

Persian Language & Literature at UCSB

Newsletter for the Academic Year 2017-2018

"This was the first year in which we offered two sets of Persian language classes: the regular classes and the intensive classes at the same time. Regular classes were offered for students with no background in Persian language. Students with some background in the language, along with Persian heritage students, were enrolled in the intensive Persian language courses. Fortunately, there was an almost unexpected, overwhelming interest in both sets of courses. This successful outcome can be best explained by the separation of regular and intensive classes followed by the program's cultural events designed to increased visibility."

-Dr. Aazam Feiz

In line with the previous modifications, Dr. Feiz created two more Persian courses: RGST 157G (Persian Cinema) and RGST 157I (Persian Media). Persian Cinema was created to supplement the language-learning courses and was offered in Spring 2017. The creation of this course was based upon the need and the interests of the students. For this reason, we had an extremely positive turnout with over 30 students enrolled. Persian media is also designed and created for language-learners. This course is the study of authentic Persian news, reports, songs, and short movies through a variety of media sources such as print, journals, TV, and the internet. This course will improve the students' reading and their ability to critically analyze media sources. Persian Media will be offered in Winter 2019.



Aazam Feiz, Ph.D

Lecturer of Persian Language & Literature

Key Changes

- Offering** both regular and intensive language courses
- Creation** of Persian Media and Persian Cinema courses
- GE Approval** of Intensive Persian Language Courses for Area B (Language)
- GE Approval** of Persian Cinema for Area F (Arts) & World Cultures

Courses Offered 2017-2018

Three year Persian language classes for students with no background in Persian.

1st year (RGST 57A, RGST 57B, RGST 57C)

2nd year (RGST 57D, RGST 57E, RGST 57F)

3rd year (RGST 157A)

Two year intensive Persian Language classes for students with some background in Persian:

1st year (RGST 58A, RGST 58B, RGST 58C)

Supplementary Persian Courses Offered:

Contemporary Persian Literature (RGST 157CP)

Persian Cinema (RGST 157G)

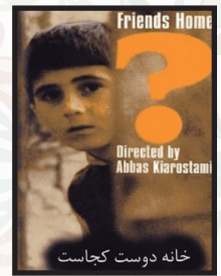


Materials for the new courses...

This year was the first year that Intensive Persian Language courses were offered. Persian, as a less commonly learned language (LCTL) does not have standardized textbooks. Since heritage students require specific teaching methods and materials, Prof. Feiz spent a considerable amount of time preparing materials for all three intensive offered language classes. Students received the materials weekly at no extra cost.

About Persian Cinema (RGST 157G)

This new course introduces students to Iranian movies as a means of understanding different aspects of the diverse culture in the society of Iran and abroad. The course seeks to familiarize students whose understanding of Persian is at Intermediate or Advanced level. Students increased their comprehension and speaking of the colloquial language and learned to exercise an enhanced facility in the language. In the class, we watched and discussed a variety of movies that represent the social, political, economic, and cultural circumstances of Iran and Persian speaking Afghans. Along the way, we will explore issues pertaining to gender, religion, women, children, education, ethnicity, and the role of cinema in depicting the issues of the society. Films to be discussed were directed by internationally acclaimed filmmakers, such as Abbas Kiarostami, Ashghar Farhadi, Jafar Panahi, Bahram Beyzai, and Majid Majidi among others. This course fulfills GE requirements: Area F (Arts) and Special Subject Area (World Culture). Although this was the first time the course was offered, there was tremendous interest with 34 students enrolled.



Student Opinions on the New Courses

The need for separate classes was an urgent one, as it is not simply the addition of a class; it affects the quality of our education and allows for more one on one time with the professor.

– Romteen Borhani

“Separate classes has benefitted Persian language learners by allowing students at different levels to learn as their respective paces.”

– Shirin Enayati

“This class has genuinely felt like home to me because I am so comfortable and engaged in class it makes the learning experience that much more rewarding and beneficial. I can now recite poems with my Uncle and read my Mom’s Farsi cookbook all on my own.

– Ashley Amell

“The professor Aazam is so caring, educated, and she truly makes the classroom the most effective and fun learning environment.”

– Yasna Mehrabani

Gaining Visibility...

Persian lecturers and students promoted and advertised for the program and its new classes at various events like the Middle East Bazaar.

Persian language courses
 Persian Language and Literature at UCSB offer two sets of Persian language courses:
 1) Regular Persian language courses:
 Three-year Persian Language classes for those students with no background in Persian language:
 • 1st year (RGST 157A, RGST 157B, RGST 157C)
 • 2nd year (RGST 157D, RGST 157E, RGST 157F)
 • 3rd year (RGST 157G, RGST 157H, RGST 157I)
 2) Intensive Persian language courses:
 Two-year intensive Persian language classes for those students with some background in Persian language (e.g. heritage students):
 • 1st year (RGST 158A, RGST 158B, RGST 158C)
 • 2nd year (RGST 158D, RGST 158E, RGST 158F)
Other Courses
 • Contemporary Persian Literature (RGST 159CE)
 • Classic Persian Literature (RGST 159PE)
 • Persian Cinema (RGST 157G)
 • Persian Media (RGST 157D)
Iranian Studies Minors
 Persian language courses can also be a major in Iranian Studies. There are two options:
 • Option 1: One year of Persian language classes plus 7 classes required.
 • Option 2: Two years of Persian language classes plus 6 classes required.



Persian Outreach 2017-2018

Persian Cooking Classes

Each quarter, Professor Feiz hosted a Persian cooking class in the Multicultural Center's kitchen. Students helped cook an authentic Persian meal. The cooking class taught students about the world famous cuisine of Iran as well as teaching them how to cook an easy and delicious dinner for themselves.

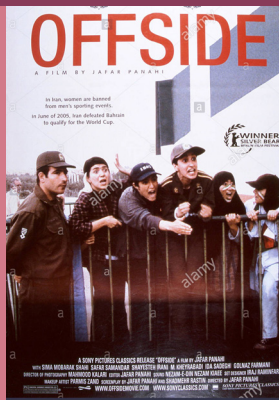


Persian Movie Night

The Persian Language and Lit program hosted the following three film screenings that worked to reveal aspects of the Persian culture and the Iranian lifestyle. These films exposed students to colloquial Farsi and portrays the Persian culture's take on love, gender relations, family values, traditions, social classes and more.



The Salesman (2016)
Oscar Winner
Cannes Festival Winner



Offside (2006)
Berlin Film Festival Winner



The Song of Sparrows (2009)
International Film Festival
Award Winner (6+)

Tea & Culture

Just like most quarters, the Persian Language and Literature program hosted an evening of Tea & Culture packed full of information about Persian Language, some aspects of Iranian culture, and our current courses offered here at UCSB.



Persian Social Night

This year, we created a new event known as the Persian social which is held at the eighth week of each quarter. During this event, Persian language students present their term projects based upon an aspect of Persian culture. The participants enjoyed a pot luck after.

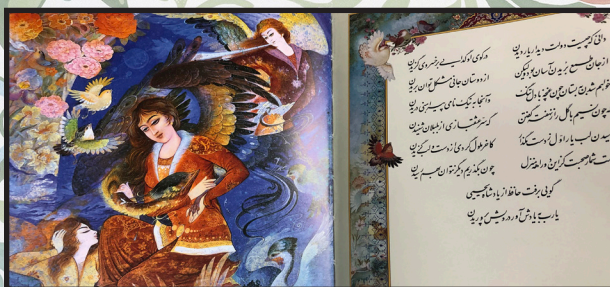
Inviting other UCSB students to the event and opening it up to a multicultural community allows for more visibility.



Yalda Night



Yalda is an Iranian festival celebrated on the longest night of the year: the night of the Northern Hemisphere's winter solstice which usually falls on the night of December 20 or 21 in the Gregorian calendar. It's celebrated in Iran, Azerbaijan, Afghanistan, Kurdistan, Tajikistan, and Turkey. It's one of the holiest nights in Old Persia and remains an official day in the Persian Empire Calendar. It is supposed to be the longest night of the year to celebrate the coming of longer lighter days. Yalda night is the celebration of the sun overcoming darkness. Friends and family usually commune together on this night and eat foods and fruits, read poetry, dance and play music. Two things that Yalda always include are watermelon and pomegranate. The red in these fruits symbolizes the crimson hues of dawn and the glow of life.



The Persian New Year

The Persian Language and Literature Program celebrated Nowruz at UCSB with one celebratory show and two haft-sin exhibitions. The Persian New Year, Nowruz, has been celebrated for over 3000 years. Nowruz serves as a Spring Festival (northward equinox) of Persian origins and it is also the beginning of the Persian New Year. Three hundred million people celebrate worldwide, including people from Iran, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Iraq, India, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kurdistan, Syria, and Turkey.



Nowruz Show

In collaboration with the Persian Student Group, the Persian Language program celebrated the Persian New Year with their regular Persian show on campus. Tickets were open to everyone. This was a great opportunity for all students to learn about the New Year traditions and experience some authentic Persian entertainment including traditional music, recital of Persian poetry, and exotic dance. The show was followed by a dinner reception where the audience could visit the haft-sin exhibition once more.

