Religion 4303/6303 The Sufi Way. Syllabus

Profesor: Dr. Godlas 3:30-4:45, TuTh, Rm. 247 MLC; Office hours: Tuesdays 5:15-6:15, Rm. 217 Peabody, 542-1486; Writing TA, Ms. Jessica Couch.

Course Objectives:
1) To obtain a broad knowledge of the major doctrines and practices of Sufism throughout its history.
2) To understand general principles of consciousness (i.e., psychological and spiritual) transformation in Sufism.
3) To learn how to hermeneutically understand Sufism (as well as other people's beliefs in general and Islam as well).
4) To enhance your academically relevant emotional intelligence.

My Teaching Philosophy and This Course:
Life in today's world can be both a beautiful and dangerous experience. One of the reasons why it is not as beautiful as it could be and more dangerous than it should be is that (although some degree of violence in dangerous situations and relationships may be necessary) people often relate to others and themselves with unnecessary degrees of violence because they lack sufficient valid information, understanding, and intelligence, especially emotional intelligence. In contrast, if they can gain greater degrees of these, their relationships to the world and other people will be governed by greater wisdom and less dominated by unnecessary violence. Unfortunately, although contemporary higher education emphasizes gaining valid information and thinking critically, it is deficient in helping students to cultivate understanding and to enhance their emotional intelligence (namely, for the most part it does not teach students how to utilize their emotions to enhance their thinking, problem solving abilities, and human relations). Hence, while this class pursues the traditional goals of providing students with valid information about Sufism and helping them to think critically about it, this class will also attempt to enhance students' ability to understand others and themselves as well as to enhance their own emotional intelligence. The means of achieving these goals will be an "ABC" holistic approach: "A," standing for "affective" and dealing with emotions; "B" referring to "behavior," involving active engagement with texts and materials dealing with Sufism (rather than just passively listening to lectures); and "C" referring to "cognition," involving facilitation of students' understanding through cultivating hermeneutical understanding and religiological analysis. In this way, it is hoped that after completing this course, students will have become more empowered to make our world a less dangerous and more beautiful place.

Hermeneutical Understanding and Religiology Defined
By hermeneutical understanding, I mean a method of cultivating understanding of both oneself (whatever one’s beliefs are) and the believers of the religions that you are studying (without necessarily sympathizing with other believers), a method that has the potential for diminishing unnecessary intercultural violence and moving the understanding of those who employ it closer to objective truth. This involves both historically contextualizing beliefs (for grad. students, honors option, and extra credit
students) and learning and applying to the beliefs of others and oneself a coherent, systematic, and relatively objective analytical method for studying religious beliefs—a method (that I call religiology or religiological analysis) that focuses on the following categories of beliefs:

(a) **Epistemology:** Beliefs concerning the basis of knowledge (What do particular people believe they should rely on in order to gain valid knowledge?—with the subcategory of hermeneutical authority (i.e., interpretative authority): What do they believe they should rely on in order to understand and properly interpret that basis of knowledge?)

(b) **Ontology:** Beliefs concerning the nature of ultimate reality (What does someone believe is truly real? What do they believe are the major characteristics of ultimate reality? What is more real, less real? How is what is more real related to what is less real?)—with subcategories of **Theology** [i.e., beliefs about God, What are God's qualities? How does God relate to existent beings?]; **Cosmology** [i.e., beliefs about the nature of created existence and degrees or levels of reality]; and **Eschatology** [i.e., beliefs about "end times" and an afterlife, What will be the nature of reality if and when the world as we know it ends?]

(c) **Anthropology:** Beliefs concerning the character of human nature, in general, and the identity of believers, in particular, as understood in the light of or in relation to that reality (Who are we as human beings? What are significant classes and identities, both as believers and non-believers?)

(d) **Psychology** Beliefs concerning the nature of human psychology (What does our consciousness consist of? Namely, what are our faculties of consciousness?—e.g., mind, conscience, soul, etc.; and What are some of the major states or contents of consciousness?—some answers contemporary Western science gives are electro-chemical impulses, thoughts, and emotions such as love, sadness, happiness, depression, anger, ecstasy, etc.)—

(e) **Teleology** Beliefs concerning the purpose(s) of existence (What is/are the purpose(s) of existence in general? What are the purposes of human life? The purposes of individual lives?)

(f) **Methodology,** Beliefs concerning the way of life that leads to that attainment (How can we achieve the purpose? What are some of the major aspects of the method or way of life that leads to that attainment?—with the following methodological subcategories: social, political, military, legal, economic, religio-spiritual (e.g., means of worship and contemplation).

**Major Obstacles and Solutions:**

Even though most of you recognize that there is far too much unnecessary violence in our world and would like it to become a better place, I realize that at least four obstacles may hinder your enthusiastic embrace of this class and the method I am employing (for the ultimate purpose of helping the world become a better place): you may be anxious about your need to get an "A" or "B" in this class—in order to keep your Hope scholarship (if
you have one), to graduate, and to get a decent job); you have only a limited amount of
time; you may not understand how taking this class is going to help you "make a
difference;" and you may resent the fact that the class requires a lot of work. Although
research in education clearly shows that in order for real learning to happen students must
engage material that they are learning (rather than passively attempting to absorb it
through simply listening to lectures, reading, and repeating it on exams), often students
resentfully dismiss such engagement as "busy work" because they do not see its value
and because it is a drain on their time. While I cannot lessen the amount of time your
engaged writing assignments will take, I can certainly reward you for doing them by
weighing the writing assignments heavily in the overall grade and by giving you an "A"
(95%) for the writing assignments—as long as you do them on time, follow the
instructions, and put into them college level thought and effort. In addition, since I have
explained (under the "B" section of the ABC holistic approach) both how such engaged
writing facilitates understanding and how in general learning the ABC holistic approach
can enable you to play a part in both undermining some of the causes of unnecessary
violence as well as making the world a more beautiful place to live, my hope is that this
will increase the likelihood that you will appreciate the class. So if you can see the light
at the end of this tunnel, I encourage you to take the class. If you can't see it but want to
see it, let's talk; maybe I'll be able to help you see it. If you can't see the point and thereby
think the class will probably entail a lot of "busy work," I suggest that you not take this
class.

Requirements:
Texts and Sources:
1) (WEB) Selected readings and links from my website "Islamic Studies Resources":
http://www.uga.edu/islam , especially the Sufism section: Sufism, Sufism and Sufi
Orders: Sufism's Many Paths
http://www.uga.edu/islam/Sufism.html
2) Mystical Dimension of Islam (MDI) by Annemarie Schimmel at the bookstore.
3) (CP) Course packet containing various articles, both translations from Sufi works as
well as articles by scholars about Sufism.
4) E-Learning Commons (ELC): periodically, written materials, songs, and youtube
videos may be placed on ELC including things such as an updated syllabus with links to
web sites, term sheets, and reviews sheets for tests. We will also use ELC as an
extension of class discussions asynchronously (i.e., the Bulletin Board). Our ELC site
will be up and running by Monday of the second week of classes.
5) Music tapes, CDs, and/or DVDs may be placed on reserve in the Library as needed.

Low Stakes writing assignments:
During the first two weeks each writing assignment will be "low stakes," meaning that
the point is simply, first of all, to jot down some ideas; and, second, work them into
complete sentences and paragraphs containing "topic sentences." These are graded on a
"done/not-done" basis.

Analytical Journals, On-line Discussion, Classroom participation
Beginning in the third week of classes, you will prepare with a word processor a journal entry minimally one-half of a page long (but no longer than 2 pages) for each of the week's assignments except those marked with an asterisk in the topical outline below. You must post these on ELC by Thursday midnight of each week beginning in the third week of class. Please copy and paste them into the appropriate discussion topic. Do not upload them as attachments. Uploading makes it harder for others to discuss them; and if your document has a virus, it can transmit it. (Late assignments will not be accepted unless accompanied by a written explanation from a doctor or some other civic or university official.) Number each part of this according to the steps numbered below (and like below, putting each number on a separate line):

1) Drawing on the daily reading, type one quote each (or paraphrase a lengthy passage) that was of interest to you and that you can analyze religiologically. If more than one article is to be read for that day, you should do at least one entry per article.
2) Above each quote you will note the title of the reading and the page number;
3) Label the religiological category to which you think it is relevant, underlining the label; and below that explain the meaning of the quote or paraphrase, noting why you think that the quote is relevant to the particular religiological category, noting the religiological implications of the quote or paraphrase; and
4) Toward hermeneutical understanding (a) Explain in some detail why your chosen quote interested you; (b) Briefly note and discuss at least one aspect of your own beliefs in this particular area.
5) Work toward increasing your emotional intelligence by (a) noting the emotion or emotions that you feel while reading and writing about that quote, rating yourself on the mood meter, which will be discussed by Dr. Godlas; and (b) briefly speculating about the causes of these emotions, keeping in mind that the causes may be a mixture of both something related to the quote and circumstances in your life that you are going through that are irrelevant to the quote. (Note that this step, i.e., #5b, in the assignment is confidential. You are not required to post #5b on ELC. If you feel that writing about your emotions in #5a is too personal, then make up a fictional character and write about his/her emotions instead.)

** By Thursday midnight of each week you must post your journal entries, placing each under the appropriate heading on the ELC discussion board (which will make sense to you after ELC is operating—midway in the second week of classes—and you can see the various discussion headings);
** By Sunday midnight of each week you must respond to at least one of your fellow students' postings per reading. Do not respond to a posting to which another student has already responded unless all postings have already been responded to once.
** At the midterm and final exams, hand in the weekly journals of your religiological analyses (not your responses to your fellow students).
** At test 2 and at the final exam, you must turn in correctly formatted journals. Do not print them off of ELC. They will not be accepted because the formatting will be distorted.
** Reading assignments should be read and journals prepared by class time on Thursday of each week, when journals should also be brought to class for in class small group discussion.
Religiological Interviews: Using the religiological method, you will do four religiological analyses based on four interviews. Specifically, first, you will analyze yourself regarding your own beliefs; then you will interview one male and female your own age and also one person of an older generation (none of whom have taken or are currently taking Dr. Godlas' classes). Try to interview people who have different views than yourself. If they answer you in brief answers, probe! Ask them to further explain what they mean if they use brief words or phrases such as “God is the creator,” “family,” “literal,” “heart,” or “to serve the Lord,” etc. The format of these should follow the religiological format, giving answers per each category. When writing these up and posting them, each category should be LABELED (e.g., “epistemology,” etc.) neither simply numbered nor simply indicated by letters. Also, precede the answers by the questions you asked. In addition, keep your interviews separate from one another; in other words, please DO NOT combine all of the epistemologies together, all of ontologies together, etc. Your self-analysis will be discussed in small groups in class and is due on Tuesday, August 21. The others will be discussed and due in class on Thursday, August 23. All analyses (including your own self-analysis) should also be posted on ELC by Friday August 24. You must also respond to at least ONE other student's posting per topic by Monday August 27.

Paper:
Using the WIP methodology (discussed on the WIP syllabus) involving close work with the WIP TA, Ms. Jessica Couch, you will write an eight to twelve page paper (in addition to the bibliography formatted and using complete footnotes according to the Turabian style or Chicago Manual of Style), 1.5 spacing, 12pt font, using a word-processor and then compare it with your religiological analysis of your own beliefs. First, you must chose a Sufi author from the list I will supply and, using the Religiological method, analyze that Sufi's beliefs in eight to twelve pages. Second, you will review and elaborate upon your original religiological analysis of your own beliefs. Third, in two to four pages, you will compare and contrast the two worldviews.

Extra Credit, Honors Option, and Grad. Students:
1) Instead of writing an 8-12 page paper, this must be 18-26 pages; and in it, you will religiologically compare two Sufis' viewpoints as well as briefly historically contextualize each Sufi. This is mandatory for grad. students, honors option undergrads, and extra credit students. The format should involve two complete independent religiological analyses followed by a two page minimum comparison.
2) Grad Students and Honors Options students will, in addition, be responsible for reading and discussing Karamustafa, Sufism: The Formative Period in a seminar session. Also, Trimmingham, The Sufi Orders of Islam, will be read and each grad. student will compile a bibliography (updating it for two major Sufi orders) and discuss a few key recent books or articles during a seminar session. Two more seminar sessions will be arranged, one in which paper topics will be discussed and the second in which papers will be presented (at the end of the semester).
3) Grad students will also have additional as needed assignments.

Test Format
For questions involving names, dates, and terms, the format of the tests will primarily be matching using a word bank. The ABC holistic approach, Hermeneutical Understanding, Religiological Analysis, Religiological Analysis of Sufism and Islam, the Kaltner and Esposito articles, the four-petalled rose, the relationship between dhikr, the theophanic wave, the process of psycho-spiritual transformation, and the two jihads will be tested by essay. Alternative test dates can only be arranged after giving me a note from a dean. According to university policy, the date of the final cannot be changed unless you have three final exams scheduled the same day. Our exam is Thurs., Dec. 6, 3:30 - 6:30 pm.

Grading:
Note: If you show up to class, follow the instructions for the writing assignments, and do them with college level effort and quality, you will get an "A" (95%) for 60% of your grade. (Truly extraordinary writing may receive higher than a 95%).

Journals: 25%: (ELC posting and discussion: 15%; printed and handed in at test 2 and at the final exam: 10%).
Paper: 25%
Class participation and misc. assignments: 10%
Test 1: 10%
Test 2: 10%
Final exam 20%
Extra Credit: 5%

Note: If you do not show up for the final exam you will receive an F for the exam. Make up final exams or incompletes can only be given if you have a dean's excuse. If you receive a D or an F on the final exam you will not be able to receive a score in the "A" range (i.e., neither an "A" nor an "A-"") in your course grade, no matter how high your overall numerical grade is for the class (and no matter how much extra credit you have done). If you get a score in the D range on your final exam, the highest score for your overall grade for the class will be a B+; and if you receive an "F" range score for your final exam, the highest score for your overall grade for the class will be a B. If you receive an 89, 79, etc. for your final cumulative grade, there is nothing that can be done to bump your grade up to a higher grade.

Grading Letter to Number Equivalencies:

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Topical Outline:

Note: Lists of key terms and names will be compiled for the readings and posted on ELC starting during the second week of classes.
Week 1 Tue/Thus Aug 14-16,  
*Tuesday, August 14:* Hand out Syllabus, discuss WIP section of the class. Read the syllabus carefully at home.  
Homework: Read the material on the following links (a, b, & c) on Tuesday or Wednesday, jot down notes consisting of your responses to certain parts that interested you; and before you hand them in, put them into complete sentences and paragraphs, using "topic sentences." Due on Thursday.  
(a) "Introduction to Sufism," by Dr. Godlas on his website:
http://www.uga.edu/islam/sufismintro.html; and also read the remaining pages of the introduction by clicking on the uppermost link at the bottom of the each page of his introduction.  
Read also two links on Dr. Godlas’ Introduction to Sufism webpage:  
(b) 1) *Classical Sufi Definitions of Sufism* by Sarraj (d. 378 AH/ 988 CE), translated by Dr. Godlas. http://www.uga.edu/islam/sufism/sufismlumdef.html (read the definitions; but reading the links within this page are optional)  
(c) 2) *Sufism's definition and origin* by Paul Yachness  
http://www.uga.edu/islam/sufismdef.html  

*Thursday, August 16:* film, Huston Smith, The Sufi Way  
Jot down notes consisting of your responses to certain parts of the film; and before you hand them in, put them into complete sentences and paragraphs, using "topic sentences." Due on Tuesday, Aug. 21.  

Read by the weekend of the first week.  
(a) "What is Sufism?" (pt. 1) MDI, ch. 1, pp. 3-12  
Jot down notes consisting of your responses to certain parts of this reading that interested you; and before you hand them in, put them into complete sentences and paragraphs, using "topic sentences." Due on Tuesday, Aug. 21.  
(b) *Esposito, "10 Things Everyone Needs to Know about Islam,”*  

Week 2 Aug 21-23 Hermeneutical Understanding, Religiology, and Islam  
Religiological self-analysis due in class Tuesday, Aug. 21.  
Other three analyses due Thursday, Aug 23.  
Read by the end of the second week, Aug. 23 the follow:  
(a)*Article by Prof. John Voll, "Islam" (Surveys Islamic history)  
http://www.cqpress.com/context/articles/epr_islam.html (Professor Voll teaches at George Washington University. This article was published in Congressional Quarterly, 2001.) A term sheet for this article will be posted on ELC on Aug. 22.  
(b) *Kaltner, "Talking With Churches About Islam," (Professor Kaltner teaches at Rhodes College in Memphis, TN. The article was originally from a Christian website, but is now on ELC) (updated 1/13/2013)  
(c) "What is Sufism?" (pt. 2) MDI pp. 12-22  
Thur, Aug. 23 Post on ELC: religiological self-analysis and interviews
Week 3  August 28-30
Religiological Interviews: posting of responses on ELC Monday, Aug. 27

Tues Aug. 28, Test 1 on ABC holistic approach, Hermeneutical Understanding,
Religious, Introductory Islam Articles (Esposito, Voll, Kaltner) A review sheet will be
posted on ELC midweek of Week 2
Thurs. Aug. 30
"Historical Outlines of Classical Sufism: The Formative Period" ch. 2, pt. 1 MDI 23-42

Week 4  Sept. 4-6
Sept. 3, Monday Labor Day
Selections from the Qur'an, trans. by Cleary. CR 1-8
"The Qur'an as the Foundation for Islamic Spirituality", Nasr. CR 9-14
"Historical Outlines ….: mystical leaders of the late 9th cent MDI 42-62

Week 5  Sept. 11-Sept. 13
A Survey of Sufi Qur’an Commentary, Dr. Godlas, ELC
Selections from The Brides of the Qur’an, by Baqli, trans. Dr. Godlas ELC
"Historical Outlines of Classical Sufism: Hallaj. MDI 62-77
(Recommended, "The Book," Lings, ch. 3, pp. 72-76)

Week 6  Sept. 18-20
"The Sunnah and Hadith," Nasr. CP 19-26
"Knowledge of God in Classical Sufism," Renard. CP 27-52
"Historical Outlines…: Period of Consolidation, Shibli to Ghazzali MDI 77-97
(Recommended, "The Messenger," Lings, ch. 4, , pp. 76-82;

Week 7  Sept. 25-27
"God," Nasr. CP 53-60
"The Cosmos and Natural Order," Nasr. CP 61-68
"The Five Divine Presences," Schuon. CP 69-78
*9 principles of the school of Ibn 'Arabi, ELC
"Theosophical Sufism: Suhrawardi Maqtul & Ibn 'Arabi" MDI, ch. 6, 259-272
(Recommended: "The Doctrine" ch. 6, Lings, pp. 91-96)

Week 8  Oct. 2-4
"Man," Eaton. CP 79-88
"The Spiritual Significance of the Substance of the Prophet," Schuon. CP 89-96
"Man and His Perfection," MDI ch. 4 187-227
"Veneration of Muhammad and the Perfect Man" & "Development of Ibn 'Arabi's
Mysticism of Unity" (more on "Perfect Man") MDI, from ch. 6, pp. 272-274 & 279-282
(Recommended, Lings, "The Messenger," ch. 4, pp. 76-82)

Week 9  Oct. 9-11
"Expounding the Creating of the Spirits" Razi. CP 97-100
"Female Spirituality in Islam," Chishti. CP 101-112
"The Feminine Element in Sufism"  MDI Appendix 2, pp. 426-435

**Thurs. Oct. 11, Test 2**

**Week 10** Oct. 16-18  
"Transforming Your Self," Frager.  
*Psychology of Sufism,* Nurbakhsh.  
*"The Path: [al-nafs]"*  
*"Sufi Psychology, like everything else in Sufism…"*  
CP 113-134  
CP 135-158  
MDI from ch. 3 112-113  
MDI, from ch. 4 191-92

**Week 11** Oct 23-25  
"The Seven Stations," Sarraj.  
*"The Path: Foundations of the Path"*  
*"Stations and Stages"*  
CP 159-166  
CP 167-174  
MDI, from ch. 3, 109-130  
(Recommended: "The Heart," Lings, ch. 5, pp. 82-90.)

**Week 12** Oct. 30- Nov. 1  
"Love and Annihilation," Schimmel  
"Passing Away, Union, the Perfect Man," tr. Wilson & Pourjavady  
MDI, from ch. 3, pp. 130-148=CP 175-184  
CP 185-214

**Week 13** Nov. 6-8  
"In order to enter the spiritual path…" (murid & shaykh)  
"Ritual Prayer, Free Prayer (du'a), Dhikr, & Sama"  
MDI from ch. 3, begin seven lines from the bottom, 100-108)  
MDI, from ch. 3, 148-186.  
(Recommended ch. 7 "The Method," Lings, pp 97-105.)

**Week 14** Nov. 13-15  
 a) "Sufi Orders and Fraternities,"  
MDI ch. 5, pp. 228-258; ch. 8, 344-373

b) *Sufi Orders,* Dr. Godlas’ website: [http://www.uga.edu/islam/sufismorders.html](http://www.uga.edu/islam/sufismorders.html)  
read the entirety of the webpage from the Malamatiya to Qalandariya (but reading the linked pages is not required, aside from the exceptions noted below).  
For the journal, 1) pick TWO orders (the orders listed in at the top of the page), 2) read one functional link for each chosen order (except for links to pictures and book descriptions), 3) summarize the contents of the links you chose (double-spacing between your summaries of the two orders), noting briefly interesting similarities or contrasts between the orders as well as points of religiological interest.  
(One page in length)

c) *Sufi Orders in the West,* Dr. Godlas’ website:  
[http://www.uga.edu/islam/sufismwest.html](http://www.uga.edu/islam/sufismwest.html)  
Read on this page the sections titled Islamic Sufi Orders, Quasi-Islamic orders, and Non-Islamic Sufi orders.  
For the journal, 1) pick one order from TWO of the THREE categories, 2) read one functional link for each chosen order (except for links to pictures and book descriptions), 3) summarize the
contents of the links you chose (double-spacing between your summaries of the two orders), noting briefly interesting similarities or contrasts between the orders as well as points of religiolog... (One page in length)
Recommended, The Sufi Orders, Arberry, ch. 8, pp. 40-44

Nov. 16 -26 Thanksgiving Break) Finish paper.

**Week 15** Nov. 27-Nov. 29 Sufi Poetry
*MDI "The Elaboration of these theories…” from ch. 6, pp. 282-286.
MDI, "Ibn al-Farid, Mystical Poet [in Arabic]." from ch. 6, pp. 274-279.
*MDI, "Khwaja Mir Dard" (Urdu and Persian literature), from ch. 8. pp. 373-383
1) Readings in Rumi, Song of the Reed, pt. 1, 2, and 3.
http://www.dar-al-masnavi.org/n-I-0001.html
http://www.dar-al-masnavi.org/n-I-0004.html
http://www.dar-al-masnavi.org/n-I-0019.html
2) Readings in Yunus Emre
*3) Readings in Hafez
http://www.hafizonlove.com/divan/01/001.htm
http://www.hafizonlove.com/divan/01/002.htm
http://www.hafizonlove.com/divan/01/003.htm
(REC, The Persian Poets, ch. 10, Arberry, pp. 51-57)

**Final Exam: Thurs., Dec. 6, 3:30 - 6:30 pm**

**Cell Phone Policy:** Please refrain from using cell phone during class. This means turning off your cell phone when you come into the classroom. If I notice that you are speaking or texting on a cell phone during class, I may confiscate your phone.

**Honesty Policy**
The UGA Academic Honesty Policy will be followed. In other words, all academic work must meet the standards contained in "A Culture of Honesty.” Students are responsible for informing themselves about those standards before performing any academic work. The link to more detailed information about academic honesty can be found at http://www.uga.edu/ovpi/honesty/acadhon.htm. Do not talk to anyone during an exam except for a TA or Dr. Godlas, otherwise you might be suspected of violating the honesty policy.

**Disclaimer**
Any material in any format, whether written, audio or video and which we will be exposed to in the class does not necessarily reflect the instructor’s opinion or belief. The materials that will be used are SOLELY for educational purposes.

**The Americans with Disabilities Act**
Students with disabilities needing accommodations such as special test arrangements, note taking, taped textbooks, tutoring; equipment, etc. please contact your instructor and/or the Disability Resource Center in the College Center room 230, 706-957-4646.
Changes to this Syllabus
The instructor reserves the right to make any changes to this syllabus. The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; changes may be necessary but will be announced and posted on ELearning Commons.