USKUDAR UNIVERSITY & INSTITUTE OF INTEGRATED KNOWLEDGE

**GOD'S BEAUTIFUL NAMES: MEANING & RELEVANCE**

SYLLABUS

(3 credits (ECTS 8 credits); 90 mins of class time per weekly lecture for a 14-week, 3+0)

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| **Course description** |  |
| **Course objectives** |  |
| **Prerequisites** | None. |
| **Textbook and readings** | Listed below for each week. |
| **Assessment & evaluation** | Reading reflections (15%) and discussion forum and learned lessons (15%), Attendance and participation (10%), Quizzes (30%), Assignments (30%) |
| **Attendance** | Required through Zoom |
| **Medium of instruction** | English |
| **Instructors** | Dr.Colin Turner and Dr.Mahshid Turner |

**Tentative Course Content**

(May be modified to suit needs)

(During a 14 week-semester, there will be two classes each week. Each class will be 90 mins in total.

Classes start at 16:00 Istanbul Time; 14:00 London Time; 9:00 am New York Time: 21:00 Kuala Lumpur Time)

**Lecture One**

Unit Title: The Universe as a Gallery of Names

Aim: To give students an insight into Said Nursi’s conceptualisation of the universe as a ‘gallery of Divine names and attributes’

Objectives: To acquaint students with the notion of creation as the place in which God is ‘hidden in plain sight’; to understand the names of God as ‘the pillars that hold up the cosmos’; to familiarise students with Said Nursi’s conceptualisation of the creation as a book that is to be read; to understand the importance of the names of God as hermeneutical keys which unlock the meaning of existence.

Reading: *The First Word* ; Chapter One of *The Quran Revealed*

**Lecture Two**

Unit Title: Sacred Heptad: the Seven ‘Essential Names’ of God

Aim:

Objectives:

Reading:

**Lecture Three**

Unit Title: Names of Awesomeness, Names of Beauty: the jamālī/jalālī binary The

Aim:

Objectives:

Reading:

**Lecture Four**

Unit Title: *Is the rose beautiful or is it created beautifully?*

Aim: To acquaint students fully with the Nursian binary of *ma‘nā-i ismī* and *ma‘nā-i ḥarfī* and its role in his ‘theology of the names’

Objectives: To learn to identify the ‘self-referential’ and the ‘Other-indicative’ in writing and in the spoken word; to be able to explain lucidly and in full the nature and significance of the self-referential/Other-indicative binary, and to account for its significance in Nursian thought.

Reading: To be decided

**Lecture Five**

Unit Title: Divine Oneness (aḥadiyya) and Divine Unity (wāḥidiyya)

Aim: To understand the conceptual and practical importance of the two main components of Divine unity, namely *aḥadiyya* (uniqueness) and *wāḥidiyya* (oneness).

Objectives: To locate and identify the unity/unicity binary in various creational settings; to read other Divine names and attributes against the backdrop of the unity/unicity binary.

Reading: Chapter One of *The Quran Revealed*

**Lecture Six**

Unit Title: Adam and the Teaching of the Names: the Divine Trust (amāna)

Aim:

Objectives:

Reading:

**Lecture Seven**

Unit Title: *Commemoration (dhikr) and invocation (du‘ā): a practical approach to the Names of God*

Aim:

Objectives:

Reading: *The Quran Revealed*.

**Lecture Eight**

Unit Title: The Divine Name ‘Most Holy’ (al-Quddūs)

Aim:

Objectives:

Reading:

**Lecture Nine**

Unit Title: The Divine Name ‘All-Just’ (al-‘Adl)

Aim:

Objectives:

Reading:

**Lecture Ten**

Unit Title: The Divine Name ‘Wise Judge’ (al-Ḥakam)

Aim:

Objectives:

Reading:

**Lecture Eleven**

Unit Title: The Divine Name ‘Singular’ (al-Fard)

Aim:

Objectives:

Reading: *The Quran Revealed*.

**Lecture Twelve**

Unit Title: The Divine Name ‘All-Living’ (al-Ḥayy)

Aim:

Objectives:

Reading: *The Quran Revealed*

**Lecture Thirteen**

Unit Title: The Divine Name ‘Self-Subsistent’ (al-Qayyūm)

Aim:

Objectives:

Reading:

**Lecture Fourteen**

Unit Title: The Divine Names as Indications of the Hereafter

Aim: To explore Nursi’s understanding of resurrection and the hereafter

Objectives: To familiarise students with Nursian ‘proofs’ of resurrection and the hereafter; to explore the Nursian contention that the desire for immortality is hardwired in the human psyche; to gain insight into social-scientific understandings of human ‘immortality hunger’.

Reading: *The Tenth Word* ; Chapter Eight of *The Quran Revealed*; Colin Turner, ‘Wealth as an Immortality Symbology in the Quran: A Reconsideration of the māl/amwāl verse’ in *Journal of Quranic Studies*, Vol. 8, No. 2 (2006), pp. 58-83.