



FACULTIES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF TEHRAN IV. FACULTY OF LETTERS AND HUMANITIES

FACULTIES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF TEHRAN

iv. Faculty of Letters and Humanities

The Faculty of Letters and Humanities (Dāneškada-ye adabīyāt wa ‘olūm-e ensānī), originally named the Faculty of Letters, Philosophy, and Educational Sciences (Dāneškada-ye adabīyāt wa falsafa wa ‘olūm-e tarbiātī), was one of the six faculties constituting the University of Tehran when it was founded in Bahman 1313 Š./February 1935. The core curriculum of the faculty consisted initially of literature, philosophy, history, and geography—subjects already taught at the Teachers’ College (Dāneš-sarā-ye ‘ālī; See [EDUCATION xix](#); [xx](#)). At first the faculty was housed in the buildings of the Teachers’ College in Bāḡ-e Negārestān, a park of the Qajar period, near the present Bahārestān Square. In 1958 the institution was moved to a modern building on the main campus of the university.

Administration. The Teachers’ College and the Faculty of Letters, Philosophy and Education were administered jointly until 1942, when the University of



Tehran was granted administrative and fiscal autonomy. In that year the faculty was reorganized as two institutions: Faculty of Sciences (Dāneškada-ye ‘olūm), and Faculty of Letters (Dāneškada-ye adabiyāt). The latter was given overall administrative control of the Teachers’ College. The Teachers’ College became an independent institution in 1955–56. In 1966 the Faculty of Letters was assigned its present name (on these developments see *MDAT* 3/1, 1334 Š./1955, p. 99; *Sāl-nāma-ye Dānešgāh-e Tehran*, Tehran, 1336 Š./1957, p. 88; Ḥ. Maḥbūbī Ardakānī, *Tārīḵ-e taḥawwol-e Dānešgāh-e Tehrān wa mo’assasāt-e ‘ālī-ye āmūzešī dar ‘aṣr-e ʔojasta-ye Pahlavī*, Tehran, 1350 Š./1971, pp. 225-32).

Until 1942, the dean of the faculty was appointed by the Ministry of Education. After that date, when the University of Tehran was given an independent status, deans were elected by the council (*šu@rā*) of each faculty. The first president of the faculty and the Teachers’ College, ‘Isā Ṣadīq, held the post until 1940. His immediate successors were Walī-Allāh Naṣr, who remained in office until 1942 and ‘Alī-Akbar Sīāsī who administered the joint institution from 1942 to 1955. After the separation of the Teachers’ College, he continued as dean of the Faculty of Letters until his resignation in 1963. From that year on, deans were appointed by the president of the university—a system still in force. The appointees who held this office between 1963 and the Revolution of 1979 were Ḍabīḥ-Allāh Ṣafā (1963–68), Sayyed Ḥosayn Naṣr (1968–72), Abu’l-Ḥasan Jalīlī Yazdī (1972–74), Moḥammad-Ḥasan Ganjī (1974–75), and ‘Ezzat-Allāh Negahbān (1975–78).

Initially, the teaching staff of the faculty consisted of scholars who also taught at the Teachers’ College (see *Sāl-nāma-ye Dāneš-sarā-ye ‘ālī* 1313–14 Š./1934–35): Badī‘-al-Zamān Forūzānfar (Persian literature), ‘Alī-Akbar Sīāsī (psychology), Asad-Allāh Bīžan (education), Amīna Pākrawān (history of fine arts, later French), Sayyed Moḥammad Tadayyon (Arabic literature), Reżāzāda Ṣafaq (history and philosophy), ‘Abd-al-Ḥosayn Ṣaybānī (general history), Sayyed Moḥammad-Kāžem ‘Aṣṣār (Islamic philosophy), Mas‘ūd Kayhān (geography), Sa‘īd Nafisī (history of the ancient world), William S. Haas (modern Western philosophy), Jean Hytier (French language and literature), Ġolām-Reżā Rašīd Yāsemī (history of Persia after the Arab conquest), Maḥdī Bayānī (Persian literature), ‘Abd-Allāh Faryār (English), and Loṭf-‘Alī Ṣūratgar (English literature).

Academic programs. 1. Bachelor’s degrees (*līsāns*, from Fr. “licence”; renamed *kār-æenāsī* after the Revolution of 1979): At the beginning, the Faculty and the Teachers’ College offered only three-year bachelor’s programs in four



disciplines: Persian literature, foreign languages, history and geography, philosophy and education (*Majalla-ye ta'lim o tarbiat* 9/4, 1318 Š./1939, pp. 63–64; *Sāl-nāma-ye Dānešgāh-e Tehrān*, 1335–36 Š./1956–1957, p. 882). Archaeology and Arabic literature were added to the bachelor's programs in 1936 and 1959 respectively (*MDAT* 7/2, 1338 Š./1959, p. 96). In 1963 the entire university system underwent significant reforms, adopting a structure similar to the American college system. The academic year was divided into two semesters (*nīm-sāls*), the minimum duration of studies for a bachelor's degree was extended to four years (eight semesters), and departments (*gorūhhā-ye āmūzešī*) were established in every faculty. The Faculty of Letters and Humanities was divided into departments of Persian language and literature, art and archaeology; social sciences, geography, history, philosophy, psychology and education, foreign languages, general linguistics, and ancient languages (i.e., Old Persian, Avestan, and Pahlavi; since 1972, these subjects have been taught only at post-graduate levels). In 1969 the Department of Foreign Languages split into three departments: Arabic language and literature, English language, and other European languages (French, German, Russian, and Italian). In 1972 the Department of Social Sciences became an independent Faculty of Social Sciences and Cooperative Studies (*Dāneškada-ye 'olūm-e ejtemā'ī wa ta'āwon*). After the Revolution of 1979 the Department of Foreign Languages was upgraded to the status of Faculty of Foreign Languages (*Dāneškada-ye zabānhā-ye kārējī*). Presently, the Faculty of Letters and Humanities consists of seven departments: Persian language and literature, general linguistics, ancient languages and cultures, history; geography, psychology, archaeology and art, Arabic literature (*MDAT* 11/2, 1342 Š./1963, p. 250; 12/3–4, 1344 Š./1965, p. 478; 16/4, 1348 Š./1969, p. 679; *Rāhnemā-ye Dānešgāh-e Tehrān*, 1352–53 Š./1973–74, p. 553). Until 1953–54, the only condition for enrollment in the Faculty of Letters and in the Teachers' College was a secondary school diploma and passing a competitive entrance exam (literary section). Holders of secondary school diplomas in the sciences were also admitted after taking a number of specialized courses. Candidates were required to pass an entrance examination in Persian, Arabic, and a European language (*MDAT* 1/2, 1332 Š./1953, p. 131). For many years now, admission to all colleges and universities in Persia has been based on comprehensive general entrance examinations for the whole country (*āzmūn-e sarāsari*).

2. Master's degrees (*fawq-e līsāns*; now renamed *kāršenāsī-e aršad*): The first master's program in the faculty was organized in 1958 in the field of social sciences. In 1962 it was followed by a master's program in psychology and



education. After the university reforms of 1963, many other master's programs were gradually instituted. At present, master's degrees are conferred by all seven departments of the Faculty of Letters and Humanities, each with its own admission criteria. The minimum duration of studies at the master's level is four semesters.

3. Doctoral programs (*dawra-ye doktori*): The doctoral program in Persian language and literature, established in 1937, was the first Ph.D. program offered at the Faculty of Letters. The first successful candidate to obtain a doctorate in Persian literature was Moḥammad Mo'īn (q.v.), whose thesis, supervised by Ebrāhīm Pūr-e Dāwūd, was accepted in 1941 and later published as *Mazdyasnā wa ta'tīr-e ān dar adabīyāt-e fārsī* (Tehran, 1326 Š./1947). At present doctorates are also conferred in philosophy, history, geography, general linguistics, and ancient culture and languages of Persia. Initially, holders of a bachelor's degree in Persian language and literature could continue their studies in the only available doctorate program, on the strength of written recommendations from the Faculty's teaching staff. Since the establishment of master's programs, doctoral candidates in all disciplines are required to hold a master's degree in a relevant field, and to pass written entrance examinations. The minimum duration of studies on the doctoral level is four semesters, which includes the writing of a thesis (*Rāhnemā-ye Dāneškada-ye adabīyāt*, 1339 Š./1960, p. 56).

4. Evening courses for bachelor's degrees: This program began in 1967, with degrees in four fields—Persian literature, English, French, and Arabic. It was discontinued in 1979.

5. Department for Foreign Students (*Bakš-e dānešjūyān-e kārejī*): Established in 1953 under the title of 'Courses in the Language and Culture of Persia for Foreigners,' this department comprised two sections: courses in modern Persian language and courses in Persian literature and culture. Each section granted certificates upon the completion of a course (*MDAT 2/2*, 1333 Š./1954, p. 100). Subsequently, the department was expanded to include a one-year program of introductory courses in Persian language and culture, and a doctorate program which accepted only candidates already holding a bachelor's degree in Persian or a related field. Later the introductory program was transferred to the International Institute of the Persian Language, which teaches Persian to foreign students wishing to enroll at Persian universities. The department offers only graduate programs at M.A and doctorate levels. As of 1991, 337 foreign students had obtained doctoral degrees there.



Graduation system. In order to be granted a bachelor's degree from the Faculty of Letters or the Teachers' College, students at first had to obtain a number of certificates (*šahādat-nāmas*) out of the twenty-three offered by the institution. The number of required certificates depended on the field of study (*Majalla-ye ta'līm o tarbīat* 4/5, 1313 Š./1934, pp. 312-13; 4/7-8, 1313 Š./1934, pp. 475-76). Students who wanted to become qualified secondary-school teachers had to choose three additional courses in educational studies out of the seven courses offered by the Teachers' College. These three courses were considered as equivalent to one *šahādat-nāma* (*Majalla-ye ta'līm o tarbīyat* 6/12, 1315 Š./1935, p. 883). In 1956 the faculty introduced the system of compulsory and elective course units. The full bachelor's curriculum had to be completed in not less than three and no more than six years. Certificates could still be granted for a number of course units with a common subject or related subjects: for instance, the certificate in history of Persian literature comprised nine course units (*MDAT* 3/4, 1335 Š./1946, pp. 91-102). After the reforms of 1963, the course credits (units) system was adopted in all institutions of higher learning. At the Faculty of Letters and Humanities, freshmen were required to take general courses such as Persian, a foreign language, and essay writing (*MDAT* 14/4, 1346 Š./1957, p. 526). After the 1979 Revolution, compulsory courses on the history and teachings of Islam were added to first year curricula.

Affiliated institutions. The Institute of Foreign Languages (*Mo'assasa-ye zabānhā-ye k̄ārejī*) was established in 1956 for teaching modern English, French, Urdu, Arabic, Turkish, etc. (*MDAT* 3/4, 1335 Š./1956). After the Revolution of 1979, it was incorporated into the newly founded Faculty for Foreign Languages (*Dāneškada-ye zabānhā-ye k̄ārejī*).

The Dehḳodā Dictionary Institute (*Mo'assasa-ye loḡat-nāma-ye Dehḳodā*) was established to complete the publication of the *Loḡāt-nāma*, the monumental dictionary begun by 'Alī-Akbar Dehḳodā (q.v.). In 1957, a Parliamentary decree placed this institution and its budget under the administration of the Faculty of Letters (*MDAT* 5/3, 1337 Š./1957, p. 17). Since completing the publication of the remaining fascicles, the institute has been engaged in publishing a new Persian dictionary, the *Loḡat-nāma-ye fārsī*. The first fascicle was published in Tehran in 1361 Š./1982 and several more have appeared subsequently.

The Institute for Social Studies and Research (*Mo'assasa-ye moṭāla'āt wa taḥqīqāt-e ejtemā'ī*) was established in 1958 to promote research in the social sciences in Persia, with Ġolām-Ḥosayn Ṣadiqī as its head and Eḥsān Naraqī as its first director (*MDAT* 5/4, 1337 Š./1958, p. 86). Initially part of the Faculty of



Letters, it expanded into a Faculty of Social Sciences and Cooperative Studies (Dāneškada-ye 'olūm-e ejtemā'ī wa ta'āwon) in 1952.

The Center for the Civilization and Culture of Persia and the Middle East (Markaz-e tamaddon wa farhang-e Īrān wa kāvar-e miāna) was founded in 1958, to promote knowledge of the region and of Persian civilization among non-Persians. The curriculum was taught in English. The center's first director was Ḥāfeẓ Farmānfarmā'īān. The private library of the Farmānfarmā'īān family was donated to the institution (*MDAT* 6/2, 1337 Š./1958, p. 88; 8/2, 1342 Š./1963, p. 74–79). After the Revolution of 1979 the center was dissolved, its library was transferred to the Faculty of Letters and Humanities, and its educational functions were taken over by the Department for Foreign Students.

The Institute of Archaeology (Mo'assasa-ye bāstān-æenāsī) was established in 1959 to continue and complete previous archaeological activities and to undertake new, scientific archaeological investigations in Persia. Its first director was the archaeologist 'Ezzat-Allāh Negahbān (*MDAT* 7/2, 1338 Š./1960, pp. 96–97).

The Institute of Psychology (Mo'assasa-ye ravānšenāsī) developed out of the Department of Psychology and Pedagogy created in 1339 Š./1960 to teach these subjects at the master's level. It was expanded into the Research Institute of Psychology and Educational Sciences (Mo'assasa-ye moṭāla'āt wa taḥqīqāt-e ravān-æenāsī wa 'olūm-e tarbiātī). After the establishment of the Department of Psychology and also of a separate Faculty of Educational Sciences (Dāneškada-ye 'olūm-e tarbiātī) at the University of Tehran, the institute was reorganized, renamed, and devoted exclusively to research in psychology. (*MDAT* 1/3, 1342 Š./1963, pp. 370–71; 1/4, 1342 Š./1963, pp. 476–78).

The Institute of Geography (Mo'assasa-ye joḡrāfiā) was established in 1966 to promote geographical studies about Persia and to coordinate the activities of different university and government institutions engaged in geographical research. Its publications are independent of the serial publications of University of Tehran (*Rāhnemā-ye Dānešgāh-e Tehrān*, 1351 Š./1972, p. 613).

The International Institute of the Persian Language (Mo'assasa-ye bayn al-melalī-e zabān-e fārsī) was created in 1989 for teaching Persian to foreigners, and for preparing teachers of Persian to be sent abroad.



Two other affiliated institutes, the Institute for Studies of Persian Dialects and Literatures (Mo'assasa-ye moṭāla'āt dar zabānhā wa adabiyāt-e fārsī) and the Institute for Historical Studies and Editing of Texts (Mo'assasa-ye moṭāla'āt wa taḥqīqāt-e tārikī), were chartered but not fully implemented or absorbed by other institutes.

Press. The *Majalla-ye Dāneškada-ye adabiyāt wa 'olūm-e ensānī* (formerly *Majalla-ye Dāneškada-ye adabiyāt*) was first issued in Mehr 1332 Š./October 1953. A quarterly journal, it publishes academic articles, book–reviews, and occasional thematic supplements dedicated to various research projects of the faculty's departments (e.g., two supplements devoted to the archaeological finds at Marlik, 1351 Š./1973, 1956 Š./1977).

Library. The collection of the former Central Teachers' Institute formed the nucleus of the library at the Faculty of Letters and Humanities. The earliest available record of its holdings—6,694 volumes—dates back to Esfand 1315 Š./February–March 1937 (*Majalla-ye ta'lim o tarbiyat* 6/12, 1315 Š./1936, p. 884). After the separation of the Teachers' College from the Faculty of Letters in 1955, the common library of both schools was left for the faculty. By April 1995, the library contained 154,525 volumes of books and journals, including important private collections bequeathed to it (see M.-T. Dānešpažūh, *Fehrest-e noskaha-ye kaṭṭī-e ketāb-kāna-ye dāneškada-ye adabiyāt*, 3 vols., Tehran, 1399-44 Š./1960-65).

Laboratories. The departments engaged in teaching modern foreign languages have their own audio–visual equipment. The departments of psychology, linguistics, and geography have specialized laboratories.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

given in the text.