

**Islamic Mysticism
McMaster University
SCAR 3X03
Fall 2022**

Prof Liyakat Takim

Office Hours: Mondays 5-6 or by Appointment

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The Course:

This is a historical and topical survey of the origins and development of Islamic mysticism. The course is primarily concerned with the growth of the mystical tradition in Islam, the rise of asceticism, the early Sufis, the role of the Sufi masters, the development of Sufi orders and the eventual systematization of Sufi teachings. We will also study the lives of prominent Sufi figures like Rabi'a, Hallaj, Rumi, Ghazali and others. The course will end with a discussion on how Sufism can act as a link between East and West.

Course Requirements:

Regular attendance at weekly sessions and active participation in the lectures and tutorials are mandatory.

Reading Assignments:

Schimmel, A., Mystical Dimensions in Islam

Mutahhari, Light Within Me (online)

Lings, M. A Sufi Saint of the Twentieth Century, (reserve)

Nasr, S. H., Sufi Essays, (reserve)

Smith, M., Rabi'a the Mystic, (reserve)

Milson A Sufi Rule for novices (reserve)

Assignment Schedules:

There will be one mid-term examination and a visiting lecturer report. In addition, there will be two quizzes and a final examination at the end of the semester.

Composition of Final Grades:

Mid-term examination 25%

2 Quizzes 20%

Final examination 30%

Class & Tutorials 15%
Visiting Lecture 10%

Classes & Readings:

Sept 7th: Introduction: Monotheism & Mysticism

Readings: Schimmel, Mystical, 3-22
Nasr, Sufi Essays, 25-42

Sept 14th: Historical Survey of the classical period of Sufism

Readings: Schimmel, Mystical, 23-50

Sept 21st Great Mystical figures of the Classical Age: Rabi'a and al-Hallaj

Readings: Schimmel, Mystical, 62-77
Smith, M., Rabi'a the Mystic chaps 1-3
E. Schroeder, "A Saint and his fate" in Muhammad's People, 521-54 (reserve)

Sept 28th: The path to the beloved: Tariqa and the mystical experience

Readings: Schimmel, Mystical, 98-130;
Nasr, Sufi Essays, 68-83,

October 5th Guest Speaker

Oct. 19: Quiz 1

The 'annihilation' of the ego and reconstruction of a new personality
Readings: Schimmel, Mystical, 130-186,
Chittick, Sufi Path, 173-193

Oct 26: A Sufi Rule for Novices, Discussion of the book on the adab al-muridin

Readings: The full text of Milson's translation (reserve)

Nov 2nd Mid-Term Examinations

Nov 9th Esoteric Shi'ism

Readings: Light Within Me, 43-112
Taylor, Ja'far al-Sadiq 97-112 (Reserve)

Nov 16 The role of the Sufi Master

Readings: Lings, Sufi Saint, 79-117 (Reserve),

Nov 23 Ghazali and his contribution in reconciling Sufism with Sunni Islam

Readings: Schimmel, Mystical, 91-97

Watt, The Faith and Practice, 11-85 (Reserve)

Nov 30 Jalal al-Din Rumi and love Mysticism

Readings, Chittick, The Sufi Path of Love, 194-231

Schimmel, Mystical, 309-328

Dec 7th: **Quiz 2**

Course Review

Policies

DEPARTMENT SPECIFIC

Staff in the office of the Department of Religious Studies will not date-stamp or receive papers and other assignments.

UNIVERSITY MANDATED

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university. It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, located at www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which other credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

AVENUE TO LEARN

In this course we will be using Avenue to Learn. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students who require academic accommodation must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. Academic accommodations must be arranged for each term of study. Student Accessibility Services can be contacted by phone 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or e-mail sas@mcmaster.ca. For further information, consult McMaster University's Policy for Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities.

POLICY FOR MODIFYING A COURSE

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check her/his McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

E-MAIL COMMUNICATION POLICY

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student's own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

MCMASTER STUDENT ABSENCE FORM

In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar "Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work". Please note these regulations have changed beginning Spring/Summer 2015. The timeframe within which the MSAF is valid has been reduced from 5 days to 3 days. The upper limit for which an MSAF can be submitted has been reduced from 'less than 30%' to 'less than 25%' of the course weight. As per the policy, students must immediately follow up with their instructors to request accommodation for any missed academic work. Failure to do so may negate their relief. If you have any questions about the MSAF, please contact your Associate Dean's office.

TURNITIN.COM

In this course we will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal plagiarism. Students will be expected to submit their work electronically to Turnitin.com and in hard copy so that it can be checked for academic dishonesty. Students who do not wish to submit their work to Turnitin.com must still submit a copy to the instructor. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to Turnitin.com. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, etc.). To see the Turnitin.com Policy, please go to www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.