

May I be a dog of the streets of Medina,
Indeed, the highest station of every perfect sage.

- Pir Mehr Ali Shah (d.1937)

What's the meaning of Pakistan; *no god but God!*

The minstrel and the music –both have changed
Our sleep has changed, the tale we told has changed
The nightingale now sings a different song
The colour in the cheeks of spring has changed

- Akbar Ilahabadi (d. 1921)

You have heard me sing the praises of English education, because I wanted you to be taught English. Now that you've learnt English to the extent that every good subject of our impress Queen Victoria should, let me now tell you the faults of the English, because everything has its good and bad aspects.

- "Nazir Ahmad's Letter to his Son"

From Taliban to Taj Mahal (& back)

(Windows into Islamic South Asia, its Unity and Diversity, Wonders and Splendors,
Tragedies and Ambiguities, & Memory and Heritage)

REL 379 (Fall 2023) TTH 3:05-4:20 pm (LIB Studio)

WHAT IS IT ABOUT? (Previously Course Description)

This is story of Islamic South Asia from the 16th-20th century Traveling back and forth in these centuries you will listen to the voices of its major actors and observe religious life, thought, and literary and artistic traditions. Reading primary texts constitutes the core practice in our study. Run as a seminar, the study will involve conscientious reading and entail (in order of significance) speaking *from within* texts, speaking *with* them, and speaking *to/about* them as well.

TEXT-GUIDES

(Available at the Bookstore)

Indian Art (Oxford History of Art) 1st Edition

by [Partha Mitter](#) (Author)

From <https://www.amazon.com/Indian-Art-Oxford-History/dp/0192842218/ref=sr_1_1?crid=11J4MY7S4PR01&keywords=indian+art+partha+mitter&qid=1679646329&s=books&prefix=indian+art+partha+mitter%2Cstripbooks%2C87&sr=1-1>

An Introduction to Islamic Medicine Paperback – May 21, 2016

by [Mohammed Salim Khan](#) (Author)

From <https://www.amazon.com/Introduction-Islamic-Medicine-Mohammed-Salim/dp/0992945607/ref=sr_1_1?keywords=introduction+to+islamic+medicine&qid=1679574910&s=books&prefix=introduction+to+Islamic+m%2Cstripbooks%2C91&sr=1-1>

A Tale of Four Dervishes (Penguin Classics) Paperback – August 28, 2007

by [Mir Amman](#) (Author)

From <https://www.amazon.com/Tale-Four-Dervishes-Penguin-Classics/dp/0140455183/ref=sr_1_2?crid=3RN4EX2TGJXNK&keywords=the+four+dervishes&qid=1679072772&s=books&prefix=the+four+dervishes%2Cstripbooks%2C93&sr=1-2>

Advice on the Art of Governance (Mau'izah-i Jahangiri) of Muhammad Baqir Najm-i Sani: An Indo-Islamic Mirror for Princes (SUNY series in Near Eastern Studies)

by [Sajida Sultana Alvi](#) (Translator)

From <https://www.amazon.com/Advice-Governance-Mauizah-i-Jahangiri-Muhammad/dp/0887069185/ref=sr_1_1?crid=22BD5JN9ZWYQ&keywords=advice+on+the+art+of+governance&qid=1679072688&s=books&prefix=advice+on+the+art+of+governance%2Cstripbooks%2C130&sr=1-1>

Sufi Meditation and Contemplation: Timeless Wisdom from Mughal India Paperback – June 15, 2012

by [Scott Kugle](#) (Author), [Editor](#) (Author), [Translator](#) (Author), [Carl Ernst](#) (Author)

From <https://www.amazon.com/Sufi-Meditation-Contemplation-Timeless-Wisdom/dp/0930872908/ref=sr_1_1?crid=3ABZE3DTE851O&keywords=Sufi+Meditation+and+Contemplation&qid=1679116399&s=books&prefix=sufi+meditation+and+contemplation%2Cstripbooks%2C113&sr=1-1>

LEARNING OUTCOMES

INSTRUCTOR'S:

By the end of this course, the participants will have:

1. Been introduced to the unity and diversity of the religious, ethical, aesthetic, literary, social and political realities of Muslim South Asia from 1500 to the present.
2. Comprehended ways in which South Asian Islamic past is remembered and informs its present.
3. Probed and engaged a culture other than one's own.
4. Read and interpreted primary texts from Muslim South Asia.
5. *Walked and conversed* with authors and texts and articulated thoughtful and engaging question(s) and response(s) to what they heard.

YOURS?

NOTE: Most significantly, for those invested in the endeavor our study seeks to make study of Islam in South Asia *relevant, fruitful, enjoyable, and meaningful*.

Disabilities

A student who requires accommodation for a documented disability of any type should see the instructor immediately to discuss modifications to course requirements. "Davidson College values the diversity of its community and is an equal access institution that admits otherwise qualified applicants without regard to disability. The college seeks to accommodate requests for accommodations related to disability that are determined to be reasonable and do not compromise the integrity of a program or curriculum. To make such a request or to begin a conversation about a possible request, please contact Beth Bleil, Director of Academic Access and Disability Resources, in the Center for Teaching and Learning by visiting her office in the E.H. Little Library, by emailing her at bebleil@davidson.edu or by calling 704-894-2129. It is best to submit accommodation requests within the drop/add period; however, requests can be made at any time in the semester. Please keep in mind that accommodations are not retroactive."

Honor and Conscience

The College expects students to fully abide by the Honor Code. The instructor wonders also about the burdens of conscience, and to what extent both intersect (or not).

THE INTELLECTUAL COMMUNITY

Voluntary Visit

Consider visiting any of the mosques in Charlotte. Contact Muslim Students Association (MSA) or South Asian Students Association (SASA) to see if they can facilitate.

The Intellectual Community inside and outside the class

We will speak about this in the class on the first day.

Recommended Reading

If you are intrigued by some conversation in the class, you may ask for a recommended reading to delve a bit deeper. Do clarify what aspect is of particular interest to you.

A Room in View

You are strongly encouraged to contribute to the “a room in view” series.

Meeting with the Instructor

Prof. Syed Rizwan Zamir

Office: Eumenean Hall 104; **Phone:** (704) 894 2950]

Email: rizamir@davidson.edu (On the weekends I tend to keep very low)

You can meet with SRZ:

1. Right after the class meeting (just walk up to me); or
2. During office hours: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70A0A4AA8AD2DA31-office> (signup by noon in the morning of your intended visit); or

INTELLECTUAL PRACTICES (AKA Course Assignments)

Intellectual Contributions, Quality of Study & Presence (includes Storytelling & Poetic Readings)	20%
FOUR-step Collaborative Team Research & Teaching	30%
Weekly Journal-Portfolio [Reflective 90%, Explorative 10%] – 10 Entries in total	20%
Final Exam (Cumulative) – During Exam Week	30%

COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH

STEP I= ARTICULATING THE QUEST(ion)

You will bring FOUR things with you:

1. Two artefacts (texts included)
2. The question and the topic.
3. The quest/intent=What do you intend to know & why/stakes in the question?
4. What do you need from me?

DUE DATE: Oct 13 in class [Do update the Google Doc with this information]

STEP II=ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Key & relevant *primary texts* and *scholarly studies* on the subject/theme/question must be consulted and studied. You will continue to build this annotated bibliography until the project is finished.

DUE DATE: OCT 20 – sign up for the date for your TEAM-Teaching Session

STEP III= TEACHING A SESSION (SIGN UP ON GOOGLE DOC BY ...[TBA])

A 50-minute Teaching session followed by Q&A and feedforward from the instructor.

You will assign readings and homework and will be *teaching* (not presenting)

See guidelines here: <https://rizwanzamir.net/re-search/>

STEP IV= Your Supreme Court Ruling OR Fatwa (to be delivered through Moodle)

Write a SUPREME COURT RULING (e.g., Shah Bano Case) OR A FATWA (e.g., Fatwa translated by Khalid Masud). See Metcalf, *Islam in South Asia in Practice* text for templates.

DUE DATE: NOV 30

NOTES:

Since they complement each other, work on Steps I & II simultaneously. For Step I & II, see guidelines here: <https://rizwanzamir.net/research-ing/> These guidelines are written more generally but offer the 'spirit' of the exercise. USE THE LIBRARY COURSE GUIDE: <https://davidson.libguides.com/rel379>. If you experience hurdles, consult the librarians. Every team will provide a short note from a librarian that research and sources were discussed.

BREAKDOWN OF THE 30% GRADE:

STEPS I & II = 10%

STEP III = 10%

STEP IV & Research= 10%

JOURNAL-PORTFOLIO

There will be a **total of 10 entries**. [Electronic or Notebook? Handwritten or Typed? TBD]

- The **9 reflective entries** will be written at the end of a week. Engage with the texts and conversation we had in the class. The length will be between **100-250 words**.
- The **1 explorative entry** involves research on some theme from the week and to be to be written after the week's readings and discussion are over (**250-500 words**)

PROMPTS FOR THE ENTRIES AFTER FALL BREAK

NOTE: *The other FIVE entries will be of your choice and must be completed by Fall break. The other entries may relate to your collaborative team research. ONE must be explorative and research-based – i.e., goes beyond the texts and content of the course.*

1. Choose a text (or part of a text) and write an **Interpretive Reflection (IR)** on it.
2. What have we learned about “religion or Islam as a religion” in South Asia? Use texts to illustrate your broader conclusion(s)
3. Are there themes in Muslim South Asia that run across art, literature, spirituality, and medicine? If so, what do you make of these overlaps and concurrences? What conclusion can be drawn from this pattern? If not, then what do we say about lack of concurrence(s)?
4. Does familiarity to, and knowledge and study of Muslim South Asia matter? What could it contribute to Davidson College's curriculum and to the intellectual and lived experience of its students? Show and (not just) tell; make a case for your answer.
5. **FINAL ENTRY:** In 250-word post both in your journal portfolio (and copied on the Google Doc) tell us your **THREE takeaways** from the study. You are speaking to your teammates as your audience). This entry will provide your recap, highlights, and reflection on your study. Put in an effort to *show (and not just tell)* your three takeaways.

GUIDELINES for Journal-Portfolio, Research, Storytelling, Asking Questions etc.

See <https://rizwanzamir.net/re-search/> & <https://rizwanzamir.net/reflective/>