Persian 404*

* (this is not an error message)

Critical Readings in Modern Persian

Autumn 2019 | TTh 10:30-12:20 PM | Savery Hall 167

Instructor: Aria Fani
Pronoun: او
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Office hours: Tuesday & Thursday 12:30-1:30 PM, or by appointment

Disclaimer: Humor has been used in the writing of this syllabus; beware of cross-contamination with serious pedagogical aims.

Court Materials: Will be provided in print or PDF format throughout the course.

Prerequisite: Completion of Intermediate Persian *or* my consent. Attendance during the first week of class is mandatory.

Course Objectives:

- **Main Pedagogical Objective:**
  - Gaining **familiarity** with registers of contemporary Persian as used mainly in Iran in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.
    - By register, I mean the specific usage of standardized Persian in such diverse contexts as media/news, film, nonfiction, fiction, poetry, and virtual space (blogs, video games, etc).
- **Speaking & Listening**
  - Initiate and maintain **conversation** and discussion of contemporary topics.
  - Develop **listening strategies** for conversations and extended narratives.
  - Cultivate a domain of **vocabulary** that facilitates participation in extended conversation about contemporary topics.
- **Comprehension**
  - **Read, understand and discuss** the main ideas and details of authentic materials. By authentic I am referring to texts composed for (educated) Persian speakers as opposed to textbooks produced for language learners.
- **Write**
  - **Compose** essays in Persian by demonstrating competence in standardized grammar and critical thinking

→ These objectives cover the most basic components of language learning: comprehension through listening and reading, writing, and speaking.

Grading breakdown:	participation	15%
	homework	15%
	journals	10%
	presentations	15%
	quizzes	25%
	final	20%
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	total	100%

A = 99% - 93% | **A-** = 92% - 90% | **B+** = 89% - 87% | **B** = 86% - 83% | **B-** = 82% - 80% | **C+**= 79% - 77%
C = 76% - 73% | **C-** = 72% - 70% | **F** = 69% and below

Participation (15%): In a language course, it is vital that you be there and participate. Office hours may not be used to compensate for absences. If you need accommodation for any personal reason, please talk to me.

- **Punctuality:** being on time to class shows respect & commitment. If you need accommodation, please talk to me. Regular tardiness may result in being marked absent: side effects include but are not limited to low participation grade, cranky instructor, and judgy classmates.

- **Etiquette**: we will adhere to *adab* at all times by being respectful in class, supportive of our peers' inquiries and output, and intellectually vulnerable when discussing culturally and personally sensitive issues. All are welcome in class. By all, I mean whoever may be reading this.

- **Inclusion:** We are a colorful tapestry, like a Persian carpet. All are welcome in class. By all, I mean whoever may be reading this (or to whomever this sentence may be read or translated).

- **Participation**: ask questions, help your peers, voice your interests. *#bethere.*

- **To-catch-a-predator:** I assume any work that bears your name is yours truly. *#integrity*. Seeking help from a tutor or a family member is OK only if they're helping you to polish your grammar and restructure your thoughts. In other words, the composition is by and large your own work.

Presentation (15%): → will provide rubric.

Homework (15%)**:** will collect in class (almost) every time we meet. Late submissions may be corrected but will not receive credit (unless absence was excused prior to student missing class).

Quizzes (30%) and **Final project** (20%)**:** cover what we cover in class. No surprises!

Journal (10%)**:** → will provide rubric.

Final grade is indeed *final*. No *chaaneh-zani* in the bazaar of grades, please. I will subsequently ignore any such emails.

Resources:

- Persian-English dictionaries
- Persian-Persian dictionary
- Persian-language media
- Learning resources online.
- How to pronounce words.

Schedule

(schedule is tentative as everything else in life)

#	Date	Reading	Register	Due
1	Thur., 26 September	- سه شنبه: معارفه. - شعر دو کاج		
2	Tue., 1 October Thur. 3 October	- گرمایش زمین	زبان رسانه	- Diagnostic one-page essay (native speakers four pages)
3	Tue., 8 October Thur. 10 October	TBD	تاریخ	
4	Tue., 15 October Thur. 17 October	- *با عزیز جان در عزیزیه* نوشتهٔ فرخنده آقایی	سفر نامه	

5	Tue., 22 October Thur. 24 October	- «خانه سیاه است» ساختهٔ فروغ فرخزاد - "Capturing the Abject of the Nation in The House is Black," Nasrin Rahimieh	فیلم	- 21st: First round of journals
6	Tue., 29 October Thur. 31 October	TBD	طنز	- presentations
7	Tue., 5 Nov. Thur. 7 Nov.	TBD	زندگی نامه	
8	Tue., 12 Nov. Thur. 14 Nov.	TBD	رمان	
9	Tue., 19 Nov. Thur. 21 Nov.	TBD	شعر	
10	Tue., 26 Nov. Thur. 28 Nov.	TBD		- presentations
Final project to be submitted on Tuesday, December 3 no later than 12 PM (NST)* * Non-stretchable time				

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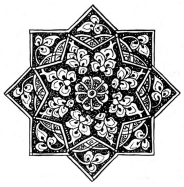


- **What**: You'll speak on two occasions for seven minutes on a topic of interest to you.
- **About**: Topic could be related to class discussions and readings.

- **Criteria:**
  - **Delivery**
    - Your primary goal should be to deliver an organized, well-enunciated, and linguistically accurate presentation in Persian.
    - Make sure not to rely on notes.
      - You shouldn't entirely read your presentation! Rehearse it several times and memorize it in order to deliver your talk.
      - You may have notes or flashcards and look at them from time to time. However, you will get rotten tomatoes if you read your entire presentation off of flashcards and smelly eggs if your notes are written in romanized Persian (my pet peeve!)

→ Native speakers: I expect you to speak at a significantly lower pace so that your peers may better understand you. This may take some training, so make sure to prepare for it.

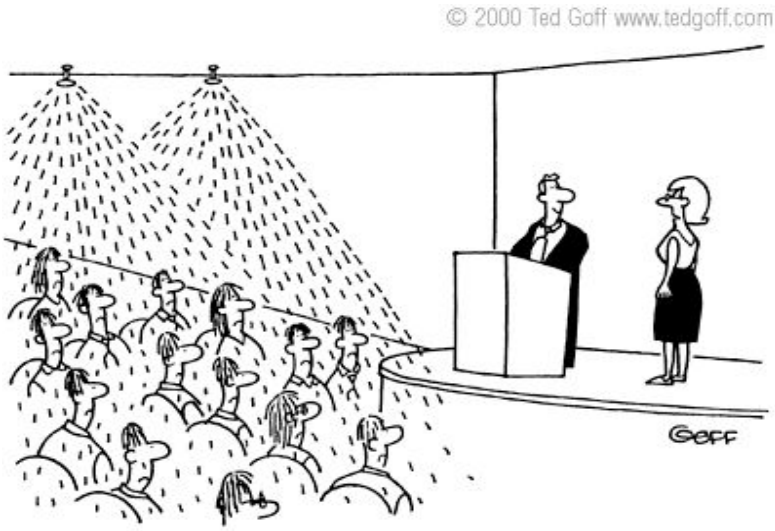
  - **Visual aids**
    - It is suggested, though not required, that you include some form of visual aid. You may use pictures, video clips, PowerPoint, posters, maps, etc. Be creative!
      - If using a video clip, it must not exceed <u>45 seconds</u>. You will need to explain the reason for showing the video.
  - **Time**
    - Time your presentation: it should be no more than 7 minutes long.
  - **Partner**
    - You may work in groups of two. I may assign you a partner.
  - **Topic**
    - Your topic should be coherent, narrow and well researched. At an advanced level, generic and introductory topics are no longer acceptable (un-ok topic examples include: Persian cuisine, Isfahan, the *Shahnameh*, Persian musical instruments, a synopsis of Rustam and Sohrab, etc). Pick a well-defined topic

that you have fun exploring and writing about. If your heart isn't in it, you will most likely not enjoy delivering it.

- **Sample of acceptable topics:**
    - *Noheh* (نوحه) singers (lament songs) under the Pahlavis and the Islamic Republic
    - President Obama's use of Persian poetry in his annual Nowruz addresses
    - Propaganda posters of the Iran-Iraq war
    - Graffiti as social critique in Kabul
    - Iranian newspapers respond to Donald T***'s election
    - Colloquial differences between فارسی and دری.

- **Grammar**
    - Make sure to use the correct verb tenses and words that accurately express your thoughts and intended register. I encourage you to run your topic and draft by your friends and family.
        - That said, you may not borrow their phraseology or ideas wholesale without proper citation. That is not getting help, it is called plagiarism.

- **Recap**: Your presentations constitute 15% of your final grade. Check syllabus for presentation dates.



"You're not allowed to use the sprinkler system to keep your audience awake."

Presentation rubric

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Presenter .....

Preparation (25%) Does the student know hir script? Is ze able to deliver the presentation without reading notes? Does ze have the appropriate background information for the presentation?

.....

Organization (25%) Is the topic focused and relevant? Is there coordination and harmony between different parts of the presentation? Does the topic give coherence to the presentation?

.....

Pronunciation (25%) Could the presentation be understood easily? Was the class able to understand and follow along? Were key words and terms misspoken or used in the wrong context? Is the presentation delivered in a smooth, non-halting manner? Does the presenter stress the appropriate words?

.....

Accuracy (25%) Is the presentation delivered in proper, standard Persian? Are grammatical mistakes a distraction from the ideas that the student attempts to convey? If the presenter deviates from the lines ze was supposed to have prepared are the improvised lines grammatically correct?

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Total grade (100%)

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Journals

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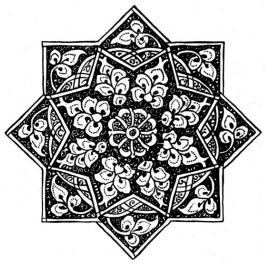

You are required to keep a journal in which you write weekly about a topic.

Why? so that you practice thinking and writing in Persian about complex ideas.

I will grade you:

1. not on grammar and punctuation. * unless I cannot decipher what you mean.
2. not on whether or not I agree or disagree with your observations (even though I'm tempted)
3. on your attempt to express yourself in Persian. I encourage you to find the expressions that most accurately express your thoughts and feelings.
4. on the # of entries: five entries per submission will receive 100%.
    a. I collect journals 3 times a semester. Each time I collect them, I expect five entries (total of 15)
5. submit journals only in a notebook.

- *Recommendations:*

→ Foreign language learners and heritage speakers:

Current affairs, brief book reviews, films (in segments or in entirety), news broadcasts, television shows, folk music, short stories, Persian-language websites and blogs, etc.

→ Native speakers:

You may not just summarize books, films or your daily activities. I expect you to challenge yourself by writing about *why* you find a certain book or film important or relevant.

→ I encourage you to use visualization as long as you comment on what this image/art-work/photograph/etc means to you, and how it relates to the topic you're exploring

in a tweet-shell: a complete journal submission with 5 entries or more will receive 100%. I collect journals three times during the semester as indicated in your syllabus.

Code of conduct: I assume all submitted and delivered works are your own.