



**Director:** Dr. Robert H. Stockman  
**Email:** [WI@usbnc.org](mailto:WI@usbnc.org)

[www.wilmetteinstitute.org](http://www.wilmetteinstitute.org)  
**Voice:** (877)-WILMETTE

## Ministry of Shoghi Effendi

**Faculty:** Barney Leith, Ed DiLiberto

### Course Description:

This course looks at Shoghi Effendi's life from birth to death, showing how he devoted his life to developing, in a variety of ways, themes that continue to help the Bahá'í Faith grow into a worldwide religion. We will look briefly at Shoghi Effendi's childhood and youth (1897–1921) and more thoroughly at his ministry as Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith, a position to which his grandfather 'Abdu'l-Bahá appointed him in His Will and Testament and which he held from 1921 until his death in 1957. The course will look at the many roles Shoghi Effendi filled as he carried out his duties as Guardian in fostering the growth and development of the Bahá'í Faith. These include builder, interpreter, author, and translator.

Shoghi Effendi devoted much of his ministry to building the administrative order outlined by Bahá'u'lláh and elaborated by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in His Will and Testament and to using it as an instrument for fostering the international spread of the Bahá'í Faith called for by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in the Tablets of the Divine Plan. He worked tirelessly to extend and beautify the properties of the Bahá'í World Center in Haifa and Acre, to erect the facade of the Shrine of the Báb, and to prepare a physical home for the center of the administrative order. Shoghi Effendi worked tirelessly to translate many writings of Bahá'u'lláh into English, edit and translate a history of the Bábí period of the Faith, pen thousands of letters clarifying basic Bahá'í teachings, and write the classic history of the first hundred years of the Faith's beginnings. His devotion, self-sacrifice, and suffering are an inspiration to Bahá'ís of all generations. Reading assignments are drawn primarily, though not exclusively, from Ruhíyyih Rabbání's *The Priceless Pearl*.

### Course Goals:

This course will enable participants to:

- Explore the stages of Shoghi Effendi's life, from childhood through university, to becoming the Head of the Bahá'í Faith, and then his accomplishments as Guardian,
- Understand and be able to explain the station of the Guardianship, especially in relationship to the Universal House of Justice,
- Understand the significance of various letters and books he wrote,
- Acquire a deeper devotion to Shoghi Effendi and a dedication to continue His work,
- Gain an appreciation for Bahá'í spiritual practices and a desire to follow them,
- Demonstrate understanding of the course topics through postings in the course, devotionals, special research or artistic projects, or presentations to friends.

### Course Expectations and Guidelines:

This course is divided into one-week sessions beginning with an orientation unit and ending with a unit for review and summary. All units include readings, activities, and an online discussion among workshop participants. The course has been structured so that it typically 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 will naturally be meeting the course expectations for discussions, activities, and a final project. If you are not taking the course for credit, we recommend that you set goals that will help you develop your personal capabilities and will be achievable in and around your other daily tasks.

During the final review unit, 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:

<b>Unit 1</b>	<b>Introduction to the Course and to Moodle</b>	<b>Feb 7 - 10, 2016</b>
<p>In this unit, you will review the unit topics and dates, learn how to use Moodle (our course delivery 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.</p>		
<b>Unit 2</b>	<b>Shoghi Effendi: The Early Years, 1897 -1921</b>	<b>Feb 11 - 17</b>
<p>In this unit, you will learn about the major events (education, travel, work, friendships, etc.) in the life of Shoghi Effendi from his birth in 1897 to the passing of 'Abdu'l-Bahá in November 1921.</p> <p>Participants will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summarize some of the activities and characteristics of Shoghi Effendi's childhood</li> <li>• Analyze the ways in which each of Shoghi Effendi's educational experiences shaped his life</li> <li>• Generate a list of main points of Shoghi Effendi's life that you would cover in a presentation to others</li> </ul>		
<b>Unit 3</b>	<b>Shoghi Effendi: Early Years as the Guardian, 1922 - 1937</b>	<b>Feb 18 - 24</b>
<p>In this unit, you will learn that Shoghi Effendi grieved mightily for the loss of his Grandfather upon learning of His passing. Despite his great grief, from the beginning of his work as the Guardian, Shoghi Effendi had a vision of and for the Bahá'í community throughout the world based on the writings of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá. You will examine some of the projects and activities set in motion by the Guardian to educate and move the Bahá'í community to the status of independent world religion in the 15 years between the start of the Guardianship to the launch of the First Seven Year Plan.</p>		

<p>Participants will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Summarize Shoghi Effendi's immediate reaction to first hearing 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Will and Testament</li> <li>Provide an account of how Shoghi Effendi dealt with the external crises after 'Abdu'l-Bahá's passing</li> <li>Reflect on the ways in which the projects and activities set in motion by the Guardian impacted the growth of the Bahá'í community</li> </ul>		
<b>Unit 4</b>	<b>Shoghi Effendi: Translator, Interpreter, and Author</b>	<b>Feb 25 – Mar 2</b>
<p>In this unit, you will learn how Shoghi Effendi's work as translator, interpreter, expounder and author covered almost the entire span of his life. This unit gives the participants a sample of at least some of Shoghi Effendi's literary work and an opportunity to read some of what others have said regarding his work as translator, interpreter, and author.</p> <p>Participants will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explain Shoghi Effendi's methods for translating and writing</li> <li>Determine the impact which the major works of Shoghi Effendi have had our present understanding of the Faith and of Bahá'í life</li> <li>Analyze the role that Shoghi Effendi's authority as interpreter played in his translations and writings</li> </ul>		
<b>Unit 5</b>	<b>Shoghi Effendi: Master Planner</b>	<b>Mar 3 - 9</b>
<p>In this unit, you will learn that when Shoghi Effendi became the Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith, there were no officially elected National Spiritual Assemblies. He immediately began the process of building the Administrative Order of the Faith. At the same time, he also began to develop the physical structures of the Faith in the areas surrounding Haifa and Akká. You will find out how Shoghi Effendi's planning propelled the little known and numerically insignificant Bahá'í community of the 1920s to recognition as an independent world religion. You will also learn how Shoghi Effendi designed and developed the physical structures around the Shrine of the Báb and the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh.</p> <p>Participants will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>List the names and purposes of each Bahá'í institution which Shoghi Effendi created or developed</li> <li>Summarize the steps and major milestones the Guardian took to develop and beautify the Bahá'í World Centre</li> <li>Construct a list of some of the features which, according to Shoghi Effendi, "set apart the Order identified with the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh from any of the existing systems of human government</li> </ul>		
<b>Unit 6</b>	<b>Shoghi Effendi and the First Epoch: The Prosecution of Abdu'l-Baha's Divine Plan, 1937-1963</b>	<b>Mar 10 - 16</b>
<p>Having laid a foundation that strengthened the faith of the believers and formed strong, unified communities, Shoghi Effendi set in motion plans to give effect to 'Abdu'l-Bahá's "Tablets of the Divine Plan", which were revealed during World War I. Stage by careful stage, these plans led to the emergence of a world-wide and diverse community, with local and national institutions that provided the foundation for the first election of that supreme, world-governing body spoken of by Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the Universal House of Justice. In this unit, you will identify the specific plans given by Shoghi Effendi from 1937 to 1963; list their objectives; and note the victories won.</p> <p>Participants will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Differentiate between the different periods of Shoghi Effendi's ministry, based on the prosecution of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Tablets of the Divine Plan, and the chief achievements of each period</li> <li>Clarify the reasons why Shoghi Effendi collected and recorded the statistics of the growth of the Faith with such care</li> <li>Create a short written piece or draw a diagram showing how Shoghi Effendi systematically developed the Administrative Order from the bottom up.</li> </ul>		
<b>Unit 7</b>	<b>Shoghi Effendi's Passing in 1957 and an Overview of the Guardianship</b>	<b>Mar 17 - 23</b>
<p>Shoghi Effendi's death in London in November 1957 came as a great shock to the Bahá'ís of the world.</p>		

Hundreds gathered with 'Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhhiyah Khanum in the Great North London Cemetery (now the New Southgate Cemetery) to mourn Shoghi Effendi's passing and to attend his funeral. Many were the tributes recognizing the astounding and almost single-handed accomplishments of this "Priceless Pearl" in the 36 years of his ministry. But the legacy that Shoghi Effendi left can never be adequately described. Suffice it to say that the Bahá'í Faith as we know it now is his great bequest to humankind. In this unit, you will review some of these surpassing achievements and reflect on the continuing role of the Guardianship now and in the future.

Participants will be able to:

- Summarize the major achievements of Shoghi Effendi during his lifetime as the Guardian
- Judge the impact of Shoghi Effendi's sudden and unexpected death on the Bahá'í community
- Clarify the role that the Guardianship continues to play in the Bahá'í Faith.

<b>Unit 8</b>	<b>Integration and Application of Learning</b>	<b>Mar 24 - 26</b>
---------------	------------------------------------------------	--------------------

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.

	<b>Course Project</b>	
--	-----------------------	--

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.

	<b>Certificate of Completion</b>	
--	----------------------------------	--

- 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.