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Epistle to the Son of the Wolf

Faculty: [Christopher Buck](#) and [Necati Alkan](#)

Course Description:

This course will explore Bahá'u'lláh's last major work, a single letter containing His own anthology of His writings that illustrates major themes of His revelation: God as the source of His revelation; Who Bahá'u'lláh is; why He came; proofs of His station; His general teachings; the sufferings He endured; humanity's responses to His revelation; and accounts of martyrs that illustrate the transforming power of the Bahá'í Faith.

Revealed for an enemy of the Bahá'í Faith, Shaykh Muhammad-Taqi (surnamed "Son of the Wolf"), the book warns him about the consequences of his persecution of the Faith. Containing as it does Bahá'u'lláh's quotations from His own revelation, Epistle to the Son of the Wolf provides an excellent summary of themes He considered important to understanding the Bahá'í Faith.

Learning Objectives:

- The contents of the Epistle to the Son of the Wolf;
- Background information about the circumstances of the revelation of Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, the career of its recipient, and his relationship to the Bahá'í Faith;
- The relationship between Epistle to the Son of the Wolf and other works of Bahá'u'lláh revealed before it;
- Information about the cultural and social context of the Middle East in which Epistle to the Son of the Wolf was revealed;
- To demonstrate your understanding through postings in the course, devotionals, special research or artistic projects, or presentations to your friends.

Course Expectations and Guidelines:

This course is divided into one week (or less) sessions beginning with an orientation (Unit 1) and ending with a review and summary (Unit 7). All units include readings, activities, and an online discussion among workshop participants. The course has been structured so that it requires an estimated 5 or 6 hours per week of reading and discussion.

During Unit 1, you will draft a personal learning plan (PLP) to define the goals you have set for yourself by participating in this course. If you are taking the course for credit, one of your goals would naturally be meeting the course expectations for discussions, activities, and a final project. If you are not taking the course for credit, you need to set goals that will help you develop your personal capabilities and will be achievable in and around your other daily tasks.

During Unit 7, you will refer again to your PLP and complete a self-assessment reviewing the extent to which you met the goals you set for yourself. In addition, learners seeking credit from their university will complete their final project (15-20 page research paper or equivalent) and submit it to the lead faculty.

Your instructor will periodically review your progress in the course and be available to discuss things with you. The following guidelines will help you gain maximum benefit from your participation in the course

and will contribute toward a rich and rewarding experience through dialogue with others. We recommend that you consider them when drafting your PLP.

- Complete the readings and activities for each unit. Afterwards, your first posting in the discussion area should make reference to the readings and activities in such a way that your instructor can tell you read the material and engaged in the activities.
- Post at least 2 message replies in the discussion area for each unit/session. Each post should contain substantive comments (i.e., a comment like “oh, that’s interesting” is NOT substantive).
- Choose at least 2 different days each session when you will participate in the discussions. We suggest posting at least once within the first few days of the session, with your second post at least two days before the next session begins. By contributing more than one post on different days, you will help the group develop rich ongoing discussions.
- If you post on time (i.e., within the time period of each unit on the course schedule), others will be able to read and respond to your post.
- Keep a course journal to help you track your ideas as you work on your final project.

In order to be eligible to receive a **Certificate of Completion**, you must participate in a majority of the discussions, as well as complete a majority of available unit activities and the end-of-course self-assessment. Learners taking the course for credit must also complete a final project. Your first discussion posts within each unit should address the discussion topic and demonstrate understanding of the course/unit concepts. Additional postings should provide substantive comments to other participants that are thoughtful, relevant, and help to extend the discussion.

Course Schedule:

Unit 1	Introduction to the Course and to Moodle	Jan. 20-26, 2015
In this unit, you will review the unit topics and dates, learn how to use Moodle (our course management system), set up your user profile, begin developing a personal learning plan, and learn how to post and reply in the discussion forums. Learners seeking university credit through their own university or an external agency will be required to design a personal learning plan to meet external standards, including active and ongoing participation in the course discussion forums, readings, assigned activities, and completion of a 15 to 20 page research paper or a project of equivalent complexity.		
Unit 2	Background and Significance	Jan. 27-Feb. 2
The course uses an extensive compilation of Descriptions and Commentaries with excerpts from the writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Shoghi Effendi, and authors such as Taherzadeh and Balyuzi.		
Unit 3	Epistle, Paragraphs 1-67	Feb. 3-9
The course also uses extensive study guides by Hooper Dunbar and Melanie Smith.		
Unit 4	Epistle, Paragraphs 68-129	Feb. 10-16
All study in the course is keyed to paragraph numbers. An extensive glossary has been scanned from print editions. Links are provided for several online editions, including free e-books and an audio book.		
Unit 5	Epistle, Paragraphs 130-198	Feb. 17-23
Supplemental readings include authors Moojan Momen and Marzieh Gail.		
Unit 6	Epistle, Paragraphs 199-268	Feb. 24-March 2
Local Study Groups are encouraged to enroll as a community of learners from 3 to 6 people, who also meet locally to discuss the book, use the study guides, and to further deepen on the subject. To learn more about Wilmette Institute Local Study Groups, read this page .		
Unit 7	Integration and Application of Learning	March 3-9
In this unit, we discuss the course in general and the relationship of the various topics to each other and review the learning goals set during Unit 1. Those seeking credit will complete their final projects (15-20 page research paper or equivalent) and submit them to the lead faculty.		

Course Project	
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Your Personal Learning Plan (PLP) helps you focus on what you want to learn in the course and on what course project you might be interested in creating. The final project is a course requirement only if you wish to receive credit from an external agency. You will have an opportunity to share your final project with course participants.

The following is a short list of possible ideas for final projects. Learners may propose other ideas as well:

- Submit a research/reflection paper (approximately 15-20 pages including references) on a topic related to the course.
- Create an artistic project related to the course with a written explanation about it.
- Alternative final project formats can be discussed with course instructor.

Certificate of Completion	
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- Learners not taking the course for credit will receive a certificate of completion from the Wilmette Institute after course expectations were met.
- For learners taking the course for credit, the Wilmette Institute will send a transcript to the learner and the external accrediting institution within a month of completion of the course.