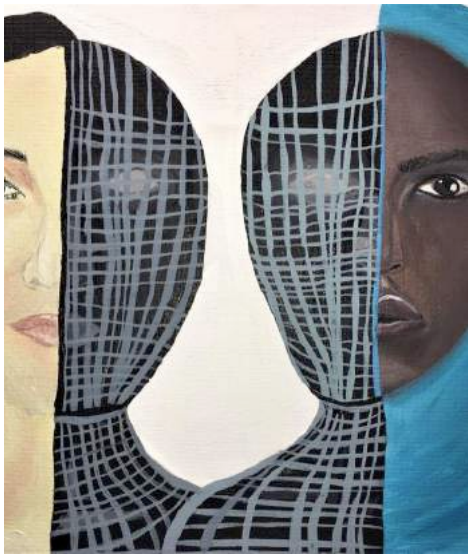


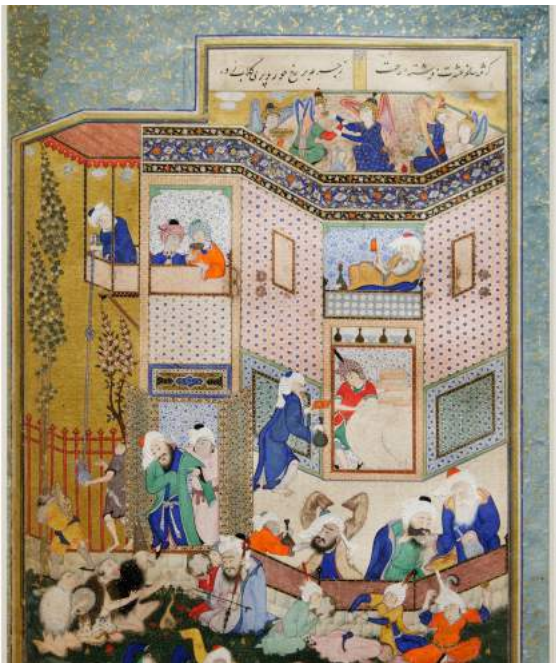






God is Beautiful and Loves Beauty

الله جميل يحب الجمال



Arts and Literature of Islam and Muslim Cultures: RELS 3497AA ST - MW 12:30-1:45 PM

This course explores the artistic and literary genres of Islam and Muslim cultures through the lens of the study of religion and theology. Islamic Art is calligraphy, miniature painting, mosque architecture, arabesque, scripture, didactic poetry, love lyrics, music, dance, drama, epic romances, folk tales, short stories, novellas, film, and more! The historical survey includes the medieval period, the postcolonial and/or diasporic Muslim context, and Muslim futurisms. Regions include the Middle East and N. Africa, West and Sub-Saharan Africa, S. and S.E. Asia, and N. America. Students will have ample opportunity to submit creative and artistic pieces, but no artistic talent is necessary.

When the sincere disciple enters under obedience of the shaykh, keeping his company and learning his manners, a spiritual state flows from within the shaykh to within the disciple, like one lamp lighting another. The speech of the shaykh inspires the interior of the disciple, so that the shaykh's words become the treasury of spiritual states. The state is transferred from the shaykh to the disciple by keeping company and by hearing speech. This only applies to the disciple who restricts himself to the master, who sheds the desire of his soul, and who is annihilated in the shaykh by giving up his own will.

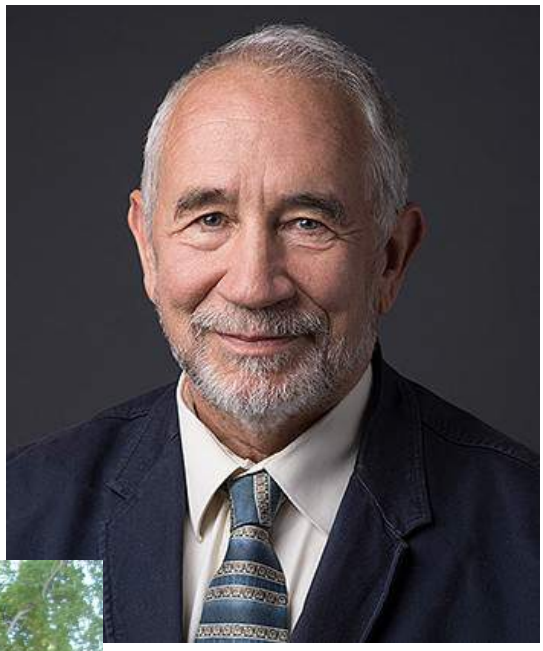
--Abu Hafs al-Suhrawardi (d. 1234)

The intelligence and proficiency required to teach the content of this course would not be possible without my mentors--too many to list.

For this class in particular, I am grateful for the knowledge imparted to me by these three "*shaykhs",* or teachers/masters, of Islamic spirituality, art, theology, philosophy, and humanities.



Ali Asani
Professor of Indo-Muslim and Islamic Religion and Cultures
Harvard



James Morris
Professor of Islamic Studies
Boston College



Luis Manuel Girón-Negrón
Professor of Comparative Literature
Harvard

May we honor them in the classroom as we continue to learn, grow, and flourish together in the Beauty of God.

CREATIVE
This class is creative.
Creative does not mean
"little work load."

ALTERNATIVE
There is reading.
Assessments are unique.
You need not be artistic.

ENGAGING
Readings will connect with art.
Conversation will ensue.
You must be willing to engage.

personal
emotions
goodness
intellect
community
transformational
meaningful
imagination
theology
individual
big questions
knowledge
beauty
spiritual
truth
love
faith
body
art
religion
submission
political



About this Class

This class engages Islamic art in creative and alternative ways. There is reading—and some of it is academic, giving historical background and offering theological interpretations of Islamic art. But a lot of the reading is poetry, short stories, and historical fictions.

Additionally, there is a lot of **art-gazing**: attending carefully to images, calligraphy, miniatures, paintings, film, architecture, design, and more. And **art-creating.**

You are encouraged to bring you whole self to class and to assessments—from your spiritual and religious to your political and embodied. Beauty, truth, and goodness are sought, and transformation, imagination, and meaning are desired.

about this land

Seton Hall University is located on Lenapehoking, the ancestral lands of the Lenni Lenape indigenous peoples of Turtle Island (also known as North America).

May we honor them and all native peoples by restoring equitable relationships among all peoples and their sacred land.

about this instructor

axel marc oaks takacs (he/him) is a scholar of classical and post-classical islamic studies and catholic comparative theology.

theo-poetics, imagination, poetry, incarnation, prophetic theology, school of love, mysticism, interreligious studies, racism, capitalism, islamophobia, interreligious co-resistance, revelation, decolonialism, indigenous knowledges



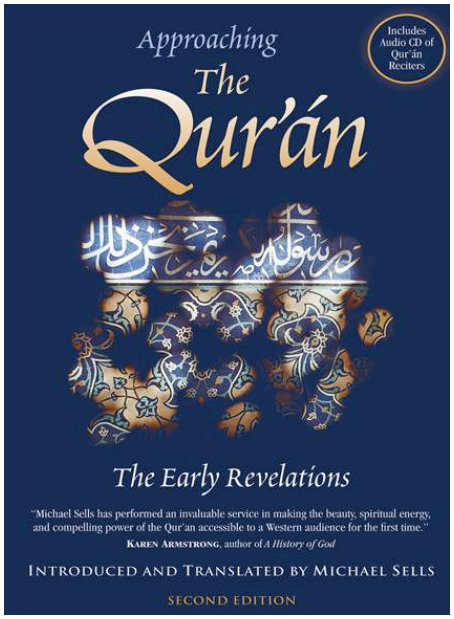
A painting by Hassan Massoudy of a phrase by Khalil Gibran which says: "Will my heart become a tree laden heavily with fruit that I can pick and give to others?"

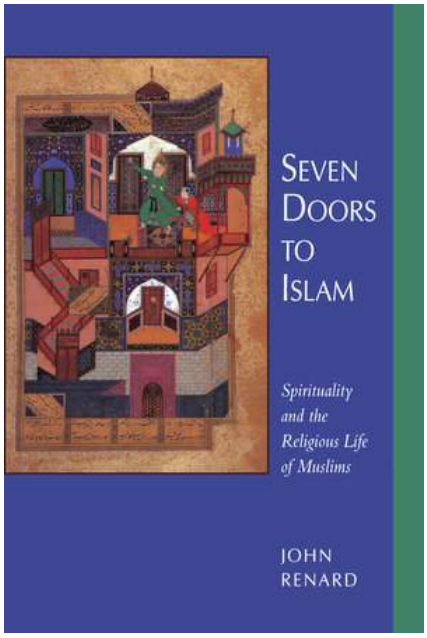
Where can you find the instructor?

email: takacsax@shu.edu

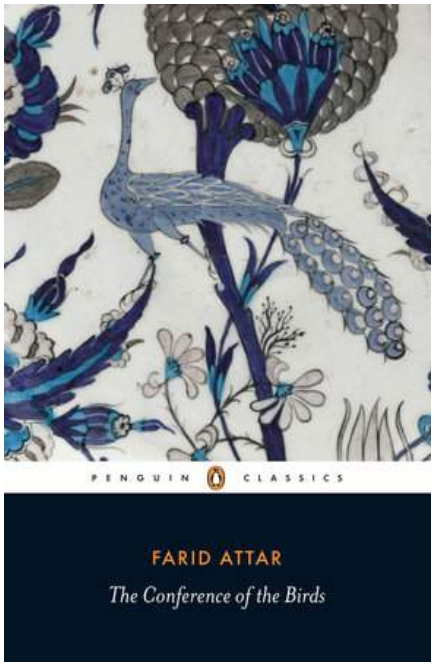
Office Hours (Fahy 324)
Mondays and Wednesdays from 2-4 p.m.,
Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays by appt.

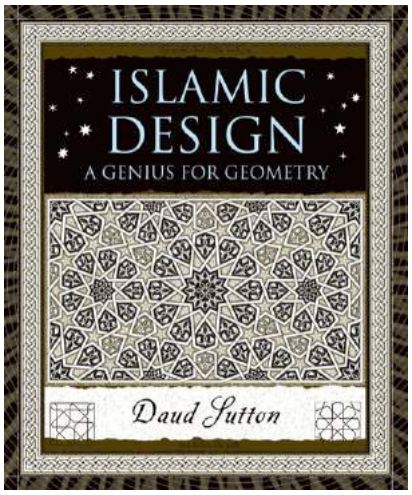
What are we reading?

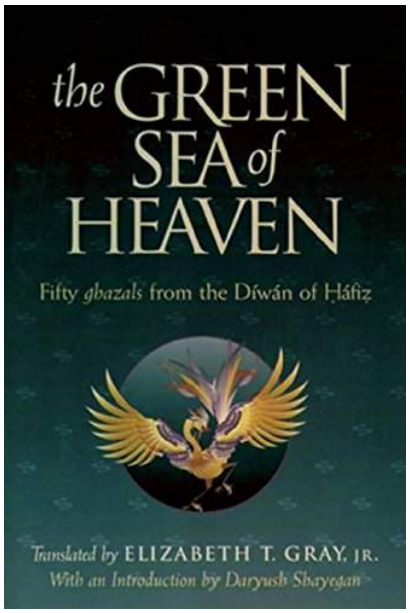


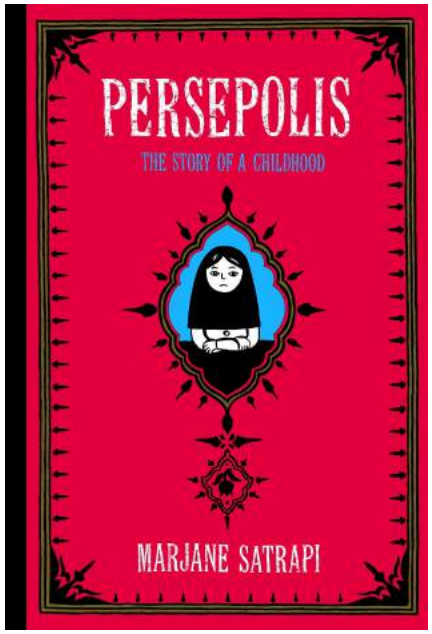


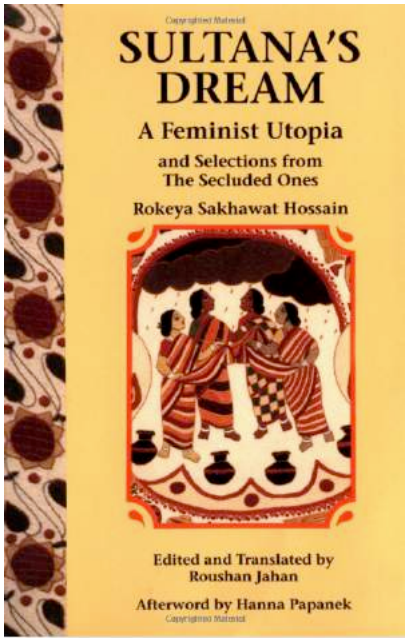


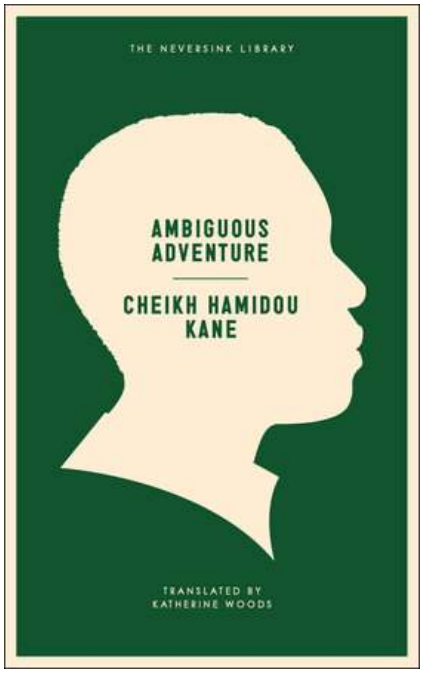






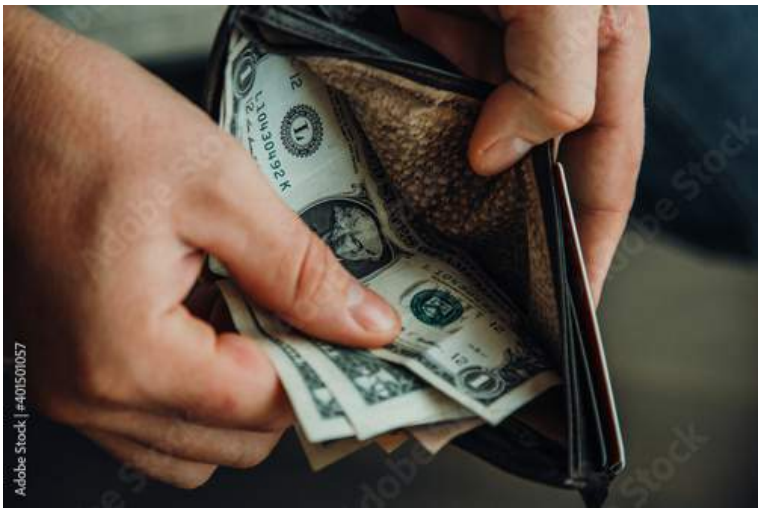






How do I buy these books?

- *Approaching the Qur'an*, by Michael Sells (https://amzn.to/3b8oh5p, $9.06)
- *Seven Doors to Islam*, by John Renard (https://amzn.to/3mUFL7O, $6.65-$31.95)
- *Islamic Art and Spirituality*, by S.H. Nasr (https://amzn.to/39ANkxs, $26.40-$33.95)
- *Conference of the Birds*, by Farīd al-Dīn ʿAṭṭār (d. 1221) (https://amzn.to/3OikP6o, $13.49)
- *The Green Sea of Heaven* (https://amzn.to/3n69U3X, $13.06-$25.00)
- *Islamic Design*, by Daud Sutton (https://amzn.to/3OkYTYb, $4.22-8.49)
- *Persepolis*, by Marjane Satrapi (https://amzn.to/3b9hyrQ, $8.15-14.40)
- *Sultana's Dream*, by Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain (https://amzn.to/3y24EoE, $10.10-$13.95)
- *Ambiguous Adventure*, by Cheikh Hamidou Kane (https://amzn.to/3HAEjkI, $9.17)



$ cash $ dollar $ bills

I encourage you to purchase physical copies of these books to facilitate in-class discussion. But, I understand we're all on a budget, and the roughly $115-125 may be steep.

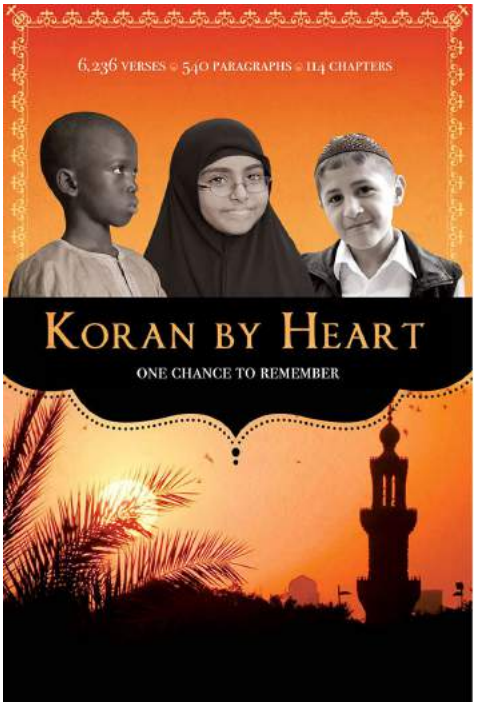
Other options? Reach out to me privately and we can figure something out. Or, access those available electronically — see below (remainder: around $80)

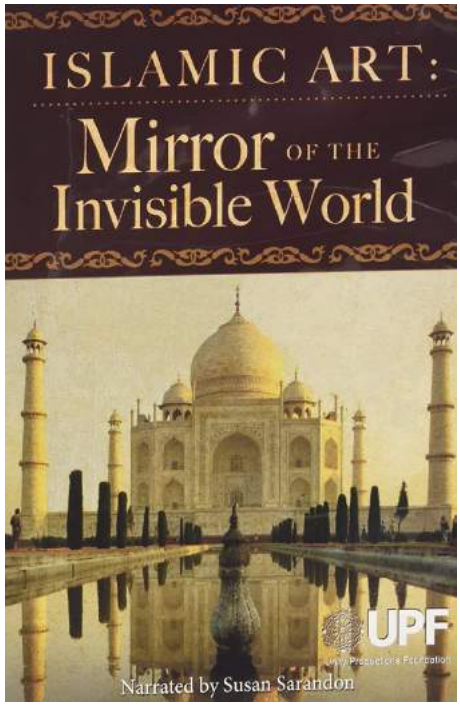
How do I otherwise access these books?

- *Approaching the Qur'an* - PURCHASE REQUIRED
- *Seven Doors to Islam* - Available Digitally @SHU Library: https://bit.ly/3Omdbbb
- *Islamic Art and Spirituality* - Available Digitally @SHU Library: https://bit.ly/3Qx4HzJ
- *Conference of the Birds* - PURCHASE REQUIRED
- *The Green Sea of Heaven* - PURCHASE REQUIRED
- *Islamic Design* - PURCHASE REQUIRED
- *Persepolis* - PURCHASE REQUIRED
- *Sultana's Dream* - Available Digitally @SHU Library: https://bit.ly/39tp5kV
- *Ambiguous Adventure* - PURCHASE REQUIRED



What are we watching?









There will be four film screenings related to the course. These will be scheduled on Thursday evenings (last on on a Tuesday) and attendance is required. Should a student not be able to attend a screening, they will need to borrow the film from the instructor and prepare a 250-word response.

Where are we going?





The Met
Art of the Islamic World Collection



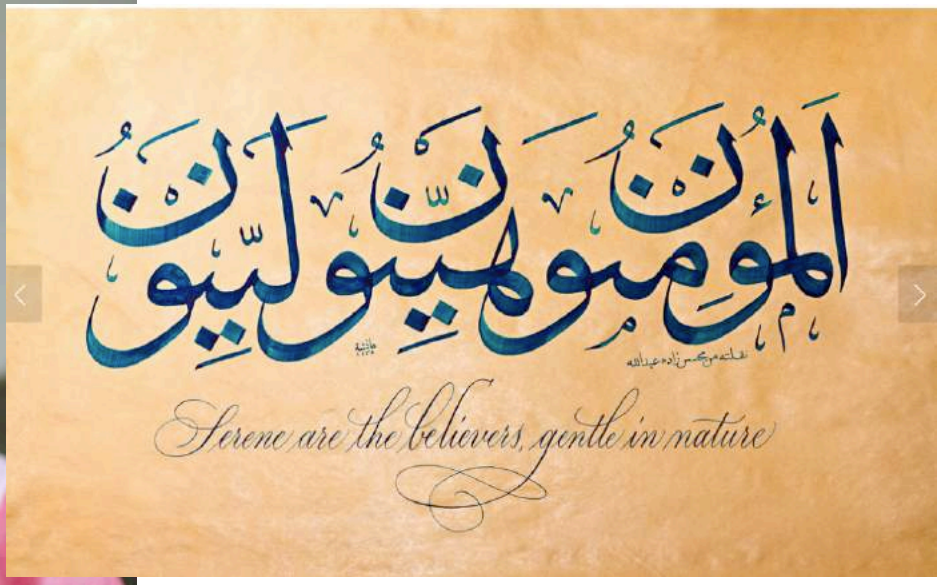


NIA
Masjid and Community Center

Who is visiting us?

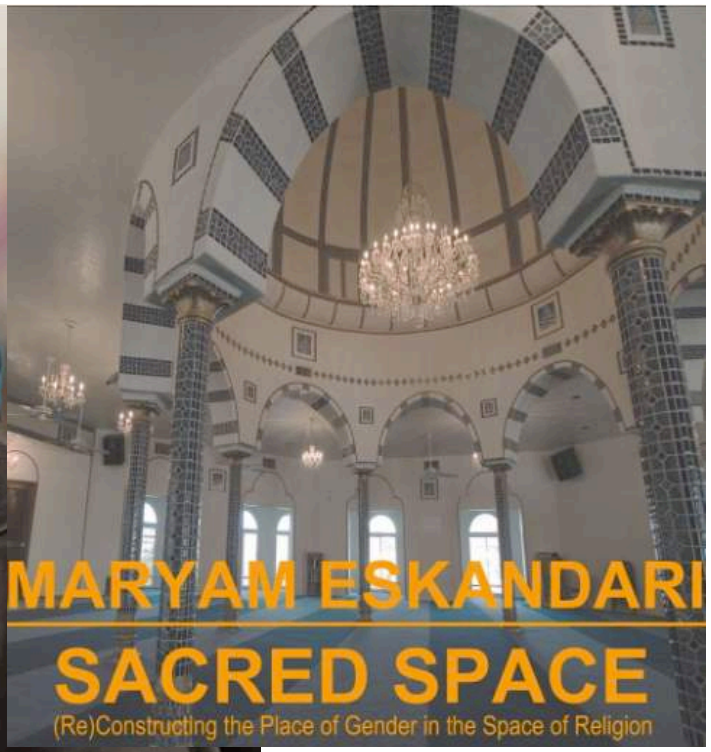


Elinor Aishah Holland
Classically Trained Arabic Calligrapher



https://www.nyislamicarts.com/elinor-aishah-holland





What are we doing?

- Required readings, attendance, and class discussions [5%]
- Attending four film screenings and staying for brief discussion [15%]
- Creating a Calligraphic Design with self-commentary and self-analysis [15%]
- Planning & Designing a Mosque for a N. American setting with commentary [15%]
- Memorizing/Performing a Ghazal (Love Lyric) OR Creating your own (both with commentary and analysis) [15%]
- Creatively Engaging and Responding to American Muslim Futures Exhibit (https://www.americanmuslimfutures.com) [15%]
- Creating a portfolio of creative and artistic responses to course material along with a 1500-2000-word introductory essay reflecting on the major themes of the course [20%]

What are the goals?

- locating and interpreting the role of arts and literature in Islam and Muslim cultures
- examining and explaining the function of arts and literature in Muslim devotional life
- becoming familiar with the literary arts (scriptures, panegyrics, love lyrics, poetry, epic romances, folk songs, and folk tales), sound and visual arts (Qur'ān and poetic recitations, music, dance, drama, architecture, calligraphy, and miniature painting).

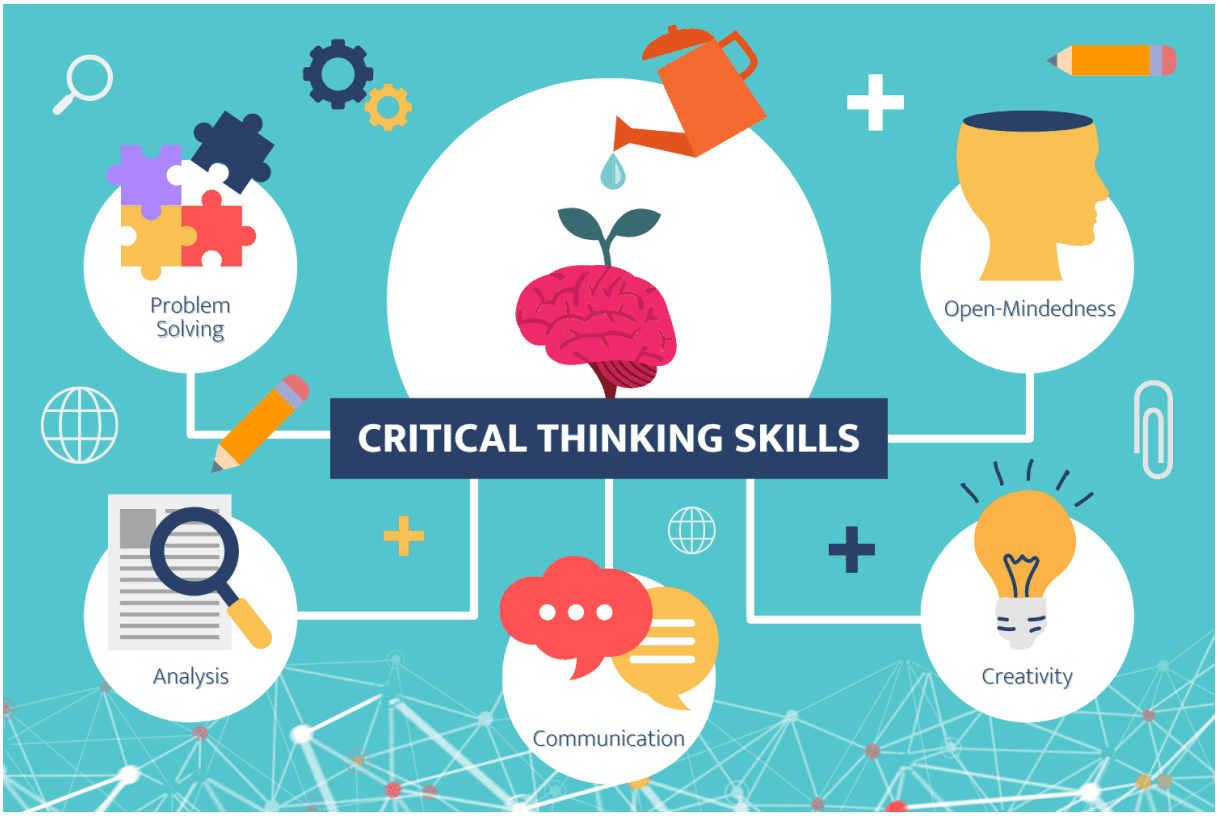


- experimenting and creating art in the style of the arts and literature of Islam and Muslim cultures
- reflecting and analyzing creative pieces of art from Islam and Muslim cultures
- relating theology & spirituality to the arts and literature of Islam and Muslim cultures
- interpreting art through the theology, history, and spirituality of Islamic art.
- appreciating beauty

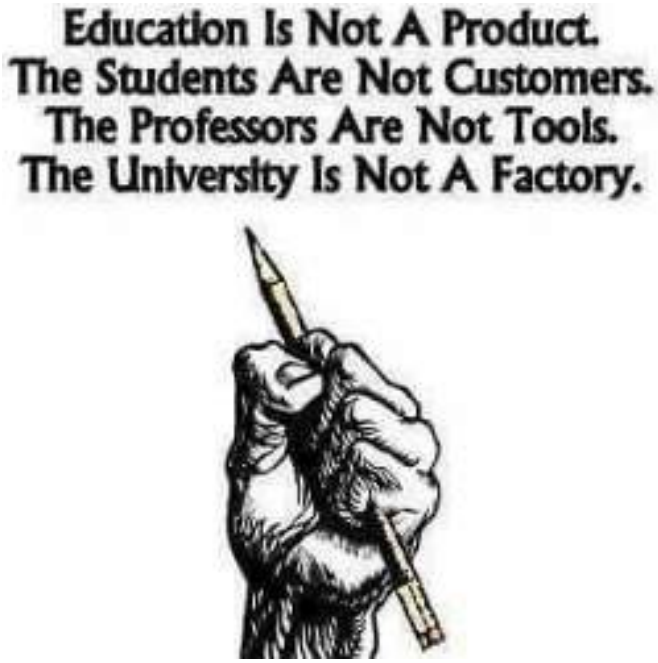
Image: Ism-i Nur (https://www.nyislamicarts.com/artists-2#/ism-i-nur)



Humanities courses are not merely about names, places, and dates, they are about **critical thinking and the conceptualization of ideas**. Most importantly, humanities courses train an individual to **entertain an idea other than one's own**. They exercise the **imagination** in an attempt to enter into the ways in which **various human cultures** from different times and places have understood **what it means to be human**. Additionally, humanities classes explore questions of **power, inequality, inequity, justice, truth, beauty, goodness, and human flourishing**. If you forget a date, place, or name, just ask me, in person or after class, during office hours, or via email.



- What is/are the argument(s) or thesis/es of a given text, and what are the presuppositions of the argument(s) or thesis/es (i.e., the facts, norms, and experiences presumed by the text)?
- What is the presumed knowledge? What background is assumed?
- What is the history of this idea? What is the future of this idea?
- How does this idea shape history, self, community?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of the argument?
- What is another perspective or alternative?
- What is most/least important to the argument?
- Who produced this knowledge and why may that matter?
- Who benefits from this idea? Who is harmed?
- Who is in authority in this system?
- Who is most directly affected?
- Where will this idea take us?
- Where are there similar concepts, situations, theories, or practices outside the context of the text?
- Why is this relevant to me or others?
- Why and when are people influenced by this?
- Why should people know about this?
- Why has it been this way for so long?
- Why is there a need for this today?
- How does this disrupt things?
- How do we know the truth about this?
- How does this idea lead to justice? Truth? Beauty? Goodness? Human Flourishing?
- How does this idea lead to injustice?



late policy

if you want feedback, then assignments need to be submitted w/in 24 hours of due date. after 10 days, highest possible grade is 70%,

be a luddite

cell phones prohibited
laptops prohibited
take notes by hand
hold a physical book
gaze into the eyes of your neighbor
technology will always be with us, let's take a break from it in this classroom (aside from digital images, audio, and so on, of course)

just don't cheat

The Department of Religion considers Academic Integrity of the utmost importance. When we enter higher education, we join a community of scholars held together by a love for knowledge, intellectual engagement, and mutual trust. Cheating of any kind, but plagiarism in particular, destroys trust, betrays disrespect for the processes of learning to which we, as the Department of Religion, are committed, and mocks genuine intellectual engagement. The Department of Religion considers all cheating and plagiarism serious breaches of academic integrity.

disability support services

It is the policy and practice of Seton Hall University to promote inclusive learning environments. If you have a documented disability you may be eligible for reasonable accommodations in compliance with University policy, the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and/or the New Jersey Law against Discrimination. Please note, students are not permitted to negotiate accommodations directly with professors. To request accommodations or assistance, please self-identify with the Office for Disability Support Services (DSS), Duffy Hall, Room 67 at the beginning of the semester. For more information or to register for services, contact DSS at (973) 313-6003 or by e-mail at DSS@shu.edu.



How many of you can't even? I am stressed, you are stressed. The world doesn't have to be this way! Think of this classroom as imagining a future free of anxiety while preparing you for the reality that the world remains colonized by a work-work-work mentality.

UNDOCUALLY

DIVERSE
INCLUSIVE
ACCEPTING
WELCOMING
SAFE SPACE
FOR EVERYONE



Whatever your race, (ir)religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity, gender identity or expression, trauma-informed knowledge and experience, neurology, country of origin, native language, immigration status, English-speaking capacities, socioeconomic status, dis/abilities—you, your views, your knowledge, and your experiences are valued and affirmed.

-alternative assignments and assessments are always possible-

CORESIST

Assignment and Assessment Details

Required Readings, attendance, and class discussions

Each class has assigned readings you are expected to complete *before* the day the class meets. Come prepared to discuss the material, ask questions, and contribute your intelligent, personal, and critical reflections.

I encourage you to underline, take notes, gather your thoughts and write them down.

Attendance is mandatory. If you need to miss a class, you must email me ahead of time. There are many reasons to miss a class. Too many to list.

This amounts to 5% of your grade. Attendance gets you an 8.9/10 for that day. Participating in-class increases your grade; online discussion posts increase your grade, too.



Attending four film screenings and staying for brief discussion

There will be four film screenings related to the course. These will be scheduled on Wednesday evenings and attendance is required. Should a student not be able to attend a screening, they will need to borrow the film from the instructor and prepare a 250-word response.

Thursday 9/15 @ 7:15 p.m.: *Koran By Heart*

Thursday 10/6 @ 7:15 p.m.: *Islamic Art: Mirror of the Invisible World*

Thursday 11/3 @ 7:15 p.m..: *The Colour of Paradise*

Tuesday 11/29 @ 7:15 p.m.: *Music of the Mystics: The Qawwali Documentary*

This amounts to 15% of your grade. 10 points each movie. Attendance: 8.9/10. Participating in discussion in-person or online increases your grade.

Create a Calligraphic Design of *Allāh* with Self-Commentary & -Analysis

Design and create a calligram of the Arabic word for God — Allāh — If you feel inspired and you are proficient in Arabic, you may run other words or phrases by me.

The calligram assignment is intended to introduce you to an important Islamic religious art form; it is a simple exercise and has proved to be quite enjoyable even for those who think they have no artistic talent.

The project consists of learning to write "Allāh," the Arabic word for God, in the Arabic script (there will be a brief tutorial in class). We will also explore examples in class, though you are encouraged to explore other examples online. A Master Calligrapher will join us for one session (TBD).

Having familiarized yourself with this art form, you should choose a concept or symbol associated with God in the Islamic tradition (for example, God as Compassionate, Merciful or the Light of the Heavens and the Earth etc) that you have encountered in the course readings over the last few weeks and attempt to represent it through a calligram design using the word Allah (or otherwise)

You are free to choose any medium for your design – in the past, students have used media as varied as montage, stain glass, water colors, photography and knitting. Your calligraphy should be accompanied by a short explanation of your design (between 250-300 words).

Rubric [15% Grade Weight]



A range grade:

The student has a thorough and comprehensive grasp of the relevant course material. The write-up makes reference to at least one reading and applies the reading thoughtfully and creatively to the main idea behind the project. The write-up has one key theme that draws upon the course readings and lectures. The student does not merely replicate the calligraphy displayed on the course website or in a book or other source. The project instead displays a creative and personal interpretation of a key concept. While the project is not going to be graded on its artistic merit, it should be evident that the student has put effort into and engaged with the project.

B range grade:

The write-up does not have a clear theme, or its connection to the design of the calligram is not immediately clear. The write-up does not generate a creative, deep reflection on the course material or lectures. The student put minimum effort into the project.

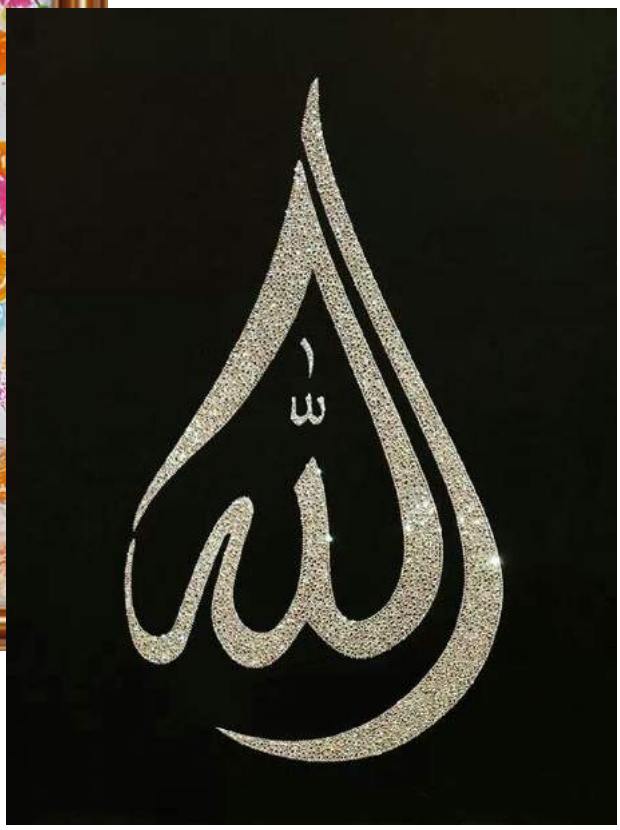
C range grade:

The write-up is significantly short, and it has no connection to the course material or explain the design of the calligram. The project merely replicates the calligraphy displayed on the course website or other source. The student clearly put no effort into the project.


Allah











جمال

the beautiful



الودود

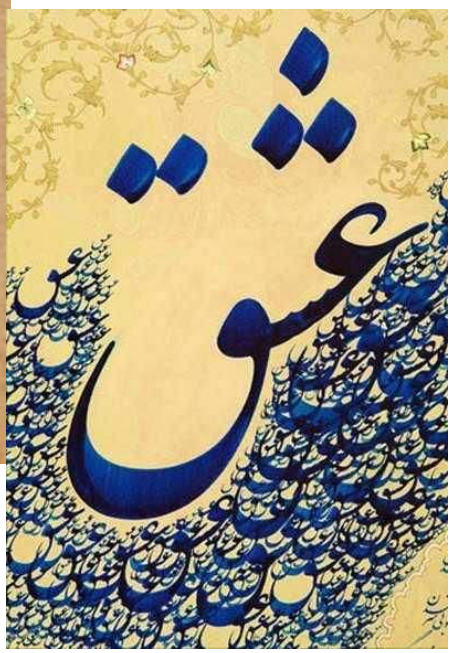
the affectionately loving



الرحيم

the compassionate





الرحمان

the merciful

عشق

passionate love

Planning and Designing a Mosque for a North American Setting

Your architectural firm has won a bid to design a mosque for a major US city. In producing your design you should keep in mind those issues concerning the expression of conventional features of mosque design and décor as well as the projection of an Islamic/Muslim identity within an urban American context. Remember to include the basic components that all mosques share (*miḥrāb*, *qibla*, etc.,) and also pay attention to the concerns of an urban environment. Think about what the exterior façade will look like: what its features will be and what sort of statement of identity you wish to make. As you choose your décor, be prepared to explain your choices and what it symbolizes. It is also important to keep in mind that mosques are multi-purpose buildings, serving as community centers, particularly so for diaspora communities. You will be expected to address this function in your design. There are no restrictions on the size of the mosque and you can assume an unlimited budget funded by a rich and devout patron! Finally, you must explain the salient features of your design when you submit your project. Be sure to consult the additional resources available on Canvas:

- Examples of other students' Mosque Design Presentations
- "The Architecture of the Mosque: Historical Roots and Modern Influences" at archnet.org
- "Mosque Design in the U.S."
- Visual Archives of Mosques at MIT Dome (https://dome.mit.edu/handle/1721.3/45936)
- Mosques, Mihrabs, and Minbars divided by region

Your group will plan, design, and pitch the mosque design as a video and/or slideshow presentation. Remember, since you are pitching this mosque, you will have to ground your architectural decisions based on what you have learned about the *art* and *function* of a mosque.

[15% Grade Weight]

A Range

Your design decisions are supported by creative interpretations of the Islamic tradition of mosque architecture and functionality. You reference course material and assigned readings in grounding and supporting your architectural choices. You discuss all prominent components of a mosque: *miḥrāb*, *qibla,* minaret and/or dome, prayer hall (*muṣalla*), ablution (*wuḍū'*) rooms, *minbar,* space(s) for community events and social gatherings and services. You connect decisions to the urban context.

B Range

You do not support your decisions with course material.

C Range

You lack the key features of the mosque.



Hassan Fathy Dar-Ul-Islam Mosque – New Mexico



Islamic Center of America
Dearborn, Michigan



Islamic Center of
Washington, D.C.

Memorizing or Creating a Poem + Commentary (Option 1 of 2)

Option One: Compose a love lyric (*ghazal*) or a narrative epic (*mathnawi*) in English using conventional images and themes drawn from the Arabic, Persian, and Urdu traditions. Your poem should be accompanied by a brief analysis; for the musically inclined the poem may be set to music and performed.

You will be required to submit:

- The text of your composition
- A video of your performance of the composition
- An audio commentary

The composition: You should compose either a *ghazal* or a *mathnawi* in English using the themes associated with these genres. Be sure to conform to the physical structure of the genre, paying attention to rhyme (monorhyme for the ghazal and rhymed couplets for the *mathnawi*)—keeping meter in not necessary. Compositions should include themes typical of the genres, such as the yearning lover expressing an unfulfilled love (for the *ghazal*) and stories with moral lessons (for the *mathnawi*). Your compositions should contain allusions to the Qur'an, the Hadith, folklore, romances, the natural world, and everyday life. (For a discussion of the repertoire of possible images, refer to A. Schimmel, *Two Colored Brocade*.) As you compose, remember that ambiguity and wordplay are highly prized. Oscillating between the spiritual and the material is expected of accomplished poets. The *ghazal* should have at least 8-10 couplets while the *mathnawi* should have at least 16-20. Do not forget to include your *takhallus* (nom de plume) in last verse of your composition.



The video: You are asked to create a video because the written text of a poem is simply one component of its overall experience. Your poem can be sung, read aloud, or performed in another style. The video format will also allow you to include additional elements if you wish, such as music (it need not be original) or other artistic dimensions such as illustration or calligraphy.

The audio commentary: Your video should include a commentary in which you explain the poem—particularly the symbols you have employed. You may submit the text of your commentary in addition, but it is not necessary.

Memorizing or Creating a Poem + Commentary (Option 2 of 2)

Option Two: Memorize and analyze a Persian love lyric (*ghazal*)—in Persian—composed by Persian poets Rumi or Hafiz, and include an analysis of the poem.

You will be required to submit:

- A video of your recitation
- An audio analysis of the poem

I will provide resources for this project on the course website. You will be able to select from six different poems.

Among societies of Muslims historically, intensive and repeated listening to, reflecting upon, reciting, memorizing, and sharing selected devotional and mystical verses—whether from the Qur'an, traditional prayers, or Sufi poetry—have been important modalities through which the faithful have encountered, experienced, learned from, internalized, and been transformed by spiritual words and meanings.

This option for your *ghazal/mathnawi* assignment allows you to select one of the six mystical poems by luminaries of Sufi literature Rumi and Hafez and spend time regularly listening to, reflecting upon, reciting, and memorizing it.

These six poems have been specially selected because they represent "classics" of Sufi literature and remain immensely popular in many areas of the Islamic world today. For each poem, recited Persian, written Persian, English translation, English transliteration, and (as available) audio or video musical renditions have been provided.

Keep in mind that your experience of becoming familiar with these poems in another language parallels that of many peoples historically in diverse cultural regions of the Islamic world, for whom the "classical" languages of Islam—Arabic and, later, Persian—were not their mother tongues. Many people gained familiarity with these languages mainly by hearing devotional and poetic recitations in their surrounding environments, memorization of selected verses, and through explanations and discussions with others in their native languages.

You may wish to take a quiet moment a few times each week for this activity. During each session, listen to, recite, and reflect upon your chosen poem, or some of its verses, multiple times. You may like to "buddy up" with a classmate or small group, or drop by during office hours to practice and discuss the poems.

From time to time, capture your reflections on the meanings of the verses as these meanings unfold during your encounters with the poem over time. Do different levels of meaning reveal themselves? How do the meanings that unfold interact with the "context" that you bring to the poem at any given moment?

You may also wish to journal your reflections on the audition-reflection-recitation-memorization-sharing experience itself. Has this experiential learning activity deepened your understanding of what we are learning about in the course? Has it raised fresh questions?

[15% grade weight]

American Muslim Futures Online Exhibit Responses

American Muslim Futures is an online exhibit of art that imagines a future free of hate and oppression. From 350 entries, AMF selected 23 Muslim and allied artists to showcase their visions for a truly beautiful future.



Saba Taj | Durham, NC
Borders/Portals (are so Gay)
Oil paint, acrylic paint, spray paint, glitter and gold leaf
72" x 72" (2020)

In this assignment, you are to explore the exhibit, which is divided into four galleries:

LIBERATION

POWER

BELONGING

FUTURE

You are to complete the CREATE, RESPOND, and CONNECT exercises and questions for ONE of the galleries but with the following guidelines:

- For the CREATE section, you must integrate some aspect of the material from this class. Connect what we have learned in this class concerning Islamic art, spirituality, theology, and more, to your artistic creation.
- For the RESPOND section, interpret the art not only through your own personal lens but also through the lens of the arts and literatures of Islam and Muslim cultures (in other words, interpret it through Islamic art, spirituality, theology, etc.)
- For the CONNECT section, in addition to their questions, connect the theme (LIBERATION, POWER, BELONGING, or FUTURE) to Islamic art, spirituality, theology, etc.: how can the theme be conceptualized through the Islamic traditions we've covered in class?

Exhibit: https://www.americanmuslimfutures.com

CREATE, RESPOND, CONNECT Questions: https://www.americanmuslimfutures.com/classroom

[15% grade weight]

Portfolio of Creative and Artistic Responses to Course Material + Analysis

This assignment is a portfolio of creative responses to any aspect of five, four, or three of the following readings:

- Surah Yusuf and/or Jāmī's Yusuf wa Zulaykha
- Farīd al-Dīn ʿAṭṭār's *Conference of the Birds* (*manṭiq al-ṭayr*)
- Farīd al-Dīn ʿAṭṭār's Love Lyrics (*ghazals*)
- Ḥāfiẓ's Love Lyrics (*ghazals*)
- Jalāl al-Dīn Muḥammad Rūmī's Didactic Poem (*Mathnawī*)
- Jalāl al-Dīn Muḥammad Rūmī's Quatrains (Ar., *rubāʿiyāt*, Pr., *chāhārgāna-hā*)
- Marjane Satrapi's *Persepolis*
- Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain's *Sultana's Dream*
- Cheikh Hamidou Kane's *Ambiguous Adventure*
- Sir Muhammad Iqbal, *Complaint* and *Responses to Complaint* (*Shikwa* and *Jawab-i-Shikwa*)
- "'Oh ye Americans': The Autobiography of Omar ibn Said: An Enslaved Muslim in the United States,"
- Malcolm X, "Mecca" (ch.17), *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*
- Daud Sutton's *Islamic Design: A Genius for Geometry*

During the course of the semester, each student will create a portfolio representing creative responses to themes brought up in different readings listed above. The portfolio provides students to reflect creatively on the readings, discussions, and lectures. The portfolio should incorporate works in at least 3 different media. These can be classical media, such as drawing, photography, poetry, musical composition, plastic arts, painting, comics, prose fiction, etc. But they can also be technologically or social media-driven arts, such as Twitter, TikTok, YouTube videos, animation, FaceBook, etc. Each entry in the portfolio should be accompanied by a short explanation (250-500 words) of how the work you created engages with or represents themes and ideas featured in the reading (connecting it to larger topics in the class). It must be well considered and explain your thought processes.



Continued from above…

You will then write an introduction to the 3-to-5 creative responses.

5-7 pages, 12pt, double spaced. It must explain your work in general and review the major themes of the course and their relation to your artwork. This essay should be clearly marked as "introductory essay" or "prologue" and uploaded to the front of the blog posts.

Think of this introductory essay as a sort of preface or prologue to your creative responses. Before briefly explaining each of your projects, address the following questions: What do you want the viewer to get out of your blog posts? What aspects of the course in particular, and what various manifestations of the Islamic religious tradition and Muslim communities in general, do you want to convey to the reader of your blog posts?

What are your main take-aways from this course? How have the readings, lectures, and discussions shaped your understanding of Islam and Muslims? You may then decide to focus on select themes from the course and explain how these themes in particular are reflected in each of your blog posts. This thematic introduction should prepare the reader for what you believe they should get out of your blog posts.

Be sure that your introduction is not simply an expansion of your shorter introductions that you wrote for each blog post. Those are meant to connect your creative response with that the (aspect of the) reading on which it is based. This introduction is more of a "reader's guide" for your creative responses as a whole. Start with general reflections, then hone in on your particular projects.

There is no final exam or final paper in this class. *This is your final*. [20%]

Grade A Range

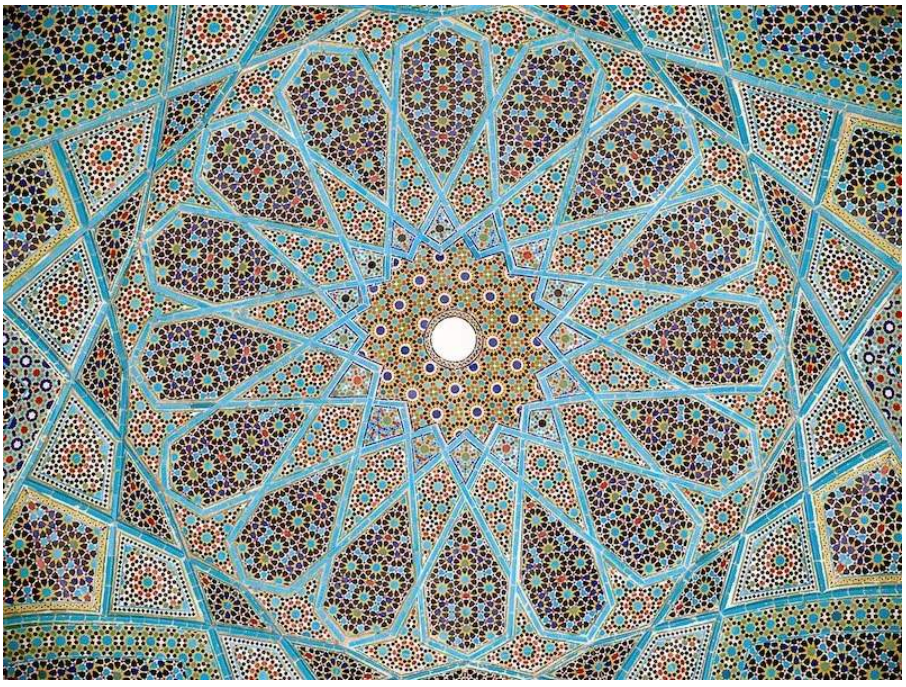
Five creative responses. **5-7 pages**. You **cite from five** different readings on the syllabus. You follow the guidelines above.

Grade B Range

Four creative responses. **4-5 pages**. You **cite from four** different readings on the syllabus.

Grade C Range

Three creative responses. **3-4 pages**. You **cite from three** different readings on the syllabus.



Schedule of Classes and Assigned Readings

Religious Holy Day | **Film Screening** | **Assignment Due Date** | **No Class**

Day	Required Readings and Other Information
T 8/23 - T 8/30: Paryusana Festival (Jain Traditions)	
Day 1: M 8/29 - First Day of Class Reviewing syllabus, assignments, course goals; What do you know about Islam and how do you know it? What is Islamic about Islamic Art?	• No Required Readings The *adhan* (Call to Prayer); Why study religion and theology through the arts?
T 8/30: Ganesh Chaturthi (Hindu Traditions)	
Day 2: W 8/31 - Fundamental Concepts to Understand Islam What is Islam? Text, Pre-Text, and Con-Text of Revelation	• Renard, *Seven Doors to Islam*, Chapter 1 (pp. 1-33) • Carl Ernst, "What Is Islamic Art?", in *Following Muhammad* (pp. 182-197) Being Islamic, Being Muslim: Engaging Revelation Across Time (History) and Space (Regions)
W 8/31 - F 9/9: Das Laxana Festival (Jain Traditions)	
M 9/5 Labor Day (Civil Religion)	**No Class**
Day 3: W 9/7 Qur'ān as Revelation What is the Qur'ān and Qur'ānic revelation? What is its relationship to pre-Islamic poetry?	• Sells, *Approaching the Qur'án*, pp. 1-40 • Sells, *Approaching the Qur'án*, pp. 41-55, 78-103, 145-157
Th 9/8: Feast of the Nativity of the Theotokos (Orthodox Christianity)	
Day 4: M 9/12 Qur'ān: Oral/Aural Engagement The Beauty of Qur'ānic Revelation The art of Qur'ānic recitation	• Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazāli, "External Rules of Qur'an Recitation" • Sells, *Approaching the Qur'án*, pp. 161-165, 172-188 • Nelson, "Reciter and Listener," Ethnomusicology Vol. 26, No. 1, 41-47.
M 9/12 - F 9/16: Ghambar Paitishem (Zoroastrian Traditions)	

Schedule of Classes and Assigned Readings

Religious Holy Day | **Film Screening** | **Assignment Due Date** | **No Class**

Day	Required Readings and Other Information
Day 5: W 9/14 Qur'ān, Spiritual Lessons, and Literary Arts Literary renderings of Qur'ānic narratives; Spiritual lessons from the prophets	• Renard, *Seven Doors to Islam*, pp. 75-88, 95-104, 259-272 • James Morris, "Dramatizing the Sura of Joseph: An Introduction to the Islamic Humanities" • Jāmī's *Yusuf wa Zulaykha*
Th 9/15 @ 7:15 PM: *Koran by Heart* Film Screening and Discussion	Beck room C
Day 6: M 9/19 Qur'ān and the Art of Calligraphy (Background) Elinor Aishah Holland, an experienced calligrapher trained and licensed (*ijāza*) in the classical art, will join us remotely.	• Nasr, *Islamic Art and Spirituality*, pp. 17-36 • Alain George, "The Qur'an, Calligraphy, and the Early Civilization of Islam," in *A Companion to Islamic Art and Architecture*
T 9/20: Mabon (Wiccan/Pagan Traditions)	
Day 7: W 9/21 Qur'ān and the Art of Calligraphy (Experiential Learning) Elinor Aishah Holland, an experienced calligrapher trained and licensed (*ijāza*) in the classical art, will join us in person to offer a tutorial.	• Renard, *Seven Doors*, pp. 125-141 • Abdelkabir Khatibi and Mohammed Sijelmassi, *The Splendor of Islamic Calligraphy*, pp. 14-33. • Abdalla Adamu, "Islamic Calligraphy and Talismans in Northern Nigeria"
Su 9/25 - T 9/27: Rosh Hashanah (Jewish Traditions)	
Day 8: M 9/26 Art in Devotion to the Prophet Muhammad I (Background) Prophet Muhammad as model and exemplary figure for Muslims; intercessor for Muslims; *isrā'* and *mi'rāj*	• Ali Asani, "Following God's Beloved: Prophet Muhammad as the ideal Muslim," in *Infidel of Love* • Ernst, "The Prophet Muhammad as Mystical Exemplar and Object of Devotion," in *Sufism: An Introduction to…* • Christiane Gruber, "Between Logos (*kalima*) and Light (*Nūr*): Representations of the Prophet Muhammad in Islamic Painting," *Muqarnas* 26 (2009), 1-34.

Schedule of Classes and Assigned Readings

Religious Holy Day | **Film Screening** | **Assignment Due Date** | **No Class**

Day	Required Readings and Other Information
M 9/26 - Tu 10/4: Navaratri (Hindu Traditions)	
Day 9: W 9/28 Art in Devotion to the Prophet Muhammad I (Primary Sources) Art, poetry, devotional songs, and more	• Renard, *Seven Doors to Islam*, pp. 235—238 • Ali Asani, "In Praise of Muḥammad: Sindhi and Urdu Poems," in *Religions of India in Practice* • "The Miracles of Mohammed," in *The Myths and Legends of the Swahili* • Suleyman Çelebi's Turkish poem, *Mevlid-i Şerif*
Fr 9/30: Calligraphic Design Assignment Due	
Day 10: M 10/3 Islamic Design & Architecture I Optional and Further Background: • Mattia Guidetti, "Sacred Spaces in Early Islam," in *Companion to Islamic Art and Architecture* • Gülru Necipoğlu, *The Topkapı Scroll: Geometry and Ornament in Islamic Architecture: Topkapı Palace Museum Library MS H. 1956* (Santa Monica, CA: Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities, 1995), 73-83 (ch.5), 217-23 (ch.12); you should also skim 61-72 (ch.4) and 197-215 (ch.11), which may help putting Necipoğlu's arguments in context.	• Renard, *Seven Doors to Islam*, pp. 125-141 • Nasr, *Islamic Art and Spirituality*, pp. 3-14, 37-63, 195-202 • Renata Holod, "Approaching the Mosque: Beginnings and Evolution," in *Mosques: Splendors of Islam* • Sutton, *Islamic Design*, pp. 1-25 (attempt one or two designs)
T 10/4 - W 10/5: Yom Kippur (Jewish Traditions)	

Schedule of Classes and Assigned Readings

Religious Holy Day | **Film Screening** | **Assignment Due Date** | **No Class**

Day	Required Readings and Other Information
Day 11: W 10/5 Islamic Design & Architecture II **Maryam Eskandari, Muslim-American Architect, will join us at 1PM.** Optional and Further Background: • *The Mosque: History, Architectural Development and Regional Diversity*, 17-41, 43- 53, 55-70.	• Fatima Quraishi and Matthew Saba, "Elements of the Mosque: Form and Adornment," in *Mosques: Splendors of Islam* • Each student will read a different chapter under Part Two: Regional Expressions of *Mosques: Splendors of Islam*, and share in class. • Sutton, *Islamic Design*, pp. 26-50 (attempt one or two designs)
Th 10/06 @ 7:15 PM: *Islamic Art: Mirror of the Invisible World* Film Screening and Discussion	Bethany 201
F 10/7 - Sa 10/8: *Mawlid al-Nabī* (Islamic Traditions)	
M 10/10 Fall Break (T 10/11, too).	**No Class**
Su 10/9 - Su 10/16: Sukkot (Jewish Traditions)	
Day 12: W 10/12 Poetry in the Context of Islamic Spirituality and Sufism Optional and Further Background: • Knysh, *Islamic Mysticism: A Short History*, pp. 150-163	• Renard, *Seven Doors to Islam*, pp. 107-125 • Nasr, *Islamic Art and Spirituality*, pp. 87-97 • Ernst, *Sufism: An Introduction to the Mystical Tradition of Islam*, Chapter 6 Sufi Poetry
Su 10/16 - Tu 10/18: Shemini Atzeret & Simchat Torah (Jewish Traditions)	
Day 13: M 10/17 The Love Lyric (*ghazal*) Optional and Further Background: • L. Lewisohn, "Prolegomenon…2 – The Mystical Milieu: Ḥāfiẓ's Erotic Spirituality," in *Ḥāfiẓ and the Religion of Love,* pp. 31-55	• Daryush Shayegan, "The Visionary Topography of Ḥáfiẓ," in *The Green Sea of Heaven*, pp. 15-34 • J.T.P. De Bruijn, "Chapter 3: The Poetry of Love," in *Persian Sufi Poetry* • Selection of Ḥāfiẓ's Love Lyrics from *The Green Sea of Heaven*; Selection of ʿAṭṭār's Love Lyrics

Schedule of Classes and Assigned Readings

Religious Holy Day | **Film Screening** | **Assignment Due Date** | **No Class**

Day	Required Readings and Other Information

Day 14: W 10/19 Rūmī's Quatrains (*rubāʿiyāt*) and Didactic Poetry (*Mathnawī*)
 	
Optional and Further Background:
• James Morris, "The 'Ascension of the Word': Rhetoric and Reader Engagement in Rūmī's *Mathnawī*"
	• Nasr, *Islamic Art and Spirituality*, 114-147
	• Selection of Rūmī's Quatrains
	• Selection from Rūmī's *Mathnawī*:
	  • Book 1: Prose Introduction, couplets 1-324;
	  • Book 2: Couplets 1724-1819
	  • Book 3: Couplets 1260-1450

Fr 10/21: Mosque Project Due	
Day 15: M 10/24 Didactic Poetry (Farīd al-Dīn ʿAṭṭār's *Conference of the Birds*) I	• Morris, "Envisaging the Spirit: The Basic Structure of ʿAṭṭār's *Conference of the Birds*" • Fatemeh Keshavarz, "The Flight of the Birds: The Poetic Animating the Spiritual in ʿAṭṭār's *Mantiq al-tayr*," in *Attar and the Persian Sufi Tradition* • ʿAṭṭār, *Conference of the Birds* pp. 29-75 (original edition) or pp. 39-86 (revised edition)
M 10/24: Diwali (Hindu, Jain, and Sikh Traditions)	
Day 16: W 10/26 Didactic Poetry (Farīd al-Dīn ʿAṭṭār's *Conference of the Birds*) II	• ʿAṭṭār, *Conference of the Birds* pp. 75-166 (original edition) or pp. 86-180 (revised edition) • Michael Barry, "Illustrating ʿAṭṭār: A Pictorial Meditation by Master Ḥabīballāh of Mashhad in the Tradition of Master Bihzād of Herat," in *Attar and the Persian Sufi Tradition*
W 10/26: Birth of Báb **Th 10/27: Birth of Bahā'u'llāh (Bahā'í Traditions)**	
Fr 10/28: Poetry Project Due	

Schedule of Classes and Assigned Readings

Religious Holy Day | **Film Screening** | **Assignment Due Date** | **No Class**

Day	Required Readings and Other Information
Day 17: M 10/31 Didactic Poetry (Farīd al-Dīn ʿAṭṭār's *Conference of the Birds*) III	• ʿAṭṭār, *Conference of the Birds* pp. 166-229/End (original edition) or pp. 180-245/End (revised edition) • Lucian Stone, "Blessed Perplexity: The Topos of Hayrat in ʿAṭṭār's *Mantiq al-tayr*," in *Attar and the Persian Sufi Tradition*
Day 18: W 11/2 Colonial and Postcolonial West Africa I	• Cheikh Hamidou Kane, "The Clash of Culture and Faith in Colonial Africa: An Ambiguous Adventure, in *Lingua Romana* vol 10, issue 1, 28-32 • Cheikh Hamidou Kane, *Ambiguous Adventure*, Part I, Chapters 1-5
Th 11/3 @ 7:15 PM: *The Colour of Paradise* Film Screening and Discussion	Beck C
Day 19: M 11/7 Colonial and Postcolonial West Africa II	• Rebecca Masterton, "Islamic Mystical Readings of Cheikh Hamidou Kane,'s *Ambiguous Adventure*," in *Journal of Islamic Studies* 20:1 (2009) pp. 21-45 • Cheikh Hamidou Kane, *Ambiguous Adventure*, Part I, Chapters 6-9
Tu 11/8 Election Day (Civil Religion) **Tu 11/8: Gurpurab (Sikh Traditions)**	
Day 20: W 11/9 Colonial and Postcolonial West Africa III	• Cheikh Hamidou Kane, *Ambiguous Adventure*, Part II
Day 21: M 11/14 Colonial and Postcolonial South Asia I Optional and Further Background: • R. Rozehnal, "Debating Orthodoxy, Contesting Tradition: Islam in Contemporary South Asia," in *Islam in World Cultures*, ed. R. M. Feener. 103-31.	• Sir Muhammad Iqbal, *Complaint and Answer (Shikwa and Jawab-i-Shikwa)*, trans. A.J. Arberry (Lahore: Shaikh Muhammad Ashraf, 1961), v-viii, 1-79. • Ralph Russell, "Iqbal and His Message," *The Pursuit of Urdu Literature: A Select History* (London: Zed Books, 1992), 176-88.

Schedule of Classes and Assigned Readings

Religious Holy Day | **Film Screening** | **Assignment Due Date** | **No Class**

Day	Required Readings and Other Information
Day 22: W 11/16 Colonial and Postcolonial South Asia II	• *We Sinful Women: Contemporary Urdu Feminist Poetry*, ed. and trans. Rukhsana Ahmad (London: Women's Press, 1991), 1-29 (introduction), 66-103 (poems of Fahmida Riaz). • Khaled Abou El Fadl, *Conference of the books: the search for beauty in Islam*, 289-301
M 11/21 (dr takacs is at a conference)	**No Class**
W 11/23 Thanksgiving Break	**No Class**
Day 23: M 11/28 Colonial and Postcolonial South Asia III Optional and Further Background: • Rokeya Hossain, *Sultana's Dream: A Feminist Utopia, and Selections from The Secluded Ones*, 37-85 (perhaps the first few pages for some background on the author)	• Rokeya Hossain, *Sultana's Dream: A Feminist Utopia, and Selections from The Secluded Ones*, 1-36.
Tu 11/29 @ 7:15 PM: *Music of the Mystics* Film Screening and Discussion	Bethany 201
Day 24: W 11/30 Iranian Revolution I	• David Buchman, "Shi'ite Islam in Contemporary Iran: From Islamic Revolution to Moderating Reform," in *Islam in World Cultures*, 75-101. • Marjane Satrapi, *Persepolis*, 3-79
Day 25: M 12/5 Iranian Revolution II	• Marjane Satrapi, *Persepolis*, 80-153 • Haggai Ram, "Multiple Iconographies: Political Posters in the Iranian Revolution," in *Picturing Iran: Art, Society and Revolution*, 90-101. • Peter Chelkowski, "The Art of Revolution and the War: The Role of Graphic Arts in Iran," in *Picturing Iran: Art, Society and Revolution*, 128-41.

Schedule of Classes and Assigned Readings

Religious Holy Day | **Film Screening** | **Assignment Due Date** | **No Class**

Day	Required Readings and Other Information
Day 26: W 12/7 American Islam I	• Farah El-Sharif, "Two 19th-Century Tales of Muslims and American Slavery," in *New/Lines Magazine* • Omar Ibn Said, *The Life of Omar Ibn Said, Written by Himself*, in *A Muslim American Slave*, 47-79. • Malcolm X, Chapter 17 Mecca, in *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*
Day 27: M 12/12 American Islam II	• Hesham Samy Abdel-Alim, "Hip-Hop Islam," *Al-Ahram*, 7-13 July 2005. • Jonathan Curiel, "Muslim Roots, U.S. Blues," in *Aramco World* • Su'ad Abdul Khabeer, "The Loop of Muslim Cool Black Islam, Hip Hop, and Knowledge of Self," in *Muslim Cool: Race, Religion, and Hip Hop in the United States*
T 12/12: American Muslim Futures Project Due	
M 12/18 Portfolio of Creative and Artistic Responses Due	