

## March 2013 eNewsletter

### News

#### We Need Books and Periodicals!

The Wilmette Institute is assisting the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States in collecting books and periodicals (*World Order*, *Journal of Bahá'í Studies*, *Bahá'í Studies Review*) to donate to a U.S. university library. We need the books and periodicals by the end of March. Click here to see the list and to secure additional information, and to find out where to mail your donation.

[Click here to continue>>](#)

#### Save These Dates!

An updated list of 2013 calls for papers, academic conferences, and webinars.

[Click here to continue>>](#)

### Social Media

#### Facebook and Twitter Discounts

Like us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter. Doing so could get you a discount on your next Wilmette Institute course. We are offering discount codes for 10 or even 20 percent for selected courses via those two social media.

Like us on Facebook 

Follow us on  twitter

Find us on 

#### Work Advances on Bahá'í House of Worship in Chile

A new video highlights the completion of the foundation of the House of Worship in Chile, the beginning of construction of the basement and service tunnel, and other aspects of the work.

View at [http://templo.bahai.cl/noticiario\\_eng.htm](http://templo.bahai.cl/noticiario_eng.htm).

## March - May 2013 Courses

### [The Bahá'í Faith and the Arts](#)

Lead Faculty: [Anne Perry](#)

Faculty: [Sandra Hutchison](#), [Marjan Nirou Saniee](#)

**Duration of course: Seven weeks (March 1 - April 18, 2013)**



In this course on the Bahá'í Faith and the arts (offered a second time because of popular demand), we will explore the purpose of the arts from a Bahá'í perspective; how art and religion have harmonized and conflicted in the past and how the Bahá'í dispensation will be similar to and different from the past; art as a specialized and important form of service to humanity; how the Bahá'í writings encourage artists; reframing imagination, creativity, and risk-taking within a Bahá'í context and prioritizing the positive aspects of creativity to enhance our lives, our communities, the Bahá'í Faith, and the future; and developing a serviceable language about the arts that enables us to integrate the arts more fully into Feasts, Holy Days, core activities, commemorations, and so on and to include more people in art making and appreciation of the arts.

[Course Description](#)   [Fees](#)   [Study Schedule](#)   [Register](#)

### [Understanding Bahá'í History](#)

An important new course for serious students of Bahá'í history

Lead Faculty: [Moojan Momen](#)

Faculty: [Peter Smith](#)

**Duration of course: Seven weeks (March 5 - April 23, 2013)**

## Our Students Speak Up

### A Nevada Group Shares the Joy of Learning More About the Charters of the Faith

A group of Bahá'ís from Reno and Carson City, Nevada, published an account of their enthusiasm about the course **Charters of the Faith** in the *Northern Nevada Bahá'í Historian* newsletter. Click here for the beginning of their article (<http://www.nevadametherd.com/historian/pdf/FEBRUARY-NNBH-2013-FRONT-PAGE-WILMETTE-INSTITUTE.pdf>) and here for the continuation of the article (<http://www.nevadametherd.com/historian/pdf/FEBRUARY-NNBH-2-13-WILMETTE-INSTITUTE-continued-front-pg.pdf>). Be sure to read the entire article to find out how the members of the group are sharing what they learned.

### Course on Archival Practices Draws Budding Archivists from Eight Countries

Four diligent Bahá'ís learning archival principles share their progress in preserving records in their local Bahá'í communities. [Click here to continue>>](#)

## Mark Your Calendar

June 1 - July 19, 2013

[International Development and the Baha'i Faith](#)

June 10 - July 29, 2013

[Social Action and Public Discourse](#)

June 15 - August 3, 2013

[The Baha'i Faith: A Comprehensive Introduction](#)

July 1 - August 18, 2013

[Zoroastrianism for Deepening and Dialogue](#)

-

July 10 - August 28, 2013

[The Art and Science of Baha'i Spirituality, Obligatory Prayer, Meditation, and Fasting](#)

-

July 15 - September 2, 2013

[World Federation: The Time Has Come](#)



This course differs from most courses offered by the Wilmette Institute in that it aims to teach students how to read historical writings critically, rather than to impart knowledge on a given topic. In other words, the course introduces students to the academic study of Bahá'í history, showing them how to read historical accounts critically. Three units will examine motifs of Bahá'í history, breaking through cultural boundaries, and the basics of critical reading. Four additional units use specific accounts (for example, the Báb's childhood and the Danish Bahá'í community) to examine the nature of the evidence an author uses and the arguments presented in an article. The course aims to provide learners with tools that will enable them to read more widely than the standard accounts of Bahá'í history and to be able to assess them using tools used in the course.

[Course Description](#)   [Fees](#)   [Study Schedule](#)   [Register](#)

## How to Study the Bahá'í Writings

Lead Faculty: [Sandra Hutchison](#)

**Duration of course: Seven weeks (March 10 - April 28, 2013)**



**How to Study the Bahá'í Writings** is designed to introduce learners to a systematic method of studying the Bahá'í scriptures by using a number of literary and exegetical tools. In the course we will study selected passages from Bahá'í scripture through four "windows" into the meaning of divine wisdom: Language; Theme;

Structure; and the Work as a Whole. Through learning to read carefully, with attention to literal and figurative language, theme, structure, and the place of the work in the author's writings, we will develop tools for analyzing any Bahá'í text systematically. The course will also examine quickly five other "windows" into the meaning of scripture: the oeuvre (body of works), the biography, the times, the literary tradition, and the world scriptural tradition.

[Course Description](#)   [Fees](#)   [Study Schedule](#)   [Register](#)

## Economics and the Bahá'í Faith

Lead Faculty: [Farhad Rassekh](#)

Faculty: [Shahruz Mohtadi](#), [Hooshmand Badee](#), [Mary Fish](#)

**Duration of course: Seven weeks (March 20 - May 7, 2013)**



In this course we will examine the guiding principles in the Bahá'í authoritative texts that relate to economics and the betterment of society. The Bahá'í Faith does not provide an economic system, but its spiritual and ethical values have much to say about the material aspects of life and the

## August through December 2013 Course Schedule

Below is the Wilmette Institute's course schedule for August through December 2013. Starting dates may change, based on faculty availability.

- 8/15/13  
Kitáb-i-Íqán
- 09/01/13  
Exploring the Qur'án
- 09/10/13  
The Advancement of Women
- 09/20/13  
Sustainable Development and the Prosperity of Humankind
- 10/10/13  
Judaism for Deepening and Dialogue
- 10/21/13  
One Common Faith
- 11/01/13  
The Life of Bahá'u'lláh
- 11/10/13  
Science, Religion, and the Future
- 11/20/13  
Hinduism for Deepening and Dialogue
- 12/01/13  
The Summons of the Lord of Hosts
- 12/15/13  
Bahá'í History 1863-Present

organization of society. We will review the world's economic conditions in the light of writings by Bahá'í and non-Bahá'í experts and consider the moral and ethical implications of Bahá'í teachings for improving such conditions. Topics will include the characteristics of Bahá'í economics; economic justice and the spiritual solution to economic problems; the Bahá'í approach to poverty, market economy, work ethics, globalization, and development and prosperity; and the Bahá'í teachings on wealth redistribution.

[Course Description](#)   [Fees](#)   [Study Schedule](#)   [Register](#)

## [Bahá'u'lláh's Early Mystic Writings](#)

Lead Faculty: [Hossein Ashchi](#)

Faculty: [Susan Maneck](#)

**Duration of course: Seven weeks (April 1 - May 19, 2013)**



In this course on Bahá'u'lláh's early mystic writings we will explore a theme that dominates Bahá'u'lláh's early writings and continues throughout His revelation: the relationship of the individual to spiritual reality--to God, to spiritual truths, to principles of personal development, and to laws of conduct. We will explore Bahá'u'lláh's *Rashh-i-'Amá* and some of His early poetry, *The Four Valleys*, *The Seven Valleys*, *The Hidden Words*, and *the Tablet of the Holy Mariner*. We will also read some Sufi texts that provide historical and literary context for allusions Bahá'u'lláh makes in His writings. We will round out our study with extensive commentaries and study materials by Bahá'ís on Bahá'u'lláh's early mystic writings.

[Course Description](#)   [Fees](#)   [Study Schedule](#)   [Register](#)

## [The Persecution of the Iranian Bahá'í Community](#)

Lead Faculty: [Kavian Milani](#)

Faculty: [Farhad Sabetan](#), [Barney Leith](#)

**Duration of course: Seven weeks (April 15 - June 3, 2013)**



This course will examine the persecution of the Bahá'í community of Iran from 1978 to the present with some reference to earlier periods of repression. It will consider reasons for the persecution, phases in the persecution, documents justifying the persecution, the defense mounted by the Bahá'í International Community, and the responses of governments, nongovernmental organizations, and citizens around the world. It will also set the persecution of the Iranian Bahá'í community in the

larger context of human rights in Iran.

[Course Description](#)   [Fees](#)   [Study Schedule](#)   [Register](#)

---

## Introduction to Shi`ism

Lead Faculty: [Moojan Momen](#)

**Duration of course: Seven weeks (May 1 - June 18, 2013)**



Shoghi Effendi states that the Bahá'í Faith started as "a heterodox and seemingly negligible offshoot of the Shaykhí school of the Ithná-`Ashariyyih sect of Shí`ah Islám" (*God Passes By*, xii). He has also said that Bahá'ís "must strive to obtain, from sources that are authoritative and unbiased, a sound knowledge of the history and tenets of Islam--the source and background of their Faith" (*The Advent of Divine Justice*, 49). This course focuses on Shi`ism, and, especially, on the Ithná-`Ashariyyih (or Twelver) school of Shí`ah Islam. It examines the history of this sect and its distinctive teachings. In particular, it looks at the split into Sunni and Shi`ah in Islamic history, the history and doctrine of the Imamate, the Twelfth Imam, and the developments in Shi`ism that led to the Bábí and Bahá'í Faiths.

[Course Description](#)   [Fees](#)   [Study Schedule](#)   [Register](#)

---

# Climate Change

Lead Faculty: [Christine Muller](#)

Faculty: [Arthur Lyon Dahl](#), [Carole Flood](#), [Karryn Olson-Ramanujan](#), [Melinda Salazar](#)

**Duration of course: Seven weeks (May 5 - June 23, 2013)**



In this course we will study writings and documents that will help us become literate in the science of climate change and to acquire an understanding of how it impacts us today and will continue to impact us in the future. We will also explore ethical questions related to climate change and address them in the context of the spiritual teachings of the world's religions, especially those of the Bahá'í Faith. Other units will help us make enlightened decisions for our lives that are consistent with our spiritual and ethical values. Finally, we will learn to participate in public discourse by being empowered to present spiritual solutions to the climate crisis offered by Bahá'í texts to those who are concerned about this problem. For those interested in a more thorough study of climate change or who are interested in specific aspects of it or in its ethical challenges and spiritual dimensions, the course offers numerous optional resources.

[Course Description](#) [Fees](#) [Study Schedule](#) [Register](#)

---

# Exploring the Tanakh (Christian Old Testament)

Lead Faculty: [Ted Brownstein](#)

Faculty: [Daniel Grolin](#)

**Duration of course: Seven weeks (May 15 - July 3, 2013)**



The Tanakh (called the Old Testament by Christians) is a collection of writings sacred to Jews and Christians. It includes historical accounts, prophetic utterances, sacred stories, poetry, hymns, and a variety of other material. Composed over a two thousand year period by innumerable authors, it was assembled into a single collection after the year 70 C.E. In the second century the emerging Christian community accepted the Tanakh as scripture. In this course we will study the Tanakh's major books (the Pentateuch, the earlier and later prophets, the Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Songs) in the light of progressive revelation and in the historical contexts that they depict. We will also study the remarkable comparisons and contrasts between the Tanakh and Bahá'í scripture, as well as many passages in the Tanakh the meanings of which are unsealed by the Bahá'í revelation. Studying the Tanakh in the light of the Bahá'í writings aims to confirm one's faith and to provide numerous opportunities for sharing the Bahá'í revelation with others.

[Course Description](#) [Fees](#) [Study Schedule](#) [Register](#)

---

## **ABOUT US**

The Wilmette Institute offers quality online courses on the Bahá'í Faith. It is committed to engaging a broad and diverse international community of learners in deep study of the Faith and to fostering love for study of the Faith. The Wilmette Institute was established in January 1995 by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States.

Information from the eNewsletter may be copied or reproduced, provided that the following credit is given: "Reprinted from the eNewsletter of the Wilmette Institute," followed by the issue's date. Recipients are encouraged to forward the eNewsletter to friends. If you have questions, please email us at [info@wilmetteinstitute.org](mailto:info@wilmetteinstitute.org).

---

Wilmette Institute, 1233 Central Street, Evanston, IL, 60201-2886 USA  
Phone 1.877.WILMETTE (1.877.945.6388) - Fax: 1.847.733.3563  
Email: [info@wilmetteinstitute.org](mailto:info@wilmetteinstitute.org)  
Web: <http://wi.bahai.us>

Moodle: [www.wilmetteinstitute.net](http://www.wilmetteinstitute.net)

© 2013 National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States

[www.bahai.us](http://www.bahai.us)