

## Philosophy 215: Asian Philosophy

Winter 2007

Tuesday & Thursday 11:30 - 1:18

PH 1184

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Course Call #:	16148-3			
Class Forum:	groups-beta.google.com/group/asian-philosophy-the-ohio-state-university-wi07			

### Description

This course is intended to (1) present a broad survey of the major ancient philosophical worldviews from India, China, and (to a lesser extent) Japan; (2) acquaint students with a few selected classical texts (*The Upanishads*, *The Bhagavad Gita*, *Confucius' Analects*, the *Mencius*, the *Daodejing*, and the *Zhuangzhi*); (3) introduce key ideas in some major later schools of Asian philosophy such as Samkhya-Yoga, Vedanta, Madhyamika, Yogacara, and Zen Buddhism.

### Aims

Upon successfully completing the course, the student will be able to:

- identify some of the major historical figures among Asian philosophers
- explain the basic ideas of several schools of philosophy from India, China, and Japan
- explain major cultural and philosophical themes in Indian, Chinese, and Japanese philosophy
- identify and avoid common mystifications of Asian philosophies

### Materials

There are four **required** texts:

- *The Upanishads*, translated by Juan Mascaro (Penguin Classics)
- *The Bhagavad Gita*, translated by Juan Mascaro (Penguin Classics)
- Joel Kupperman, *Classic Asian Philosophy: A Guide to the Essential Texts* (Oxford)
- Philip Ivanhoe and Bryan Van Norden (editors), *Readings in Classical Chinese Philosophy* (Seven Bridges)

**Optional** texts, for reading pleasure:

- Sue Hamilton, *Indian Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford)
- Thich Nhat Hanh, *The Miracle of Mindfulness: A Manual on Meditation* (Beacon)
- Benjamin Hoff, *The Tao of Pooh* (Dutton)
- Hyun Höchsmann, *On Philosophy in China* (Wadsworth)
- Chuck Norris, *The Secret Power Within: Zen Solutions to Real Problems* (Broadway)

## Reading and Lecture Schedule

### January 4 - January 18

Studying Asian Philosophies  
Origin of Indian Philosophy  
Introduction to the *Upanishads*  
U: 55-66; 83-85  
Themes in the *Upanishads*  
CAP: 3-21  
U: 99-104  
The Orthodox Schools  
U: 113-132  
The *Bhagavad Gita*  
CAP: 42-57  
BG: all

### January 25 - February 13

Early Indian Buddhism  
CAP: 22-41  
Major Branches of Buddhism  
Confucius  
CAP: 58-75  
CCP: 1-53 (*Analects*)  
Mencius  
CAP: 76-92  
CCP: 111-155 (*Mencius*)

### February 20 - March 8

Laozi  
CAP: 93-112  
CCP: 157-201 (*Daodejing*)  
Zhuangzi  
CAP: 113-129  
CCP: 203-245 (*Zhuangzi*)  
Tiantai and Huayan Buddhism  
Zen (Ch'an) Buddhism  
CAP: 130-148

Abbreviations: U = *Upanishads*  
BG = *Bhagavad Gita*  
CAP = *Classic Asian Philosophy*  
CCP = *Readings in Classical Chinese Philosophy*

## Assessment Schedule



Quiz 1: January 9  
Quiz 2: January 16  
**Midterm 1:** January 23



Journal 1: February 1  
Quiz 3: February 8  
**Midterm 2:** February 15



Journal 2: February 22  
Quiz 4: February 27  
Quiz 5: March 6

**Final and Journal 3:** Wed., March 14, 11:30



## Student Expectations

- Students are expected to abide by the OSU Code of Student Conduct
- Students are expected to carefully read the selections assigned for each lecture.
- Each student bears *sole* responsibility for keeping up with assignments.
  - If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to get the lecture material from a fellow student. Neither the instructor nor the GTAs will respond to student requests to re-present materials that you miss because of absence -- although we are happy to try to further explain any points you hear in class or read in the texts.
- Students are expected to attend class regularly and to arrive at class in a timely fashion.
- Students are expected, and encouraged, to ask questions and share thoughts during lecture, especially if something is not understood or the instructor says something false.
- Students are expected to participate courteously in class discussions, but a lack of participation generally will not harm one's grade.
- Any student who feels that accommodations based on the impact of a disability are required should contact the instructor privately to discuss specific needs. Please contact the Office of Disability Services at 614.292-3307 in Pomerene Hall 150 as well; they will coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

## Assessment

- The instructor reserves the right to augment the final grades of students who consistently demonstrate superior class performance, or to lower the grades of students who consistently demonstrate a dereliction of their work.
- There are **three non-cumulative examinations**, each worth 20% of the final grade.
- There are **five quizzes**, each worth 5% of the final grade.
  - Quizzes cover material from the previous week's lecture and, on occasion, reading assigned for the day of the quiz. They are predominantly multiple choice.
  - Make-up quizzes are available if the student *must* miss class due to illness, an act of God, or an alien abduction. Students should make an effort to inform the instructor that a make-up quiz will be required *before* the quiz is given.
- There are **three journal submissions**, each worth 5% of the final grade.
  - Each entry should consist of a one to two paragraph report on any confusions, insights, outside-of-class discussions, etc associated with the assigned topic.
    - Journal 1: one entry each on *Upanishads*, *Bhagavad Gita*, Buddhism
    - Journal 2: one entry each on Confucianism, Daoism, video
    - Journal 3: one entry each on Tiantai and Huayan, Zen, video
  - Journal submissions must be typed in a legible font and double-spaced.
  - Multiple pages should be bound with staples, paper clips, duct tape, or hair ties.
  - Late submissions are accepted at the instructor's discretion, and subject to penalty.
  - Journals are accepted by email *only* with prior consent of the instructor.
- **Extra credit** is available for postings to the Class Forum that either generate substantive and relevant discussion or contribute to such discussion. Extra credit is awarded at the discretion of the instructor.
- The instructor and GTAs are not responsible for "lost" material. *Retain a copy of all finished and graded work*, in order to resolve grade disputes.

## Miscellany

Philosophy -- and especially Asian philosophy -- is not easy. You must make a serious effort to understand and articulate the material. It helps to take detailed notes and let your mind wander over what you find interesting outside of the classroom. It also helps to explain ideas to people not enrolled in the class. Reviewing at least some portion of your notes once per day is an effective way to avoid becoming overwhelmed by the material.

Although power point slides from the lectures are available online, they are no substitute for taking notes during class. The slides are intended to be a substitute for chalkboard writing. They do not contain all (or even most) of the material for which you are responsible.

If at any time you would like to discuss the issues covered in class or philosophy in general, feel free to visit during office hours or arrange a meeting. The instructor and the GTAs are available to meet with you by appointment.

If at any time you are having problems with the subject matter or the manner of its presentation, *do not hesitate* to bring this to my attention (in person, via email or anonymous note, etc). It is your responsibility to bring any course-related concerns to my attention.

The GTAs are responsible for grading the examinations. So, for example, the GTAs can be especially helpful with questions related to studying for the exams.

I encourage a free and tolerant atmosphere in class. I encourage and expect questions and challenges at appropriate times during class. I welcome visits to my office. *I am here to help you learn.*

*I expressly reserve the right to alter any or all portions of this syllabus, at my sole discretion, at any time, and in any manner.*