Attention!

This is a representative syllabus. The syllabus for the course you are enrolled in will likely be different. Please refer to your instructor’s syllabus for more information on specific requirements for a given semester.
ARABIC 2701 - Classical Arabic Literature in Translation

Meeting Time/Location

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course introduces students to the classical and medieval Arabic literary heritage in English translation. These works and genres include pre-Islamic poetry, the Qur'an, the high literature of courtly cultures of the Umayyad and Abbasid caliphates, but also span encompass writings of merchants and travelers, scholars and slaves. Readings set in their cultural and historical context through reading assignments and classroom lectures,

and they are discussed in depth with full student participation.

Instructor:
Office:
Office Hrs:
Email:
Twitter:

Teaching Asst:
Office:
Office Hrs:
Email:

TEXTBOOKS FOR PURCHASE


GRADING AND ASSIGNMENTS
This course will be reading- and writing-intensive. Each week you will be required to submit two questions—that you have come up with—to me and the teaching assistant (via e-mail) that you think will enrich our class discussions the next day. Occasionally, short quizzes will be handed out (unannounced) at the beginning of class at random on the assigned readings for that day. These will be simple quizzes, and your lowest score on the quizzes will be dropped when tallying your final grade.

You will have three major writing assignments; these will be response essays. These 5-7 page essays will be based on essay questions that I will hand out in class a week prior to the submission date. You are expected
to formulate a coherent argument, and support it with material from the books that you have read (For more information, read the 'Advice on Writing'. Also, feel free to ask either me or the TA – we’re your greatest resource!).

You will need to revise one of your first two essays that you write for this class; you may choose which one. When I hand the corrected copies back, you have two days to decide if you’d like to revise it. If you do, we will schedule a meeting to discuss your paper, and work together to make plans for revising it. You will then have a week to submit your revision. You must revise at least one of your first two papers. You cannot submit a re-write without talking to either me or the TA first.

Papers must be handed in punctually. Papers should be submitted by 2:05pm on the days indicated on the syllabus below. Please submit to me a printed copy of your paper in class. Delays are unacceptable; they not only complicate grading but are unfair to others who have striven to submit their essays on time. Penalties will be assessed for lateness. Please do not ask for extensions: if you have sports or work commitments or requirements for other courses, you are expected to plan ahead and manage your time effectively so that the assignment can be submitted on time. If you have legitimate concerns, please contact me well in advance (at least 2 weeks).

Final Grade Tally:

Response Essays (x3) 75%

Class Participation (including Quizzes) 25%

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct (http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/).

DISABILITY POLICY

Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/.

FOR YOUR SAFETY, the OSU Student Safety/Escort Service is available after 7 p.m. by dialing 292-3322.
COURSE SCHEDULE – SPRING SEMESTER 2017

Week 1

SESSION 1 (Jan 10) – Course Introduction: Why Arabic Literature?

SESSION 2 (Jan 12) – Pagan Poets (1): Mute Immortals Speak

READINGS: IRWIN, pp. 1-16.

[Imru’ al-Qays

Week 2

SESSION 3 (Jan 17) – Pagan Poets (2): Beautiful Barbarians

READINGS: IRWIN, pp. 16-29.

[‘Antara ibn Shaddād

[al-Shanfarā al-Azdi

[al-Khansā’


SESSION 4 (Jan 19) – Soothsayers and Diviners


[Musaylimah ‘the Liar’

[Quss ibn Sā’ida

Excerpts from Ibn Ishāq [Ibn Isḥāq], Sīrat Rasūl Allāḥ, tr. A. Guillaume, “Shiqq and Saṭīḥ prophesy the advent of the Prophet Muḥammad.”

Week 3

SESSION 5 (Jan 24) – The Qur’ān

READINGS: IRWIN, pp. 31-41

SESSION 6 (Jan 26) – Court Cultures 1: The Umayyads and their Poets

READINGS: IRWIN, pp. 42–49.

[al-Akhṭal]
[Jarīr]
[Farazdaq]

VAN GELDER, pp. 15-20 (“Polemics in Verse”), 123-26 (“Lives of the Poets”)

Week 4

SESSION 7 (Jan 31) – Court Cultures 2: The Ghazal and Love Poetry

READINGS: IRWIN, pp. 49–63

[ʿUmar ibn Rabīʿa]
[Jamil]
[al-Walid ibn Yazīd]

VAN GELDER, pp. 27–33

SESSION 8 (Feb 2) – Court Cultures 3: Early Oratory and Epistolography

READINGS: IRWIN, pp. 63–67

[ʿAbd al-Hamīd al-Kātib]


[Muḥammad]
[Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq]
[Fāṭima]
[ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib]
[Ziyād ibn Abīhi]
SESSION 9 (Feb 7) – Court Cultures 4: The Sīra Literature

FIRST ESSAY ASSIGNED


[ʿĀʾishah’s Scandal]

[The Illness of the Prophet and the Accession of Abū Bakr]

SESSION 10 (Feb 9) – Widening Horizons: Early Abbasid Literature

READINGS: IRWIN, pp. 68-84.

[Ibn al-Muqaffa’]

VAN GELDER, pp. 168-175 (Right Conduct by Ibn al-Muqaffa’)

SESSION 11 (Feb 14) – The Works of al-Jāḥiẓ [الجاحظ] (1)

FIRST ESSAY DUE

READINGS: IRWIN, pp. 84-100.

LISTEN: James MONTGOMERY, “A Book to Save Society: al-Jāḥiẓ’s Book of Living Creatures”

SESSION 12 (Feb 16) – The Works of al-Jāḥiẓ [الجاحظ] (2)

Week 7

SESSION 13 (Feb 21) – Abbasid Courtly Culture

READINGS: IRWIN, pp. 101-117.

[Ibn Qutayba]

[al-Mas'ūdī]

[al-Washshāʾ]

VAN GELDER, pp. 208-217 (al-Amin and al-Ma’mūn, the sons of Hārūn)

SESSION 14 (Feb 23) – The Shu‘ubiyya Movement


VAN GELDER, pp. 34-36, 195-207

Bashshār ibn Burd

Abū Ḥayyān al-Tawḥīdī

Week 8

SESSION 15 (Feb 28) – The ‘New’ Poetry of the Abbasids (1)

READINGS: IRWIN, pp. 119-47.

Bashshār ibn Burd

Abū Tammām

al-ʿAbbās ibn Aḥnaf

Abū Nuwās

Abū l-ʿĀtahiyya
SESSION 16 (Mar 2) – Consorts of the Caliphs


Week 9

SESSION 17 (Mar 7) – What Makes Poetry Good? Literary Criticism in the Abbasid Age


VAN GELDER, pp. 281-296 (ʿAbd al-Qādir al-Jurjānī’s *The Secret of Eloquence*)

SESSION 18 (Mar 9) – Abū Nuwās [أبو نواس] and Mujūn

SECOND ESSAY ASSIGNED


Week 10

SPRING BREAK – NO CLASSES

Week 11

SESSION 19 (Mar 21) – NO CLASS – CONFERENCE TRAVEL

SESSION 20 (Mar 23) – al-Mutanabbī [استنبطي]

SECOND ESSAY DUE


3 translations of al-Mutanabbī’s Panegyric to Sayf al-Dawla “alā qadri abli l-ʿazmi” (tr. Arberry, van Gelder, & Montgomery)

Week 12
SESSION 21 (Mar 28) – Wandering Scholars (1)


[Abū ‘Alī al-Tanūkhī]

VAN GELDER, pp. 225-244.

SESSION 22 (Mar 30) – Wandering Scholars (2)

READINGS: IRWIN, 170-78.

[Abū Ḥayyān al-Tawḥīdī]


Week 13

SESSION 23 (Apr 4) – The Maqāmāt of Badīʿ al-Zamān al-Hamadhānī

READINGS: IRWIN, 178-193

SESSION 24 (Apr 6) – Translating Maqāmāt: Translations of Three Maqāms al-Ḥarīrī

READINGS: Excerpts from al-Ḥarīrī, Stand and Deliver, tr. Michael COOPERSON [click here]

Week 14

SESSION 25 (Apr 11) – Animal Tales

READINGS: IRWIN, 193-206

[IKWĀN AL-ṢAFĀ Alerts of the Companions]}

[Ibn al-Marzubān]}

SESSION 26 (Apr 13) – Strangers in Strange Lands (1): Vikings and Turks


Week 15
SESSION 27 (Apr 18) – Strangers in Strange Lands (1): Franks and Crusaders

READINGS: Excerpts from USĀMA IBN MUNQIDH [عاصم بن مnquيد], The Book of Contemplation, tr. Paul COBB (New York, 2008)

SESSION 28 (Apr 20) – Strangers in Strange Lands (2): Hindus and Brahmins

READINGS: Excerpts from ABŪ RAYḤĀN AL-BĪRŪNĪ [ابن رایحان البیرونی], The Hind, tr. Eduard SACHAU

Week 16

SESSION 29 (Apr 25) – Popular Tales

THIRD ESSAY ASSIGNED

READINGS: Tales of the Marvelous and News of the Strange, tr. Malcolm C. LYONS (New York, 2016),

SESSION 30 (Apr 27) – ...What a long strange trip it’s been

READINGS: Excerpts from Abū l-ʿAlāʾ al-Maʿarrī, Epistle on Forgiveness, tr. VAN GELDER and SCHOELER

THIRD ESSAY DUE DURING EXAM WEEK