

**Farnaz Masumian, M.A.**  
**Curriculum Vitae**  
*(Last Updated: February 2020)*

**EDUCATION**

**Ph.D. Coursework:** 30 hours of Ph.D. coursework, The University of Texas at Austin  
Major: Persian Studies  
Minor: World Religions

*Areas of Study:*

Persian Studies, East Asian Religions, Middle Eastern Religions

**Master of Arts:** The University of Texas at Austin, August 1985

Major: Middle Eastern Studies

Minor: World Religions

*Areas of Study:*

Middle-Eastern Religious & Political Institutions, Eastern & Western Mysticism, East Asian Studies (Buddhism & Hinduism), Muslim Political Thought, and Contemporary Arab Culture

Master's Thesis (Afterlife in World Religions):

Compared eschatological concepts such as Heaven and Hell, Resurrection, Day of Judgment, and Reincarnation, in major world religions (Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Zoroastrianism, Christianity, Islam and the Bahá'í Faith).

**Bachelor of Arts:** The University of Texas at Austin, December 1983.

Major: Oriental and African Languages with specialization in Arabic language

*Areas of Study:*

Composition, Expository Writing, Arabic literature, Arabic Etymology and Syntax, Prose and Poetry, and Philosophy.

**SKILLS AND CREDENTIALS**

*Instructor of meditation and related subjects at various informal settings, such as UT Informal Classes, the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, and the Lifetime Learning Institute of Austin*

*Former volunteer ESL instructor at various locations, such as Lifeworks, Manos de Cristo, and the First United Methodist Church of Austin*

*Former adjunct faculty, University of Texas at Austin: School of Social Work, Lecturer of World Religions*

***Publications:***

- **2019: [The Secrets of True Happiness](#) (with Bijan Masumian, PhD, and Adib Masumian, MA):** This practical and research-oriented book is the result of six years of research on the subject of happiness. Stephen G. Post, PhD, Stony Brook University School of Medicine, best-selling author of *Why Good Things Happen to Good People*, calls this book "the finest book on happiness that [he has] ever read with regard to both content, style, and potential to transform

lives....”

- **2014: [The Divine Art of Meditation](#)**: This interfaith book was published by “George Ronald” of Oxford, England. The book which is the result of almost a decade of research on the subject of meditation, looks at the benefits of meditation, presents various forms of it and offers suggestions for meditational practices.
- **2010: [Story of the Prophets](#)**: Introductory interfaith book ideal for the young. Brief accounts of the lives of key figures in nine religious traditions of the world: Abraham, Zoroaster, Krishna, Moses, Buddha, Jesus, Muhammad, the Báb, and Bahá’u’lláh.
- **2009: [The Handbook of Near-Death Experiences: Thirty Years of Investigation](#)**: Published a chapter (8) titled “Spirituality, World Religions, and NDEs” (Near-Death Experiences) in this book.
- **2005: [Divine Educators \(with Bijan Masumian, PhD\)](#)**: This interfaith book, published by “George Ronald” of Oxford, England focuses on common themes and patterns in the lives of the founders of great religions (Jesus, Moses, Muhammad, Buddha, Zoroaster, etc.).
- **2002: [Life After Death: A Study of the Afterlife in World Religions](#)**: Published by Kalimát Press of the U.S., this work was originally published in 1995 by Oneworld Publications, Inc. of Oxford, England. The book contains afterlife doctrines of seven major world religions (Hinduism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and the Bahá’í Faith). A chapter on reincarnation and transmigration, and two chapters on Near Death Experience (NDE) are also included. Similarities and differences between religious and NDE accounts of afterlife are discussed, too.  
  
This book has been reprinted 3 times so far; translated into several other languages including Russian, Polish, and Indonesian; won first prize in the religion/spirituality category at the 1998 Beijing, China Book Fair; and has been adopted as the religion textbook in at least two U.S. institutions of higher education.
- **2000: [Interfaith Meditation CD](#)** with passages from the scriptures of different world religions and music from Jumelle Productions.

## **PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

***Instructor of meditation and related subjects at various informal settings, such as UT Informal Classes, the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, and the Lifetime Learning Institute of Austin: 2013–Present***

- Teaches ongoing classes on meditation and positive thinking based on her *Divine Art of Meditation* and *The Secrets of True Happiness*, which she co-authored with her husband and son.

***Adjunct Faculty of World Religions at the University of Texas at Austin: 2005–2015***

- Taught a class on World Religions and Social Work at UT Austin, which covers the history, teachings, and principles of Hinduism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism,

Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and the Bahá'í Faith. The last few lectures focus on the concept of the afterlife in these religions, as well as a comparison of the afterlife concepts with NDE accounts.

***Austin Community College (ACC): 1992–2004***

- Taught two classroom sections of "World Religions" at three different campuses of ACC for 12 years.
- Also taught a web-based version of this course via ACC's intranet for 6 years. This was one of the first web-based courses ever offered at ACC.

**CONFERENCES AND WORKSHOPS**

***Art of Meditation for Recovery: Meditation Techniques for a Healthy Mind, Body and Spirit: July 2016***

School of Social Work Professional Development: Full-day workshop on "The Art of Meditation for Recovery"; covered meditation and visualization techniques that can be applied to the treatment of addiction and substance abuse.

***Grand Canyon Bahá'í Conference: December 2015***

- Two-part presentation, "The Divine Art of Meditation"

***International Association of Near-Death Studies Conference (Houston, Texas): October 2006***

- Presented research on "Spirituality, World Religions, and NDEs." Attended by 300 people from around the world and held at the [University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Research Center](#). Research later published as chapter 8 in [The Handbook of Near-Death Experiences: Thirty Years of Investigation](#).

***The University of Texas at Austin: Fall 2006***

- Professional Development Continuing Education: Half-day workshop on "Introduction to World Religions," School of Social Work

***New Mexico State University: Spring 2003***

- Continuing Education: Full Day Seminar on World Religions and Their Eschatologies (Afterlife Teachings)

***The University of Texas at Austin: Spring 2002***

- Professional Development Continuing Education: Half-day workshop on "Introduction to World Religions," School of Social Work

***The University of Texas at Austin: Fall 2001***

- Professional Development Continuing Education: one-day seminar on "World Religions and Their Afterlife Teachings," School of Social Work