

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

Irwin, Robert. *Night & Horses & the Desert: An Anthology of Classical Arabic Literature*. New York: Anchor Books, 2002. ISBN: 9780385721554

Van Gelder, Geert Jan. *Classical Arabic Literature: A Library of Arabic Literature Anthology*. New York: NYU Press, 2013. ISBN: 9780814738269.

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 امرؤ القيس]

Week 2

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

READINGS: IRWIN, pp. 16-29.

[ʿAntara ibn Shaddād أنترة بن شداد]

[al-Shanfarā al-Azdī الشنفرى الأزدي]

[Ta'abbaṭa Sharran تائبط شراً]

[al-Khansā' الخنساء]

Peter WEBB, “*al-Jābiliyya*: Uncertain Times of Uncertain Meanings,” *Der Islam* 91 (2014): 69-94.

SESSION 4 (Jan 19) – Soothsayers and Diviners

READINGS: VAN GELDER, pp. 110-113.

[Musaylimah ‘the Liar’ مسيلمة الكذاب]

[Quss ibn Sāʿida قسّ بن ساعدة]

Excerpts from Ibn Ishāq [ابن اسحاق], *Sīrat Rasūl Allāb*, tr. A. Guillaume, “Shiqq and Saṭiḥ prophesy the advent of the Prophet Muḥammad.”

Week 3

SESSION 5 (Jan 24) – The Qurʾān

READINGS: IRWIN, pp. 31-41

Shawkat TOORAWA, “Q Raḥmān 55, Q Aʿlā 87, and Q Balad 90. Translations in Cadenced Rhyming English Prose,” *Journal of Qurʾanic Studies* 13 (2011): 149–154.

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

READINGS: IRWIN, pp. 42-49.

[al-Akhṭal *أَلْأَخْطَل*]

[Jarīr *جَرِير*]

[Farazdaq *فَرَزْدَق*]

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

[‘Umar ibn Rabī‘a *عُمَرَ بْنِ رَبِيعَةَ*]

[Jamīl *جَمِيل*]

[al-Walīd ibn Yazīd *الْوَالِيدِ بْنِ يَزِيدَ*]

VAN GELDER, pp. 27-33

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

READINGS: IRWIN, pp. 63-67

[‘Abd al-Hamīd al-Kātib *عَبْدَ الْحَمِيدِ الْكَاتِبِ*]

Tahera QUTBUDDIN, “*Khuṭba*: The Evolution of Early Arabic Oration,” in *Classical Arabic Humanities in their Own Terms: Festschrift for Wolfhart Heinrichs on his 65th Birthday*, ed. B. Gruendler (Leiden, 2008), pp. 176-273.

[Muḥammad *مُحَمَّد*]

[Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq *أَبُو بَكْرٍ الصِّدِّيقِ*]

[Fāṭima *فَاطِمَةَ*]

[‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib *عَلِيِّ بْنِ أَبِي طَالِبِ*]

[Ziyād ibn Abīhi *زِيَادِ بْنِ أَبِيهِ*]

[Zaynab bint ‘Alī زَيْنَب بنت عليّ]

[Ṭāriq ibn Ziyād طَارِق بن زياد]

[al-Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf الْحَجَّاج بن يوسف]

[Abū Ḥamza al-Shārī أَبُو حمزة السَّارِي]

Week 5

SESSION 9 (Feb 7) – Court Cultures 4: The *Sīra* Literature

FIRST ESSAY ASSIGNED

READINGS: Ma‘mar ibn Rāshid [مَعْمَر بن راشد], *The Expeditions*, tr. S.W. ANTHONY (New York, 2015), xv-xxxiv, 92-98, 109-122.

[‘Ā’ishah’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‘ ابن السَّقْفَع]

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

Week 6

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)

READINGS: A.F.L. BEESTON, “Jāḥiẓ ‘On the Difference between Enmity and Envy’,” *Journal of Arabic Literature* 18 (1987): 22-45.

VAN GELDER, pp. 176-94 ('On Flies and Other Things')

Week 7

SESSION 13 (Feb 21) – Abbasid Courtly Culture

READINGS: IRWIN, pp. 101-117.

[Ibn Qutayba ابن قتيبة]

[al-Mas'ūdī المصعوري]

[al-Washshā' الوشاء]

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

[Abū Ḥanīfa al-Dīnawrī أبو حنيفة الدينوري]

SESSION 14 (Feb 23) – The Shu'ūbiyya Movement

READINGS: Michael COOPERSON, “ ‘Arabs’ and ‘Iranians’: The Uses of Ethnicity in the Early Abbasid Period,” in *Islamic Cultures, Islamic Contexts. Essays in Honor of Professor Patricia Crone* (Leiden, 2015), pp. 364-387.

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

[Bashshār ibn Burd بشّار بن برد]

[Abū Ḥayyān al-Tawḥīdī أبو هيان التوحيدى]

Week 8

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

READINGS: IRWIN, pp. 119-47.

[Bashshār ibn Burd بشّار بن برد]

[Abū Tammām أبو تمام]

[al-ʿAbbās ibn Aḥnaf العباس بن أحنف]

[Abū Nuwās أبو نواس]

[Abū l-ʿĀtahiyya أبو العاترية]

[al-Buḥturī البحتريّ]

[Ibn al-Rūmī ابن الروميّ]

SESSION 16 (Mar 2) – Consorts of the Caliphs

READINGS: Excerpts from Ibn al-Sāʿī [ابن الساعي], *Consorts of the Caliphs: Women and the Court of Baghdad* (New York, 2015)

Week 9

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

READINGS: “Abū Bakr al-Ṣūlī’s defense of Abū Tammām,” in Abū Bakr al-Ṣūlī, *The Life and Times of Abū Tammām*, tr. Beatrice GRUENDLER (New York, 2015), pp. 1-63.

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

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

SECOND ESSAY ASSIGNED

READINGS: VAN GELDER, pp. 37-43.

Philip KENNEDY, *Abu Nuwas: A Genius of Poetry* (London, 2005), 29-78.

Week 10

SPRING BREAK – NO CLASSES

Week 11

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

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

SECOND ESSAY DUE

READINGS: Andreas HAMORI, “al-Mutanabbī,” in *Abbasid Belles-Lettres* (Cambridge, 1990) 300-315

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

Week 12

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

READINGS: IRWIN, pp. 148-170.

[Abū ‘Alī al-Tanūkhī أبو عليّ التنوخيّ]

VAN GELDER, pp. 225-244.

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

READINGS: IRWIN, 170-78.

[Abū Ḥayyān al-Tawḥīdī أبو حيان التوحيديّ]

Wadād AL-QĀḌĪ, “Scholars and their books: a peculiar Islamic view from the fifth/eleventh century,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 124 (2004): 627-640.

Week 13

SESSION 23 (Apr 4) – The *Maqāmāt* of Badī‘ 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

[IKHWĀN AL-ṢAFĀ إخوان الصفا]

[IBN AL-MARZUBĀN ابن المرزبان]

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

READINGS: Excerpts from IBN FAḌLĀN [ابن فضلان], *Mission to the Volga*, tr. James MONTGOMERY (New York, 2014).

Week 15

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

READINGS: Excerpts from USĀMA IBN MUNQIDH [أسامة بن منقذ], *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 [أبو ريحان البيروني], *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