

# Islamic Philosophy

PHIL 450W/550  
Spring 2020  
MW 3:00–4:15

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**A**N INTRODUCTION to major philosophers from the classical period of Islamic thought through their own writings. We will give special attention, as did they, to the relation between philosophy and prophecy and that between philosophy and theology, to divine and natural causality, and to the nature and destiny of the soul.

This course fulfills the Faith & Reason Theme Area requirement for undergraduates, and the medieval requirement for graduate students.

## PREREQUISITE

Basic Philosophical Questions and some knowledge of Greek thought (Plato and Aristotle especially), whether from PHIL 300 or from another source. If in doubt, consult with me before registering.

## READINGS

- al-Kindī, *On First Philosophy* (preface, on foreign learning), *The One True and Complete Agent and the Incomplete Metaphorical “Agent”* (on divine and natural causes), and *On the Means of Dispelling Sorrows*
- pseudo-Aristotle, *Exposition of Pure Goodness* (a monotheistic reworking of a polytheistic text)
- al-Rāzī, *The Philosopher’s Way of Life*
- al-Fārābī, *Commentary on the Treatise of Zeno, the Great Man of Greece* and the introduction to *Harmonization of the Two Opinions of the Two Sages: Plato the Divine and Aristotle* (on everything from prophetology to the nature of the afterlife)
- Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna), *Book of Definitions* and *The Cure: The Soul* (selections)
- al-Ġazālī, *Incoherence of the Philosophers* (prefaces and §17, attacking natural science)
- Ibn Rušd (Averroës), *Incoherence of the Incoherence* (§17, defending natural science); *Decisive Treatise* (status of philosophy in Islamic law)
- Ibn Bajja (Avempace), *Conjunction of the Intellect with Man* (on the fulfillment of human life)