CAS/GRS New Course Proposal Form

This form is to be used when proposing a new CAS or GRS course.

This form should be submitted to Senior Academic Administrator Peter Law (617-353-7243) as a PDF file to pgl@bu.edu. For further information or assistance, contact Associate Dean Joseph Bizup (617-353-2409; jbizup@bu.edu) about CAS courses or Associate Dean Jeffrey Hughes (617-353-2690; hughes@bu.edu) about GRS courses.

DEPARTMENT OR PROGRAM: WLL

COURSE NUMBER: CAS LZ 470

COURSE TITLE: TOPICS IN PERSIAN LITERATURE AND CULTURE

INSTRUCTOR(S): SUNIL SHARMA

TO BE FIRST OFFERED: Sem./Year: FALL 2018

SHORT TITLE: The “short title” appears in the course inventory, on the Link University Class Schedule, and on student transcripts and must be 15 characters maximum including spaces. It should be as clear as possible.

P E R S I A N

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This is the description that appears in the CAS and/or GRS Bulletin and The Link. It is the first guide that students have as to what the course is about. The description can contain no more than 40 words.

May be taken multiple times for credit as topics change. Readings and assignments in English; readings also available in Persian. Topic for Fall 2018: Persian Autobiography.

PREREQUISITES: Indicate “None” or list all elements of the prerequisites, clearly indicating “AND” or “OR” where appropriate. Here are three examples: “Junior standing or CAS ZN300 or consent of instructor”; “CAS ZN108 and CAS ZN203 and CAS PQ206; or consent of instructor”; “For SED students only.”

1. State the prerequisites:

   None

2. Explain the need for these prerequisites:

CREDITS: (check one)

☐ Half course: 2 credits
☐ Variable: Please describe.
Full course: 4 credits  ☐ Other: Please describe.

Provide a rationale for this number of credits, bearing in mind that for a CAS or GRS course to carry 4 credits, 1) it must normally be scheduled to meet at least 150 minutes/week, AND 2) combined instruction and assignments, as detailed in the attached course syllabus, must anticipate at least 12 total hours/week of student effort to achieve course objectives.

This is a reading-intensive course in which students will read five book-length autobiographies and substantial selections from other works. Substantial coursework takes place outside the class meeting time.

DIVISIONAL STUDIES CREDIT: Is this course intended to fulfill Divisional Studies requirements?

□ No.

☒ Yes. If yes, please indicate which division ______________________ and explain why the course should qualify for Divisional Studies credit. Refer to criteria listed here and specify whether this course is intended for “short” or “expanded” divisional list.

HOW FREQUENTLY WILL THE COURSE BE OFFERED?

□ Every semester  □ Once a year, fall  □ Once a year, spring  □ Every other year  

☒ Other: Once a year, fall or spring

NEED FOR THE COURSE: Explain the need for the course and its intended impact. How will it strengthen your overall curriculum? Will it be required or fulfill a requirement for degrees/majors/minors offered by your department/program or for degrees in other departments/school/colleges? Which students are most likely to be served by this course? How will it contribute to program learning outcomes for those students? If you see the course as being of “possible” or “likely” interest to students in other departments/program, please consult directly with colleagues in that unit. (You must attach appropriate cognate comments using cognate comment form if this course is intended to serve students in specific other programs. See FURTHER INFORMATION below about cognate comment.)

A “Topics” course will allow the Persian program to try out different course offerings as the program grows and to contribute to the Persian Cultural Studies minor, the Muslim Cultures minor, and the MENA major. The flexible “Topics” rubric will help accommodate the preferences of different instructors and cohorts of students. The sample syllabus included here, on Persian autobiography is expected to appeal to students of Iranian heritage as well as students studying various world literary traditions.

ENROLLMENT: How many undergraduate and/or graduate students do you expect to enroll in the initial offering of this course?
10 students

CROSS-LISTING: Is this course to be cross-listed or taught with another course? If so, specify. Chairs/directors of all cross-listing units must co-sign this proposal on the signature line below.

No

OVERLAP:

1. Are there courses in the UIS Course Inventory (CC00) with the same number and/or title as this course?
   - X No.
   - Yes. If yes, any active course(s) with the same number or title as the proposed course will be phased out upon approval of this proposal.
   - NOTE: A course number cannot be reused if a different course by that number has been offered in the past five years.

2. Relationship to other courses in your program or others: Is there any significant overlap between this course and others offered by your department/program or by others? (You must attach appropriate cognate comments using cognate comment form if this course might be perceived as overlapping with courses in another department/program. See FURTHER INFORMATION below.)

   No

FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT: What, if any, are the new or special facilities or equipment needs of the course (e.g., laboratory, library, instructional technology, consumables)? Are currently available facilities, equipment, and other resources adequate for the proposed course? (NOTE: Approval of proposed course does not imply commitment to new resources to support the course on the part of CAS.)

No new or special facilities will be needed.

STAFFING: How will the staffing of this course, in terms of faculty and, where relevant, teaching fellows, affect staffing support for other courses? For example, are there other courses that will not be taught as often as now? Is the staffing of this course the result of recent or expected expansion of faculty? (NOTE: Approval of proposed course does not imply commitment to new resources to support the course on the part of CAS.)

The course will be rotated between Professor Sharma and Dr Sassan Tabatabai (Senior Lecturer).

BUDGET AND COST: What, if any, are the other new budgetary needs or implications related to the start-up or continued offering of this course? If start-up or continuation of the course will entail costs not already
discussed, identify them and how you expect to cover them. (NOTE: Approval of proposed course does not imply commitment to new resources to support the course on the part of CAS.)

None

EXTERNAL PROGRAMS: If this course is being offered at an external program/campus, please provide a brief description of that program and attach a CV for the proposed instructor.

FURTHER INFORMATION THAT MUST BE ATTACHED IN ORDER FOR THIS PROPOSAL TO BE CONSIDERED:

- A complete week-by-week SYLLABUS with student learning objectives, readings, and assignments that reflects the specifications of the course described in this proposal; that is, appropriate level, credits, etc. (See guidelines on "Writing a Syllabus" on the Center for Teaching & Learning website.) Be sure that syllabus includes your expectations for academic honesty, with URL for pertinent undergraduate or GRS academic conduct code(s).

- Cognate comment from chairs or directors of relevant departments and/or programs. Use the form here under “Curriculum Review & Modification.” You can consult with Joseph Bizup (CAS) or Jeffrey Hughes (GRS) to determine which departments or programs inside and outside of CAS would be appropriate.

DEPARTMENT CONTACT NAME AND POSITION: Sunil Sharma

DEPARTMENT CONTACT EMAIL AND PHONE: sharma@bu.edu; 8-6253

DEPARTMENT APPROVAL:

Department Chair

Date 4/24/17

Other Department Chair(s) (for cross-listed courses) Date
Course Description

In this course, we will study the emergence and development of the Persian autobiography in its literary, historical, and social contexts from premodern times to contemporary Iran. The distinct features of Persian literary and cultural traditions in the larger world of Islam and early modern Persianate sphere, rise of the modern nations of Iran (and Afghanistan and Tajikistan), participation of women in the literary culture, and various political transformations, have all informed the shaping of the Persian autobiography. The intersection of autobiography with other genres such as memoirs, travelogues, and novels will also be studied. Lectures will introduce various theoretical and methodological approaches to the study of autobiographical works in world literature.

Course Objectives

1) Gain familiarity with literary genres pertaining to self-writing in the classical and modern Persian tradition.
2) Read and discuss autobiographical writings as literary works.
3) Analyze the texts in their literary, cultural, historical, and political contexts.

Required Texts


*Abbas Milani, Tale of Two Cities* (Washington: Mage, 2006).


*Required for purchase (available at BU’s Barnes & Noble Bookstore). All other readings will be available on Blackboard.*

Grades will be based on:

- Prepared and thoughtful participation (20%). If you are absent or unprepared more than 2 or more class meetings, you will not be able to earn above a B in the course.
- Paper 1: 2-page response paper (10%)
- Paper 2: 3-page analytical paper (20%)
- In class midterm (20%)
- Final research paper, 8-10 pages (30%)

The response paper will require you to comment on the narrative technique employed by an author, paying attention to how much the author reveals about themselves versus the world they live in. The analytical paper will take this further and do a close reading of a section of a work, paying particular attention to how the author narrates their story in terms of language, imagery, and genre. The midterm exam will cover methodological questions on the genre of
autobiography based on the readings done until that point.

The final paper assignment will require you to choose an autobiography from a non-Persian tradition and compare it with a Persian work from the class readings (e.g., two works by premodern authors, women, literary or political figures). You will contrast the techniques of self-fashioning by the authors and discuss the cultural factors behind them. Class presentations should be 15 minutes in length. If appropriate, please include visuals in your presentation. The paper must include primary and secondary sources.

**Academic Conduct Code**

All your contributions to this course must be your own original work. You are expected to be familiar with the Academic Conduct Code’s contents and to abide by its provisions. The Academic Conduct Code is available at: ([http://www.bu.edu/academics/cas/policies/academic-conduct/](http://www.bu.edu/academics/cas/policies/academic-conduct/)).

**Recommended Readings**

*Many Ways of Speaking about the Self: Middle Eastern Ego-documents in Arabic, Persian and Turkish (14th-20th Century)*, Ralf Elger and Yavuz Köse, eds. (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz Verlag, 2010).


**Schedule of Readings**  
(subject to modification)

**Week 1 (September 5): Introduction, the genre of autobiography in its classical context**  
Reading: “Life of a Philosopher,” translated by A. J. Arberry, 17-106 (Blackboard)

**Week 2 (September 12): Premodern Travelogue as Autobiography**  
Reading: Nasir Khusraw, *Book of Travels* (Blackboard)  
Paper 1 due: response paper on reading

**Week 3 (September 19): Persianate Voices from Mughal India**  

**Week 4 (September 26): A Slave’s Narrative**
Week 5 (October 3): Nineteenth-Century Women Writers
Readings: Bibi Khanum Astarabadi, The Vices of Men (Blackboard); Taj al-Saltana, Crowning Anguish (Memoirs) (Blackboard)

Week 6 (October 10)
IN-CLASS MIDTERM (essay questions)

Week 7 (October 17): Central Asian Voices
Readings: Sadriddin Aini, The Sands of Oxus; Abu’l-Qasim Lahuti, “About Myself” (Blackboard)

Week 8 (October 24): The First Modern Writer’s Autobiography
Reading: Muhammad ‘Ali Jamalzadah, Isfahan is Half the World.

Week 9 (October 31): Before the Islamic Revolution
Reading: Abbas Milani, Tale of Two Cities.
Paper 2 due: analytical paper on one of the modern works

Week 10 (November 7): Living in the Islamic Republic of Iran

Week 11 (November 14): Living in the Islamic Republic of Iran

Week 12 (November 21): THANKSGIVING
NO CLASS

Week 13 (November 28): Iranians in the West
Reading: Firoozeh Dumas, Funny in Farsi.
Due: Proposal for final project (one paragraph summary)

Week 14 (December 5): Autobiographical films
Mohsen Makhmalbaf, A Moment of Innocence (1996); Marjane Satrapi, Persepolis (2007) (viewing of clips in class and discussion)

Week 15 (December 12)
Class reports on final papers
FINAL PAPERS DUE