Religion 211: Religions of the Eastern World  
Spring 2014  
Campbell Hall A4, Mon & Thurs 11:30am-12:50pm  

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Course Description

This course presents an introductory survey of several major Asian religious cultures: Brahmanism/Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, and Daoism. It emphasizes the close reading, analysis, and discussion of selected primary texts that have played, and continue to play, a prominent role in the history of these traditions. Lectures explore the internal diversity of these religious cultures and their historical and contemporary interplay and expressions in different Asian contexts.

Course Requirements

i) Participation and Attendance (20%)  
Please read closely and reflect on all readings assigned for the day before coming to class, and be prepared to participate actively in classroom discussion. Attendance is mandatory. More than two unexcused absences will result in a 5% reduction per absence in your final grade. Excused absences require a note from Office of the Dean of Students. It is not necessary to email me about
absences or “self-report” your absence via https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/. Your absence will be counted as unexcused unless accompanied by a note.

ii) Quizzes (60%)
There will be three quizzes throughout the semester. Shorter, unannounced pop quizzes over daily readings may also be given from time to time.

iii) Final Paper (20%)
Students will write a final 4-5 page paper for this course, due May 9 at 5pm. We will discuss further guidelines and strategies for this project in class.

To submit: please upload your paper as an attachment in .doc, .docx, .rtf, or .pdf format to the “assignments” folder in Sakai whereupon it will be screened for originality by TurnItIn. Note that you should not need to visit the TurnItIn site and create an account for this purpose, although you may receive an email asking you to do so. Late submissions will not be accepted.

Please prepare all written assignments in 12-pt Times New Roman font and double-spaced US Letter page format.

Course Policies

i) Academic Integrity
Familiarize yourself with Rutgers policies and materials concerning academic integrity and plagiarism at the following sites:
http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu
http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/resources
Cheating and plagiarism are serious offenses. Any student found to have committed or aided the offence of plagiarism will be subject to penalties in accordance with the policies of the University.

ii) Use of electronic equipment
Please turn off all mobile phones, computers, and other electronic devices before class. Points will be deducted from your participation grade if you are found to be using any electronic device during class. If you must use a computer, tablet, or e-reader for electronic readings, please sit in the first two rows of the classroom. Recording devices are not permitted.

iii) Blogging, Twitter, Tumblr, Facebook, etc. and posting course-related content online or in public forums
You may not reproduce or transmit lecture notes, audio, video, or any course-related content online or in any other public forum. Blogging, tweeting, or posting about this class in any public forum requires the prior approval of Dr. Lammerts. Failure to obtain prior approval may constitute a violation of academic integrity as well as copyright policies.

iv) Grading System
A=100-90, B+=89-87, B=86-80, C+=79-77, C=76-70, D=69-65, F=64 and below. Incompletes, i.e., “T” grades, will not be given under normal circumstances.

v) Office hours and appointments
Please send Dr. Lammerts an email if you intend to come to office hours, or if you would like to schedule an appointment to meet at another time.
**Required Texts**


These are available for purchase in the bookstore and on 2-hour reserve in Alexander library.

Additional readings are, or will shortly be, available in PDF format on Sakai > Resources > Readings. Please note that further supplementary texts may be assigned during the semester or presented in-class for discussion.

**Course Outline and Readings**

Jan 23. Introduction

Jan 27. Vedic Ritual and Immortality
““The Hymn of Man” (pp. 29-32), “I Pray to Agni” (p. 99), “This Restless Soma” (p. 121)

Jan 30. Dharma, Class, and Legal Cosmology

Feb 3. Bhagavad-gītā (BhG) I
Miller, *The Bhagavad Gita*, Teachings 1-6

Feb 6. BhG II
Miller, *The Bhagavad Gita*, Teachings 1-6

Feb 10. BhG III
Miller, *The Bhagavad Gita*, Teachings 7-12

Feb 13. BhG IV
Miller, *The Bhagavad Gita*, Teachings 13-18

**Extra Credit 1:** Attend lecture by Jessica Vantine Birkenholtz, University of Illinois, “The Swasthani Goddess Tradition in Nepal.”
Feb 13, 5:00 PM, Alexander Library, Pane Room.
To receive extra credit (equivalent to +3 points on Quiz #1) you must hand in a one-page synopsis of Prof. Birkenholtz’ lecture in class on Feb 17.

Feb 17. The Goddess I
Film: Living Goddess (2008)

Feb 20. Feb 20. The Goddess II
Reading on Nepali Kumars, TBA
Film: Living Goddess (2008)

Feb 24. Quiz #1

Feb 27. What is a Buddha?

Mar 3. Buddha and Dhamma

Mar 6. Jātaka Tales

Mar 10. Heavenly Mansions and Ghost Stories
from Vimānavatthu—
“The Chaste Wife Mansion” (pp. 20-21), “Slave Woman’s Mansion” (pp. 41-43), “Frog-Deva’s Mansion (pp. 102-103), “Alsfood-Giver’s Mansion” (pp. 130-131)
from Petavatthu—
“The Story of Nandā” (pp. 36-37), “The Story of Fraudulent Decisions” and “The Story of Contempt for Relics (pp. 80-83)


Mar 24. Merit-making and the Decline and Renewal of the Dhamma II

Extra Credit 2: Write a two-page biography of Phra Malai. To receive extra credit (equivalent to +3 points on Quiz #2) please hand in your paper in class on Mar 31.

Mar 27. No Class (Dr Lammerts is attending a conference).

Mar 31. Karma, Protection, and Devotion in Medieval Japan
I.8 (pp. 118-119), I.10 (pp. 120-121), I.28 (pp.140-141), II.5 (pp. 164-166), III.23 (pp. 252-253), III.28 (pp. 261-262)

April 3. Quiz #2

April 7. Chinese Religions and Confucianism
Van Norden, *Essential Mengzi*:
1A1 (p. 1), 1A3-1A7 (pp. 2-8), 2A2 -2A7 (pp. 15-21)

April 10. Social Thought and Virtuous Action I
Van Norden, *Essential Mengzi*:
2B8 (pp. 25-26), 2B13 (pp. 27-28), 3B8 (p. 39), 4A9 (pp. 45-46), 4A17 (p. 47), 4A27 (pp. 48-49), 4B26-4B28 (p. 52)

April 14. Social Thought and Virtuous Action II
Van Norden, *Essential Mengzi*:
5A5 (pp. 59-60), 6A1-2 (p. 69), 6A6-6A17 (pp. 71-75), 7A1 (p. 79), 7A15 (p. 80), 7A20-7A23 (p. 81), 7A33 (p. 82), 7B14 (p. 86), 7B31-7B35 (pp. 88-89)

April 17. Early Daoist Literature: *Daode Jing* and *Zhuangzi*
I, II, III, IV, V, X, XVI, XVII, XIX, XXV, XXXIII, XXXVII, XLVIII, L, L I, LVII
“Knowledge Wanders North” (pp. 210-212)

April 21. Deities, Immortals, and Alchemical Transformation
“The Transformations of Laozi” (pp. 71-80), “Ascension” and “‘Gold and Cinnabar’ (Jindan), from *Baopuzi neipian*” (pp. 303-313), “The Administration of Heaven” (pp. 343-350)

April 24. No class (Dr. Lammerts is attending a conference)

April 28. Medieval Chinese Biographies of Transcendents
“The Holy Mother of Dongling” (p. 146), “Feng Gang” (p. 148), “Li Yiqi” (pp. 228-229), “Luang Ba” (pp. 252-254), “Shen Xi” (pp. 256-258)

May 1. Review

May 5. Quiz #3

May 9. Final essay due via Sakai by 5 PM.