

Fall, 2012, *Philosophies of Asia* 20.02 東洋哲學, 동양철학

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Time: Wed. 6:30



### **I. COURSE DESCRIPTION and OBJECTIVES:**

This course is designed to introduce students to philosophies of Asia through the study of philosophical and religious texts and key concepts of Asian philosophies, and serves to foster interest in philosophy in general and in Eastern philosophies in particular with understanding of the geographical, historical and cultural particularities of Asia. Topics include reality, knowledge, self, right and wrong, non-attachment, the meaning of life, death, and aesthetics. This course examines the history, practices, and basic tenets of philosophies of Asia. Through the comparative study of the classical philosophies of China and India, students will examine such philosophical issues as the nature of reality, the self, knowledge, ethics, society, the good life, and enlightenment in writings associated with Confucius, Lao-tzu, Chuang-tzu, the Hindu sages who composed the Vedas and Upanishads, the Buddha, and others. It also offers students an alternative to Western perspectives. In particular, the course seeks to provide students with a foundational understanding of representative thinkers of the traditional Asian philosophies up to a new philosophical trend of postcolonialism in Asia that inherits deconstructive bias against Enlightenment humanism of Western philosophies.

Instruction will consist of four basic components: (1) assigned readings, (2) lectures/seminars, (3) class discussions, videos, *etc.* (4) Exams. Reading assignments are to be completed before the class period for which they are assigned because lectures/seminars, class discussions and other activities will proceed on the assumption that their contents are known. Instructor's lectures will primarily focus on introducing major themes and concepts of the course, synthesizing of readings, generating and facilitating critical reflection/discussion, and clarifying issues raised by readings rather than summarizing their contents. The course is expected to be highly interactive.

## II. REQUIRED TEXTS:

John M. Koller, *Asian Philosophies* (5<sup>th</sup> Ed.), Pearson Education (2006) ISBN 0-13-195183-1

## RECOMMENDED BOOKS:

*The Upanishads*, trans. and selected by Juan Mascaro (Penguin) Penguin Books;  
Reissue edition (1965)

*The Bhagavad Gita*, (Paperback) Simon Brodbeck (Introduction), Juan Mascaro  
Penguin Books; Revised edition (2003)

Readings in Classical Chinese Philosophy (Paperback) by Philip J. Ivanhoe (Editor),  
Bryan W. Van Norden (Editor) Hackett Pub Co Inc; Reprint edition (2003)

Jea Sophia Oh, *A Postcolonial Theology of Life: Planetarity East and West*,  
Upland: Sopher Press, ISBN: 978-1-935946-01-4

## III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

The course grade will be assigned according to the following formula: Participation: 10% (attendance)+10%(participation in debates)=20%, 2 Exams:40%X2=80% [mid-term and final].

### 1. Class Attendance and Participation (20%):

Regular attendance (10%) and class participation (10%) are required. Attendance at every class is expected and necessary to best benefit the act and art of learning through discussion. Advance notification will be given only when an absence due to medical reasons will result in the student being unable to fulfill academic responsibilities such as presentations and examinations. Irregular attendance will result in the lowering of course grade (One absence will mark 1 negative point). You are responsible for active participation in class at all times. Amongst other things constant active participation in class, and other course related activities, is essential to the recognition of your presence and voice in the course. Anyone unwilling to attend classes regularly, prepare for classes and to participate in the life of the class should seriously consider not taking the class.

### 2. Midterm and Final exams (40%X2=80%):

There will be two exams on dates stated in the class schedule. Study Guides will be given two weeks in advance.

**Use of Inclusive Language:** Without loosing the precision that comes with identifying each person written work in this course will use inclusive language. We will break away from the hegemony of gender and use inclusive language to express the collective identity of the humanity. We will be therefore gender sensitive in this course. We do all in our

power to avoid invisibility. Preparation and the passion to participate in class are excellent strategies to transcend invisibility. Effective use of inclusive language builds community.

#### **IV. COURSE OUTLINE:**

8/29, Course Introduction, Ch1

9/05, Ch2: Vedas and Upanishads, Ch3: The Jain Vision

9/12, Ch10: Self and Reality: Vedanta

9/19, Ch11: Theistic Developments

9/26, no school

10/03, Ch4: Buddhism: The Basic Teachings

10/10, conversion day-no school

10/17, **Mid-term Exam in class**

10/24, Ch 14, Ch 15, Historical Overview and Yin Yang

10/31, Ch16, Confucianism

11/07, Ch17, Development of Confucianism

11/14, Ch 18: Daoism

11/21, Thanksgiving, no class

11/28, Ch20, Chinese Buddhism

12/05, Ch23: Japanese Philosophies

12/12, Film Watching

12/19, **Final Exam in class**