

MIDDLE EAST/SOUTH ASIAN STUDIES (MSA)

College of Letters & Science

MSA 002Y – World Coffee Cultures (3 units)

Course Description: Coffee cultural traditions and practices from around the world. Historical perspectives and analysis of future trends. Corresponding experiments testing distinct cultural influences on the sensory qualities and nutritional aspects of coffee beverages.

Learning Activities: Web Virtual Lecture 1 hour(s), Discussion/Laboratory 1 hour(s), Project.

Cross Listing: ECH 002Y.

Grade Mode: Letter.

General Education: Arts & Humanities (AH) or Science & Engineering (SE); World Cultures (WC).

MSA 092 – Internship (1-12 units)

Course Description: Supervised internship on and off campus in the area of Middle East & South Asia Studies.

Prerequisite(s): Consent of instructor.

Learning Activities: Internship 3-36 hour(s).

Repeat Credit: May be repeated 12 unit(s).

Grade Mode: Pass/No Pass only.

MSA 098 – Directed Group Study (1-5 units)

Course Description: Directed group study.

Learning Activities: Variable 3-15 hour(s).

Repeat Credit: May be repeated.

Grade Mode: Pass/No Pass only.

MSA 099 – Special Study for Undergraduates (1-5 units)

Course Description: Special study for undergraduates.

Prerequisite(s): Consent of instructor.

Learning Activities: Variable 3-15 hour(s).

Repeat Credit: May be repeated.

Grade Mode: Pass/No Pass only.

MSA 100 – Middle East & South Asia: Comparative Perspectives (4 units)

Course Description: Ethnographic and historical points of intersection and divergence in various aspects of the Middle East and South Asia in precolonial, colonial, and postcolonial societies. Anthropological, historical, and theoretical debates surrounding the region.

Learning Activities: Lecture 3 hour(s), Extensive Writing.

Grade Mode: Letter.

General Education: Arts & Humanities (AH) or Social Sciences (SS); World Cultures (WC); Writing Experience (WE).

MSA 111A – Great Cities of Arab Middle East & South Asia (4 units)

Course Description: In-depth examination of the great cities of North Africa, the Middle East and South Asia as cultural and historical artifacts. Topics include: the concept of the Islamic city, processes of modernity, and representations that reinforce imagination, memory and personal identity.

Prerequisite(s): Consent of instructor; some knowledge of Islamic/Middle Eastern history is very useful.

Learning Activities: Lecture 3 hour(s), Extensive Writing.

Grade Mode: Letter.

General Education: Arts & Humanities (AH) or Social Sciences (SS); World Cultures (WC); Writing Experience (WE).

MSA 112 – History of South Asian Islam (4 units)

Course Description: Comparative study of Muslim communities of South Asia. Commonalities in cultural identity and historical experience. Rise and spread of Islam, comparative history of Islamic Empires, colonial rule, and post-colonial nationalism.

Learning Activities: Lecture 3 hour(s), Discussion 1 hour(s).

Grade Mode: Letter.

MSA 115B – Global South Asia Diaspora (4 units)

Course Description: The migration of the diverse peoples from South Asia (including India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Nepal, and Sri Lanka) around the world from 1800 to the present.

Learning Activities: Lecture/Discussion 3 hour(s).

Grade Mode: Letter.

General Education: Arts & Humanities (AH) or Social Sciences (SS); World Cultures (WC); Writing Experience (WE).

MSA 116B – Global Punjabi Diaspora (4 units)

Course Description: Migration of the diverse peoples from the Punjab region of present-day India and Pakistan around the world from 1850 to the present.

Learning Activities: Seminar 3 hour(s).

Grade Mode: Letter.

General Education: Arts & Humanities (AH) or Social Sciences (SS); Domestic Diversity (DD); Writing Experience (WE).

MSA 121A – Shahnameh: The Persian Book of Kings (4 units)

Course Description: In-depth analysis of the Persian Book of Kings (Shahnameh) by Abu al-Qasim Ferdowsi (d. 1020 CE) in its historical context with a comparative perspective on the role of this work in Persian and world literature.

Learning Activities: Lecture/Discussion 3 hour(s), Term Paper.

Cross Listing: COM 175.

Grade Mode: Letter.

General Education: Arts & Humanities (AH); World Cultures (WC); Writing Experience (WE).

MSA 121C – A Story for a Life: The Arabian Nights (4 units)

Course Description: In-depth exploration of The Arabian Nights, the best-known work of pre-modern Arabic literature and a major work of world literature. Analysis of the work in its historical context and in comparison to other frame tales in world literature.

Learning Activities: Lecture/Discussion 3 hour(s), Term Paper.

Cross Listing: COM 172, ARB 140.

Grade Mode: Letter.

General Education: Arts & Humanities (AH); World Cultures (WC); Writing Experience (WE).

MSA 122A – Themes in the Arabic Novel (4 units)

Course Description: Select modern Arabic fiction (novels and short stories) in translation. Thematically connected readings supplemented by non-fictional writings when appropriate.

Learning Activities: Lecture/Discussion 3 hour(s), Independent Study, Extensive Writing.

Enrollment Restriction(s): Limited to 30 students.

Repeat Credit: May be repeated 2 time(s) when texts/theme of required course readings sufficiently change.

Grade Mode: Letter.

General Education: Arts & Humanities (AH); Oral Skills (OL); World Cultures (WC); Writing Experience (WE).

MSA 131A – Modern Iranian Cinema (4 units)

Course Description: Iranian cinema of the 20th century in the context of profound cultural and social changes in Iran especially since the Iranian Revolution. Productions by representative directors such as Kiarostami, Makhmalbaf, Bahram Beizaie are included. Knowledge of Persian not required.

Prerequisite(s): Upper division standing, or consent of instructor.

Learning Activities: Lecture/Discussion 3 hour(s), Film Viewing 3 hour(s).

Cross Listing: CTS 146A.

Grade Mode: Letter.

General Education: Arts & Humanities (AH); Oral Skills (OL); Visual Literacy (VL); World Cultures (WC); Writing Experience (WE).

MSA 131B – Modern South Asia Cinema (4 units)

Course Description: South Asian cinema of last 100 years in the context of cultural, social, and political changes. South Asian history, Independence, Partition, urban life, class, migration, postcolonial identity, diaspora, gender, sexuality, religion, sport, performance, etc.

Prerequisite(s): Upper division standing or consent of instructor.

Learning Activities: Lecture/Discussion 3 hour(s), Film Viewing 3 hour(s).

Cross Listing: CTS 146B, ANT 147.

Grade Mode: Letter.

General Education: Arts & Humanities (AH) or Social Sciences (SS); Visual Literacy (VL); World Cultures (WC); Writing Experience (WE).

MSA 131C – Religion & Media in Arab World (4 units)

Course Description: Exploration of the role and experience of media technologies in the Arab world. Study of digital and electronic media as well as alternative media practices. Investigation of new trends in political activism and identity formation.

Learning Activities: Lecture 4 hour(s).

Cross Listing: RST 166.

Grade Mode: Letter.

General Education: Social Sciences (SS); Oral Skills (OL); Visual Literacy (VL); World Cultures (WC); Writing Experience (WE).

MSA 150 – Women & Islamic Discourses (4 units)

This version has ended; see updated course, below.

Course Description: Introduction to the debates/discourses about women and Islam. Transformations in debates/discourses in colonial and postcolonial periods in the Middle East & South Asia. Comparative study of debates/discourses on family, work, law, sexuality, religion, comportment, human rights, feminist and religious movements.

Prerequisite(s): GSW 050; or comparable course.

Learning Activities: Lecture/Discussion 4 hour(s).

Cross Listing: GSW 185.

Grade Mode: Letter.

General Education: Arts & Humanities (AH) or Social Sciences (SS); World Cultures (WC).

MSA 150 – Women & Islamic Discourses (4 units)

Course Description: Introduction to the debates/discourses about women and Islam. Transformations in debates/discourses in colonial and postcolonial periods in the Middle East & South Asia. Comparative study of debates/discourses on family, work, law, sexuality, religion, comportment, human rights, feminist and religious movements.

Prerequisite(s): GSW 050 or GSW 050V; or comparable course.

Learning Activities: Lecture/Discussion 4 hour(s).

Cross Listing: GSW 185.

Grade Mode: Letter.

General Education: Arts & Humanities (AH) or Social Sciences (SS); World Cultures (WC).

This course version is effective from, and including: Spring Quarter 2026.

MSA 151A – Iranian Society & Culture (4 units)

Course Description: In-depth investigation of modern Iranian society and culture. Exploration of structures of Iranian society: family, gender, religion, minorities, economy, politics, and state. Iran's role in the globalizing world, and the role of Iranian diasporas.

Learning Activities: Lecture 2 hour(s), Term Paper, Discussion 1 hour(s).

Grade Mode: Letter.

General Education: Arts & Humanities (AH); Oral Skills (OL); Visual Literacy (VL); World Cultures (WC); Writing Experience (WE).

MSA 180 – Topics in Middle East & South Asian Studies (4 units)

Course Description: Comparative perspective on the Middle East and South Asia. Topics may include: modernity, religious traditions, colonialism, subalternity and social movements, gender and sexuality, history and memory, science and development, ritual and performance, public culture, diasporas.

Learning Activities: Lecture 3 hour(s), Extensive Writing.

Repeat Credit: May be repeated 1 time(s) when topic differs.

Grade Mode: Letter.

General Education: Arts & Humanities (AH) or Social Sciences (SS); World Cultures (WC); Writing Experience (WE).

MSA 181A – Topics in Regional ME/SA Studies (4 units)

Course Description: Iran & Persian topics for students specializing in region-specific Middle East & South Asia Studies.

Learning Activities: Lecture 3 hour(s), Term Paper.

Repeat Credit: May be repeated 3 time(s).

Grade Mode: Letter.

General Education: Arts & Humanities (AH) or Social Sciences (SS); World Cultures (WC); Writing Experience (WE).

MSA 181B – Topics in Regional ME/SA Studies (4 units)

Course Description: Indian/South Asia topics for students specializing in region-specific Middle East & South Asia Studies.

Learning Activities: Lecture 3 hour(s), Term Paper.

Repeat Credit: May be repeated 3 time(s).

Grade Mode: Letter.

General Education: Arts & Humanities (AH) or Social Sciences (SS); World Cultures (WC); Writing Experience (WE).

MSA 181C – Topics in Regional ME/SA Studies: Arab Studies (4 units)

Course Description: Arab Studies topics.

Learning Activities: Lecture 3 hour(s), Term Paper.

Repeat Credit: May be repeated 3 time(s) when topics and themes differs.

Grade Mode: Letter.

General Education: Arts & Humanities (AH) or Social Sciences (SS).

MSA 182A – Undergraduate Seminar in Iranian & Persianate Studies (4 units)

Course Description: Interdisciplinary perspective on one topic in the history and ethnography, literature and culture, religious and philosophical traditions, art and architecture, or media and society in Iranian and Persianate Studies.

Learning Activities: Seminar 3 hour(s).

Repeat Credit: May be repeated 3 time(s) when topic differs.

Grade Mode: Letter.

General Education: Arts & Humanities (AH) or Social Sciences (SS); World Cultures (WC); Writing Experience (WE).

MSA 182B – Undergraduate Seminar in South Asian Studies (4 units)

Course Description: In-depth and interdisciplinary perspective on one topic in the history and ethnography, literature and culture, religious and philosophical traditions, art and architecture, or media and society in South Asian Studies.

Learning Activities: Seminar 3 hour(s).

Repeat Credit: May be repeated 3 time(s) when topic differs.

Grade Mode: Letter.

General Education: Arts & Humanities (AH) or Social Sciences (SS); World Cultures (WC); Writing Experience (WE).

MSA 182C – Undergraduate Proseminar in Middle East/ South Asia: Arab Studies Seminar (4 units)

Course Description: Seminar in Arab Studies topics.

Prerequisite(s): MSA 100 recommended.

Learning Activities: Seminar 3 hour(s), Term Paper.

Enrollment Restriction(s): Limited to 15 students.

Repeat Credit: May be repeated 3 time(s).

Grade Mode: Letter.

General Education: Writing Experience (WE).

MSA 192 – Internship (1-12 units)

Course Description: Supervised internship on and off campus in the area of Middle East & South Asia Studies.

Prerequisite(s): Consent of instructor.

Learning Activities: Internship 3-36 hour(s).

Repeat Credit: May be repeated 12 unit(s).

Grade Mode: Pass/No Pass only.

MSA 194H – Special Study for Honors Students (1-5 units)

Course Description: Independent study of a problem in Middle East/South Asian studies involving the writing of an honors thesis.

Prerequisite(s): Consent of instructor; open only to majors of senior standing who qualify for honors program.

Learning Activities: Variable 3-15 hour(s).

Repeat Credit: May be repeated 12 unit(s).

Grade Mode: Letter.

MSA 198 – Directed Group Study (1-5 units)

Course Description: Directed group study.

Prerequisite(s): Consent of instructor.

Learning Activities: Variable 3-15 hour(s).

Repeat Credit: May be repeated.

Grade Mode: Pass/No Pass only.

MSA 199 – Special Study for Advanced Undergraduates (1-5 units)

Course Description: Special study for advanced undergraduates.

Prerequisite(s): Consent of instructor.

Learning Activities: Variable 3-15 hour(s).

Repeat Credit: May be repeated.

Grade Mode: Pass/No Pass only.

MSA 298 – Group Study (1-5 units)

Course Description: Group Study.

Prerequisite(s): Consent of instructor.

Learning Activities: Variable 1.5-6 hour(s).

Repeat Credit: May be repeated with consent of instructor.

Grade Mode: S/U only.