I. DESCRIPTION
This course is a historical and comparative introduction to Islamic philosophy (al-falsafa). The purpose of the course is to track the career of philosophy in the Islamic world and to examine its main challenges and transformations. We are also interested in the relevance of Islamic Philosophy for the tradition of philosophy in the West.

The objectives of this course are: (i) to investigate the meaning of philosophy and what constitutes a philosophical tradition, (ii) to examine the relation between religion and philosophy in the Islamic context, (iii) to examine the significance of philosophical writing and interpretation, (iv) to describe and distinguish the positions of a variety of Islamic philosophers, (v) to explore the role of philosophical disputation as an engine of intellectual progress, (vi) to recognize the significance of historical events on philosophical ideas, and (vii) to systematically explore the reverberations of various forms of Islamic philosophy in the West.

II. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES
Upon successful completion of this course, the student is expected to:
1. Understand key features, themes, and issues of Islamic philosophy.
2. To know and distinguish different Islamic philosophical traditions and schools.
3. Have experience reading key texts of prominent Islamic philosophers.

III. TEXTS
-McGinnis and Reisman, Classical Arabic Philosophy: An Anthology of Sources.
-Azadpur, Reason Unbound: On Spiritual Practice in Islamic Peripatetic Philosophy.
-The rest of the material for the course is available on iLearn.

IV. REQUIREMENTS
Class attendance and participation are required and count for 10% of the grade. There will also be an in-class midterm and a final take-home essay test. These requirements will constitute 50% and 40% of the final grade respectively. There will also be an optional essay assignment to improve your grade. I will discuss that in class after the midterm.
V. TEACHING ASSISTANTS

The names and the availability of the teaching assistants will be announced in the first class and on iLearn.

VI. PLAGIARISM

All work submitted for the course must be your own. Plagiarism will result in disciplinary action. For more details see: http://www.sfsu.edu/~collhum/plagiarism.html.

VII. SCHEDULE

The class has an ambitious schedule of readings. Each student will be responsible for having read the primary texts before the class period. The secondary texts are for personal edification, but if they are used in class discussions, then you are responsible for them. The documents from Classical Arabic Philosophy and Reason Unbound have an asterisk next to them. This schedule is subject to revision.

A. INTRODUCTION

1. January 28, 30: Ancient Philosophy and its Spread to the East

B. PHILOSOPHY vs. PHILOSOPHICAL ISLAM

2. February 4, 6: Razi’s Account of the Philosophical Life
   Primary Text: Razi’s Book of Philosophical Life.*
   Secondary Text: Goodman’s “The Epicurean Ethic of Muhammad ibn Zakariya Ar-Razi.”

3. February 11: Razi vs. Ismai’lis
   Primary Text: Selections from Stroumsa’s Freethinkers of Medieval Islam and from Abu Hatim Razi’s The Proofs of Prophecy.
   Secondary Text: Corbin on Shi’ism and Islamic philosophy.

4. February 13, 18, 20: Ismai’ili Neoplatonism
   Primary Text: Selections from Nasir Khusrav’s Knowledge & Liberation.
   Secondary Text: Azadpur’s “Nasir Khusraw and the Poetics of Enlightenment.”

C. ISLAMIC PERIPATETICISM

5. February 25, 27: Peripateticism as a Way of Life
   Primary Text: Excerpt from the Metaphysics of The Cure, Bk. X.
   Secondary Text: Azadpur’s “Avicenna on Philosophical Felicity,” pp. 53-60.*

6. March 4, 6, 11: Avicenna on the Soul, the intellect and the Necessary Being

7. March 13, 18: Avicenna’s Reconciliation of Philosophy and Religion
   Primary Text: Ibn Sina’s “On the Proof of Prophecies and the Interpretation of the Prophet’s Symbols and Metaphors,” Avicenna’s Introduction to the Logic of Easterners and Ibn Tufayl on Avicenna’s Eastern Philosophy.
D.  ISLAMIC SKEPTICS AND THEIR WESTERN COUNTERPARTS

8. March 20, April 1, 3: Ghazali’s Skepticism: On the Limits of Reason
   Primary Text: Ghazali’s Deliverance from Error.

March 25, 27: No Class. Spring Recess

April 8: Review
April 10: Midterm Exam.

9. April 15, 17: Skepticism and Prophecy after Ghazali
   In the East
   Primary Text: Selections from Ibn Khaldun’s Muqadima.
   In the West
   Primary Text: Popkin’s “Philosophy and Skepticism in the Sixteenth and the Seventeenth Century.”

E.  THE PERIPATETIC REPLY TO SKEPTICISM

10. April 22, 24: Ibn Rushd’s Reply to Al-Ghazali

F. PERIPATETICISM IN THE WEST

11. April 29, May 1, 6: Jewish and Christian Peripatetics
    Secondary Text: Altmann’s “Maimonides and Thomas Aquinas: Natural or Divine Prophecy.”

G. LATER ISLAMIC PHILOSOPHY

13. May 8, 13, 15: An Islamic Philosophical Response to “Modernism”
    Primary Text: Nasr’s “Who is Man?”

May 15: Final Prompt SUBMITTED to students.
May 23: Final DUE, by noon.