi, there will be important comparisons with the traditional biography of Rumi and his poetry that is studied earlier in the course.

As with all hybrid courses, the secret to success is keeping up with the work week by week and not imagining that half the meeting times means half the required work. Although there is just one 80-minute weekly meeting, you are required to read extensively, take quizzes on the readings and

participate in forum discussions on them as well. These courses are not suited to those who do not like long readings or prefer to catch up and cram in work at the end, because from week 1 there are required activities based on readings with deadlines. Think carefully whether a hybrid course on literature really suits your working habits, so you can make the right decision before the add/drop period ends.

This course will satisfy SAS Core Codes: Writing and Communication, Revision (WCr), Writing and Communication in a Discipline (WCd), Philosophical and Theoretical Issues (AHo).

### **Required Books:**

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

\*\*\*Readings from these three books will not be available as pdfs for copyright reasons.

**Other Readings:** The specific readings other than those from the required books listed above are available as pdfs in the Sakai Class “Course Content” page for each week’s online lesson activities, for you to download, print out, and read in preparation for the forum postings, quizzes and paper.

**Sakai:** Everyone needs to log in to the private Sakai site exclusively for members of this hybrid course, at <https://sakai.rutgers.edu> If anybody has problems with accessing Sakai they should inform the professor as soon as possible, as it is necessary to use this facility for most of the activities required for this course.

**Course Structure:** The course is organized into five units, each containing two or three lessons. Each lesson represents one week of work, and contains:

- a) An introduction to the topic of the coming week during the second half of the weekly meeting on Wednesday, 1.10-2.30 (see (e) below concerning the first half of the weekly class).
- b) assigned reading(s) for the week
- c) For weeks 3 to 10, there is a comprehension quiz, which can be taken repeatedly until the weekly deadline of Saturday 1pm. Only the highest score you attain will be recorded for each week.
- d) a discussion activity, using the Sakai forum tools. This activity requires posting a response of at least 300 words to an initial prompt by 11:55pm of the Saturday, and then posting by 11:55pm on the Monday a response of at least 150 words to each of two of your group

members' initial posts. You are required to fulfill this discussion activity for only ten weeks of the course (your choice of which ten).

- e) A final in-class discussion of the topic and the issues that have been raised in the previous week's discussion activity during the first half of the weekly meeting on Wednesday, 1.10-2.30. (The first meeting of the semester will instead use most of the meeting to introduce the course.)

\*\*\*A paper of at least 2,500 words is also required to complete this course. It is required in the following different drafts by the stated deadlines:

draft of at least 2,000 words required in hard copy for peer review in **11/29 class**

draft of at least 2,250 words required to be submitted in hard copy in **12/6 class** for professor's review. This must include a list of changes made in response to peer review feedback.

\*\*\*In addition to the above paper, a review paper of Chraibi's *Muhammad: A Novel* is required for this course by the deadline of 5pm, Wednesday 27th September.

The strict deadline for the final draft of this paper of at least 2,500 words is **4:30pm, Friday 15<sup>th</sup> December**, as an upload to Sakai. See further details on the "Assignment" page of Sakai.

**Attendance and participation:** Attendance as well as active and informed participation in discussions during the class meetings are rewarded in the final grade by 14%. Attendance of a class can only be established by indicating your presence at the beginning and remaining in the classroom for the full duration without use of electronic devices (e.g. phone, tablet, laptop), unless prior agreement has been obtained from the professor for late arrival/early departure. Classes will be interactive and not an occasion to sit as a passenger on the course behind a screen, or wander in and out, disturbing classmates and the professor. If you have emergency situations or do not wish to be engaged with the subject in class, it is better not to attend that week's class. However, the peer review session is compulsory with no make up chance without a doctor's note or a note from the dean.

If you are unable to come to class for reasons beyond your control (i.e. not by choice), please use the University absence reporting website <https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/> to indicate the date and reason. An email is automatically sent to your professors.

**Phones, Tablets and Laptops:** The use of electronic devices, including phones, laptops, tablets etc. is **not permitted** during class hours (Wednesday, 1:10-2:30). In this course, data is found in the readings and online activities, and it is more important to engage in and follow discussions in class than to record data mentioned in them. **Use of electronic devices will lead to a penalty equal to two class attendances/participations.** It is therefore better to use such devices in peace

elsewhere during classtime rather than in the classroom. A letter from the disability office is required for any exceptions (see below).

**Papers:** each paper must be typed and submitted in hard copy and also uploaded to Sakai for plagiarism scanning. Each paper must have a cover page and bibliography, which should consist of publications actually used for the paper. Titles and academic resources will be provided, including pdfs online and books at the reserve desk of the library. Requests for recommendations for further reading are always welcomed. Please beware that if you instead opt to rely on websites or other printed materials as sources without sufficient discrimination, you run the risk of using inappropriate non-academic sources and in consequence attaining failing grades. This is your responsibility.

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 percentile (1 out of the final 100 for the course/the 35 of the paper assignment/the 15 of the review 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.

### **Quizzes**

There will be an online quiz on the readings for eight weeks of this course. Each quiz can be taken repeatedly until the weekly deadline of Saturday 1pm. Only the highest score you attain among your attempts for that quiz will be recorded.

The first quiz is scheduled for the week when early Sufi poetry is the topic, meaning that there will be no quiz for the first couple of weeks of the course, while studying Chraibi's "Muhammad: A Novel," for which you are required to fulfill a review paper assignment. The quizzes will be held weekly until the week of the Paper Title Preparation Session on November 15th.

There is no final exam. Just the holidays to enjoy!

### **Final Grade Constituents:**

- 15 Review of Chraibi's *Muhammad: A Novel* (Deadline is 5pm, Wednesday 27th September)
- 35 Paper (Deadline is 4:30pm, Friday 15<sup>th</sup> December) [\*10 of grade based on peer-review activity]
- 20 Ten Twice Weekly Forum Activities
- 16 Quizzes on readings
- 14 Attendance and Participation during class meetings, Wednesdays, 1:10-2:30

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

**Plagiarism will result in an immediate fail for the course.**

Short version: Don't cheat. Don't plagiarize. You *will* get caught and get an F for the course.

Longer version: Cheating on tests or plagiarizing materials in your papers deprives you of the educational benefits of preparing these materials appropriately. It is personally dishonest to cheat on a test or to hand in a paper based on unacknowledged words or ideas that someone else originated. It is also unfair, since it gives you an undeserved advantage over your fellow students who are graded on the basis of their own work. In this class we will take cheating very seriously. All suspected cases of cheating and plagiarism will be automatically referred to the Office of Judicial Affairs, and we will recommend penalties appropriate to the gravity of the infraction. The university's policy on Academic Integrity is available at <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-policy> I strongly advise you to familiarize yourself with this document, both for this class and for your other classes and future work. To help protect you, and future students, from plagiarism, we require all papers to be submitted through Turnitin.com.

Since what counts as plagiarism is not always clear, I quote the definition given in Rutgers' policy in 2013:

**Plagiarism: Plagiarism is the use of another person's words, ideas, or results without giving that person appropriate credit. To avoid plagiarism, every direct quotation must be identified by quotation marks or appropriate indentation and both direct quotation and paraphrasing must be cited properly according to the accepted format for the particular discipline or as required by the instructor in a course. Some common examples of plagiarism are:**

- Copying word for word (i.e. quoting directly) from an oral, printed, or electronic source without proper attribution.
- Paraphrasing without proper attribution, i.e., presenting in one's own words another person's written words or ideas as if they were one's own.
- Submitting a purchased or downloaded term paper or other materials to satisfy a course requirement.
- Incorporating into one's work graphs, drawings, photographs, diagrams, tables, spreadsheets, computer programs, or other nontextual material from other sources without proper attribution.

A SPECIAL NOTE: Students often assume that because information is available on the Web it is public information, does not need to be formally referenced, and can be used without attribution. This is a mistake. *All* information and ideas that you derive from other sources, whether written, spoken, or electronic, must be attributed to their original source. Such sources include not just written or electronic materials, but people with

whom you may discuss your ideas, such as your roommate, friends, or family members. They deserve credit for their contributions too!

Judgments about plagiarism can be subtle. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask for guidance from your instructor before submission.

It is always essential to ask if uncertain about any of these issues, before submitting your paper for plagiarism scanning, as it is too late afterwards.

### **Student-Wellness Services:**

#### **Just In Case Web App**

<http://codu.co/cee05e>

Access helpful mental health information and resources for yourself or a friend in a mental health crisis on your smartphone or tablet and easily contact CAPS or RUPD.

#### **Counseling, ADAP & Psychiatric Services (CAPS)**

**(848) 932-7884 / 17 Senior Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901/**

**[www.rhscaps.rutgers.edu/](http://www.rhscaps.rutgers.edu/)**

CAPS is a University mental health support service that includes counseling, alcohol and other drug assistance, and psychiatric services staffed by a team of professional within Rutgers Health services to support students' efforts to succeed at Rutgers University. CAPS offers a variety of services that include: individual therapy, group therapy and workshops, crisis intervention, referral to specialists in the community and consultation and collaboration with campus partners.

#### **Violence Prevention & Victim Assistance (VPVA)**

**(848) 932-1181 / 3 Bartlett Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901 /**

**[www.vpva.rutgers.edu/](http://www.vpva.rutgers.edu/)**

The Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance provides confidential crisis intervention, counseling and advocacy for victims of sexual and relationship violence and stalking to students, staff and faculty. To reach staff during office hours when the university is open or to reach an advocate after hours, call 848-932-1181.

#### **Disability Services**

**(848) 445-6800 / Lucy Stone Hall, Suite A145, Livingston Campus, 54 Joyce Kilmer Avenue, Piscataway, NJ 08854 / <https://ods.rutgers.edu/>**

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's

disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>.

**Scarlet Listeners**

**(732) 247-5555 / <http://www.scarletlisteners.com/>**

Free and confidential peer counseling and referral hotline, providing a comforting and supportive safe space.

**COURSE OUTLINE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS**

**(FOR FULL DETAILS AND ALL MATERIALS SEE “COURSE CONTENT” ON SAKAI)**

9/6 Introduction to Course

Read the syllabus and take the video tour

UNIT 1: Driss Chraibi’s *Muhammad: A Novel*

Lesson 1: 9/6 -9/12 Chraibi, *Muhammad: A Novel*

Material Used:

Chraibi, *Muhammad: A Novel*, pp. 13-63

Brown, chp on Muhammad, pp. 69-83

<http://khidr.org/encyclopedia.islam.khidr.htm>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bahira>

No quiz this week

Discussion Posts, by 11:55pm on 9/9 and 9/11.

Lesson 2: 9/13-9/19 Chraibi, *Muhammad: A Novel*

Material Used:

Chraibi, *Muhammad: A Novel*, pp. 65-90

Austin, “The Sophianic Feminine,” pp. 233-45

No quiz this week

Discussion Posts, by 11:55pm on 9/16 and 9/18

## UNIT 2: Arabic Sufi Poetry

### Lesson 3: 9/20-9/26 Early Arabic Sufi Poetry

Material Used:

Homerin, "Tangled Words," pp. 190-89

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

Ernst's Translations of Hallaj's *qasidas*

Web: <http://www.princeton.edu/~arabic/poetry/>

Quiz by deadline of 1pm on 9/23

Discussion Posts, by 11:55pm on 9/23 and 9/25

**\*\*\*Deadline for submission of Review Assignment on Chraibi's *Muhammad:A Novel*  
5pm, September 27<sup>th</sup>.**

### Lesson 4: 9/27-10/3 Ibn al-Farid

Material Used:

Homerin, *Umar Ibn al-Farid*, 7-19, 41-65, 123-33

Quiz by deadline of 1pm on 9/30

Discussion Posts, by 11:55pm on 9/30 and 10/2.

## UNIT 3: PERSIAN GHAZALS

### Lesson 5: 10/4-10/10 Ghazals of Hafez

Material Used:

DeBruijn, *Persian Sufi Poetry*, pp. 51-83

Squires, *Hafez*, pp. 22-3, 78-9, 107, 158-9, 289, 328, 356

Translations matching Squires' translations

"Hafez and rendi" in *Encyclopaedia Iranica*

Web: Youtube clips of recitations of Hafez's ghazals

Quiz by deadline of 1pm on 10/7

Discussion Posts, by 11:55pm on 10/7 and 10/9

### Lesson 6: 10/11-10/17 Rumi's *Divan-e Shams-e Tabrizi*

Material Used:

Keshavarz, *Reading Mystical Lyric*, pp. 1-12, 101-117



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

Rumi's *Ghazals* document

Web: musical performances of Rumi's ghazals by Ahmad Zahir and Leila Forouhar

Quiz by deadline of 1pm on 10/14

Discussion Posts, by 11:55pm on 10/14 and 10/16

#### UNIT 4: Persian *masnavi* Poetry

##### Lesson 7: 10/18-10/24 Attar's *Conference of the Birds* 1

Material Used:

DeBruijn, *Persian Sufi Poetry*, pp. 84-113

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...)).

J. Morris, *Reading The Conference of the Birds*

Youtube cartoon of Attar's *Conference of the Birds* 1

Quiz by deadline of 1pm on 10/21

Discussion Posts, by 11:55pm on 10/21 and 10/23.

##### Lesson 8: 10/25-10/31 Attar's *Conference of the Birds* 2

Material Used:

Attar's *Conference of the Birds*, pp. 57-156 (from v. 1187 to v. 3043)

Quiz by deadline of 1pm on 10/28

Discussion Posts, by 11:55pm on 10/28 and 10/30

##### Lesson 9: 11/1-11/7 Attar's *Conference of the Birds* 3

Material Used:

Attar's *Conference of the Birds*, pp. 157-229 to end of poem, v. 3044 to v. 4455)

Youtube cartoon of Attar's *Conference of the Birds* 2

Quiz by deadline of 1pm on 11/4

Discussion Posts, by 11:55pm on 11/4 and 11/6

##### Lesson 10: 11/8-11/14 Rumi's *Masnavi*

Material Used:

Rumi, *Masnavi Readings* Document

Karamustafa, "Speaker, voice and audience," pp. 33-42

Quiz by deadline of 1pm on 11/11

Discussion Posts, by 11:55pm on 11/11 and 11/13

**\*\*\*11/15 PAPER TITLE PREPARATION SESSION**

### **THANKSGIVING BREAK**

**\*\*\*11/29 IN-CLASS PEER REVIEW SESSION. BRING DRAFT OF PAPER OF AT LEAST 2,000 WORDS AND A BLACK PEN.**

### **UNIT 6: SHAFAK'S FORTY RULES OF LOVE**

Lesson 11: 11/29-12/5 Shafak's *Forty Rules of Love*

Material Used:

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

*Interview of Elif Shafak about this novel on Youtube*

Discussion Posts, by 11:55pm on 12/2 and 12/4

**\*\*\*12/6 (DRAFT OF AT LEAST 2,250-WORDS OF FINAL PAPER WITH LIST OF CHANGES MADE IN RESPONSE TO PEER REVIEW FEEDBACK.**

**DUE AT 1:30PM IN HARD COPY FOR PROFESSOR'S FEEDBACK)**

Lesson 12: 12/6-12/13 Shafak's *Forty Rules of Love*

Material Used:

Shafak's *Forty Rules of Love*, pp. 113-350

Discussion Posts, by 11:55pm on 12/9 and 12/11

**\*\*\*FRIDAY 12/15, 4:30PM : PAPER OF AT LEAST 2,500 WORDS DUE, AS UPLOAD TO SAKAI\*\*\***

**HAPPY HOLIDAYS!**