Honors 2104-001  
FALL 2020 / Online (asynchronous)

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Class Overview

This course puts the thoughts and values of various Asian traditions into cross-cultural dialogue with those of other Western traditions. It analyzes these modes of thought as expressed through religion, philosophy, literature and art. We will be reading primary sources — both Asian and Western — in translation in order to accomplish the following objectives:

- Explore foundational texts and dialogue with their authors.
- Examine various genres of writing and understand implications of the forms.
- Compare the ideas within the Asian works to those in the Western tradition using background information provided in lectures and suggested readings.

The course was designed to follow a seminar format based heavily on the discussion of readings. Due to the pandemic, I have had to make changes using an online format. The online format will be asynchronous, that is, you will be able to access lecture and other class materials and submit assignments at any time during the week. All such materials and discussions will be made available on CANVAS and you should check it regularly. If you do not have reliable, reasonably fast internet access, please leave a message on my office phone or send me an email as soon as possible so that we can work out accommodations.

I will still be asking every student to express an opinion about the works read and to defend the logic of that opinion. Everyone will be contributing thoughts and questions and commenting on other students’ ideas. I will, in turn, also respond to your comments and questions with my own thoughts. Discuss threads, emails, chat rooms, and so on are considered equivalent to classrooms and student behavior in these areas should conform to the Student Code. I expect discussions to be civil and abusive or disrespectful language or visual materials are not acceptable. I reserve the right to remove inappropriate language and behavior.

Lectures will add links to graphics that will hopefully set conceptual parameters for our discussions. These informational pieces will be posted prior to the discussions of the readings. I will not be coordinating live Zoom sessions for the course except possibly for introductions at the beginning.
One subtext to the selection of readings is that of journeys and migrations, both physical and spiritual. The status of women and gender relations will be another key theme. The status of scientific knowledge and the question of what constitutes piety are also issues we explore.

During the semester, students are expected 1) to gain familiarity with cultures and philosophies different from their own, 2) to comprehend and appreciate those different values on their own terms, 3) to critically engage those ideas and values (as well as one’s own), and thus 4) to hone your skills in assessing sources, analyzing cause and effect, and articulating reasoned arguments in our interactions.

In addition, the student should gain some knowledge of how change over time occurs, how ideas relate to social, political, and economic structures and institutions, and how the different arenas mentioned above relate and interconnect. Hopefully this course provides what is referred to in the growing area of Big Data as **Domain Awareness**. One can have an elegant algorithm or logical syllogism or elaborate and intricate narrative, but without knowing its context and what occurs to ideas in the experiential world, one cannot create a useful program for Big Data. Only **Domain Awareness** allows one to avoid the pitfalls of making a beautiful but useless program.

**Class Organization and Learning Outcomes**

Students’ final grades will be determined by a combination of factors: class participation [submission of questions on each reading, and the quality of contributions to the discussions] (20%); **one short analysis** of the readings [5 pages] (20%); **a series of paragraph assignments** on content presented in lectures (10%); **one graphics assignment** to be submitted on Canvas (20%), and a **final ten-page essay** on a theme of one’s own choosing using the course’s texts to compare Asian and Western perspectives (30%). I have outlined further details of the assignments separately in the course “Read Me.” I will be using a plagiarism detection service in this course for your longer assignments, so please be aware of what constitutes plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct. Please refer to the Student Handbook for this information.

Final course grades are determined on a letter grade scale going from zero to 4.0. (A = 4.0, A- = 3.7, B+ = 3.4, B = 3.0, B- = 2.7, C+ = 2.4, C = 2.0, C- = 1.7. Students do not get credit for a class with grades below a C-.) Essays that present an intelligent, articulate, well-organized argument will get A’s; those with some good ideas but certain problems in the presentation will get B’s; those which are short, superficial, and poorly written will receive C’s or below.

During the semester, then, the student’s skills as a researcher and writer will be honed as well as your quality of critical thought. Discussions will further develop the student’s ability to present well-reasoned perspectives, to critically but respectfully engage alternate viewpoints, and to advance new syntheses.
If for reasons of illness, family emergencies, lack of internet access, national or university service commitments, you will be unable to submit assignments, discussion questions and comments, or papers on schedule, please let me know beforehand to make arrangements for making up the work. (Illness refers to serious maladies that require professional treatment or hospitalization. National service includes things such as military deployment or reserve duty; university service includes things such as intercollegiate sports, debate, or academic conferences.)

The last day to drop classes is September 4th; the last day to withdraw from this class is October 16th. Please check the academic calendar for more information pertaining to dropping and withdrawing from a course. Withdrawing from a course and other matters of registration are the student’s responsibility.

**Required Texts**


*WU Ch’eng-en, Monkey: Journey to the West* (David KHERDIAN, trans.) ISBN: 1590302583

All other readings will be available on CANVAS.
Schedule (subject to change)

Week 1 – Aug. 24-28  Introductions, Themes & Course Precepts
Circular v. Linear Time,
Assignment: Mark the boundary between Asia and
the West (map provided). Explain what makes the
one side Asian and not Western. Is the Middle East
part of Asia? Why or why not?

Week 2 – Aug. 31-Sept. 4  Background on Indus Civilization, Aryan Migration
and Hinduism
Reading: Bhagavad Gita (1-5, 10-11, 14-19)
Assignment: Give your speculation about what the
Indus civilization symbols seen in “Inscriptions” or
“Ten Symbols” [in “Files”] might mean.

Week 3 – Sept. 7-11  Visions of Divinity
Reading: Book of Job (all),
Maimonides on Job* (excerpts)
Assignment: Why do you think Justice is depicted as
a woman in ancient Greece (as Themis or Dike) and
Rome (as Justitia)? Why is she depicted as
blindfolded from the 16th century?

Week 4 – Sept. 14-18  Tragedy & Aesthetics
Readings: Aristotle, Poetics* (excerpts)
Sophocles, “Antigone”*
Assignment: Name a TV show, movie, play, speech or
music event that gave you a cathartic experience and
say why it did.

Week 5 – Sept. 21-25  Gender & Civil Discourse
Readings: “Later Story of Rama,”* “Toy Cart”* (in P.
Lal, Great Sanskrit Plays)
Assignment: Find a picture of a South Asian goddess
and explain the social significance of her powers.

Week 6 – Sept. 28-Oct. 2  Questions of Piety
Reading: Plato, Euthyphro*
5-page essay due

Week 7 – Oct. 5-9  Background on Confucianism and Daoism
Reading: Confucius, The Analects (1, 2, 4, 7-9, 12-17)
Assignment: Go to the Utah Museum of Fine Arts (or
look through UMFA’s web site https://umfa.utah.edu
— Search term “Chinese.”) and choose a piece of
Chinese art and tell me why you like it.
Week 8 – Oct. 12-16
Metaphors and Sciences /
Readings: Lucretius, *On the Nature of Things* (1, 2)
Assignment: The Oath is often summarized as “do no harm.” Cite actual example(s) where doing nothing was harmful to another person.

Week 9 – Oct. 19-23
Reading: *The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Medicine* (excerpts)
Background on Buddhism / Han Yu, “Memorial on the Bone of Buddha” (handout)
Assignment: Identify a Western herbal medicine or cure and the medical condition it corrects.

Week 10 Oct. 26-30
Transitions to Hell & Justice
Reading: “Mulian” (“Transformation Text on Mahamaudgalyayana Rescuing His Mother from the Underworld”)
Assignment: Identify and explain the symbolism of the mudra (hand gesture) of the Buddha in the picture “Sakyamuni’s temptation by Mara” from the Mogao Caves at Dunhuang (China).

Week 11 Nov. 2-6
More Hell, More Justice
Reading: Dante, *Inferno* (excerpts)
Graphics assignment due

Week 12 Nov. 9-13
Forms of Religious Syncretism
Reading: *Monkey: Journey to the West*
Assignment: Describe the difference between pilgrimage and (sightseeing) travel. What shared elements exist between Buddhist, Islamic and Christian pilgrimage?

Week 13 Nov. 16-20
Pilgrimage and Periphery
Readings: Chaucer, “Clerk’s Tale,”
Bocaccio, *Decameron* 10th day, 10th tale
Petrarch’s Letter to Boccaccio (Canvas)
Assignment: Have contagious diseases (such as leprosy, tuberculosis, bubonic plague, etc.) reduced social inequality or increased it? Why or why not?
Week 14  Nov. 23-27  Spirits in the Material World /  
Readings: “Student Yi Climbs the Wall”*  
John Donne, “Holy Sonnets”*  
Assignment: What do these Southern Song period landscapes (see “Files”) tell you about the human journey?

Week 15  Nov. 30-Dec. 4  Rising Merchant Societies  
Readings: “Pearl-Sewn Shirt”*  
“Love Suicides at Amijima”*  
Assignment: Work on your final paper.

Final Essay due  Wednesday, Dec. 9th by 12 Noon.

*indicates readings on Canvas in “Files,” in “Readings” folder.
Some further readings in Asian classics for future reference

The Rig Veda
The Upanishads
Sources of Indian Tradition (Vol. 1)
Mencius (D.C. Lau, trans.)
Chuang Tzu: Basic Writings (Burton Watson, trans.)
Sources of Chinese Tradition (Vol. 1)
Early Korean Literature (David R. McCann, ed.)
The Tale of Genji (Murasaku Shikibu, Edward Seidensticker, trans.) [abridged version]
The Pillow Book (Sei Shongagon, Ivan Morris, trans.)
Bashō, Narrow Road to the Deep North

Some relevant videos with call numbers:

Legacy - [V-Cass CB311 L43 1991]
   India: The Empire of the Spirit [Part 2]
   China: The Mandate of Heaven [Part 3]*
The Long Search - [V-Cass BL80.2 L64 1977]
   Hinduism: 330 Million Gods [#2]
   Buddhism: Footprint of the Buddha [#3]
   Taoism: A Question of Balance [#11]
   Zen Buddhism: Land of the Disappearing Buddha” [#9]
Silk Road - [V-Cass DS793.562 S54 1990]
   “Art Gallery in the Desert”*
The Tale of Genji - [V-Cass PL788.4 G43 T3 1993]*
Double Suicide - Shinoda, Masahiro, dir. [ARC - PN1997 .S468 1988]
RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACCOMMODATIONS

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Statement
The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in the class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Olpin Union Building, 801-581-5020. CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations. All written information in this course can be made available in an alternative format with prior notification to the Center for Disability Services. [http://disability.utah.edu](http://disability.utah.edu)

University Safety Statement
The University of Utah values the safety of all campus community members. To report suspicious activity or to request a courtesy escort, call campus police at 801-585-COPS (801-585-2677). You will receive important emergency alerts and safety messages regarding campus safety via text message. For more information regarding safety and to view available training resources, including helpful videos, visit [safeu.utah.edu](http://safeu.utah.edu).

Addressing Sexual Misconduct
Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender (which includes sexual orientation and gender identity / expression) is a civil rights offense subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, color, religion age, status as a person with a disability, veteran’s status or genetic information. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you are encouraged to report it to the Title IX Coordinator in the Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action, 135 Park Building, 801-581-8365, or the Office of the Dean of Students, 270 Union Building, 801-581-7066. For support and confidential consultation, contact the Center for Student Wellness, SSB 328, 801-581-7776. To report to the police, contact the Department of Public Safety, 801-585-2677 (COPS).

Wellness Statement
Personal concerns such as stress, anxiety, relationship difficulties, depression, cross-cultural differences, etc., can interfere with a student’s ability to succeed and thrive at the University of Utah. For helpful resources contact the Center for Student Wellness - [www.wellness.utah.edu](http://www.wellness.utah.edu) 801-581-7776.

Veterans Center
If you are a student veteran, the U of Utah has a Veterans Support Center located in Room 161 in the Olpin Union Building. Hours: M-F 8-5pm. Please visit their website for more information about what support they offer, a list of ongoing events and links to outside resources: [http://veteranscenter.utah.edu](http://veteranscenter.utah.edu). Please also let me know if you need any additional support in this class for any reason.
LGBT Resource Center
If you are a member of the LGBTQ community, I want you to know that my classroom is a safe zone*. Additionally, please know that the U of Utah has an LGBT Resource Center on campus. They are located in Room 409 in the Oplin Union Building. Hours: M-F 8-5pm. You can visit their website to find more information about the support they can offer, a list of events through the center and links to additional resources: http://lgbt.utah.edu/. Please also let me know if there is any additional support you need in this class.

Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name as well as “Preferred first name” (if previously entered by you in the Student Profile section of your CIS account, which managed can be managed at any time). While CIS refers to this as merely a preference, I will honor you by referring to you with the name and pronoun that feels best for you in class or on assignments. Please advise me of any name or pronoun changes so I can help create a learning environment in which you, your name, and your pronoun are respected. If you need any assistance or support, please reach out to the LGBT Resource Center. https://lgbt.utah.edu/campus/faculty_resources.php

Learners of English as an Additional/Second Language
If you are an English language learner, please be aware of several resources on campus that will support you with your language development and writing. These resources include: the Writing Center (http://writingcenter.utah.edu/); the Writing Program (http://writing-program.utah.edu/); the English Language Institute (http://continue.utah.edu/eli/). Please let me know if there is any additional support you would like to discuss for this class.

Undocumented Student Support Statement
Immigration is a complex phenomenon with broad impact — those who are directly affected by it, as well as those who are indirectly affected by their relationships with family members, friends, and loved ones. If your immigration status presents obstacles to engaging in specific activities or fulfilling specific course criteria, confidential arrangements may be required from the Dream Center. Arrangements with the Dream Center will not jeopardize your student status, your financial aid, or any other part of your residence. The Dream Center offers a wide range of resources to support undocumented students (with and without DACA) as well as students from fixed-status families. To learn more, please contact the Dream Center at 801-213-3697 or visit dream.utah.edu.

Academic Conduct
All students are expected to maintain professional behavior in the classroom setting, according to the Student Code, spelled out in the Student Handbook. Students have specific rights in the classroom as detailed in Article III of the Code. The Code also specifies proscribed conduct (Article XI) that involves cheating on tests, plagiarism, and/or collusion, as well as fraud, theft, etc. Students should read the Code carefully and know they are responsible for the content. According to
Faculty Rules and Regulations, it is the faculty responsibility to enforce responsible classroom behaviors, beginning with verbal warnings and progressing to dismissal from class and a failing grade. Students have the right to appeal such action to the Student Behavior Committee. Faculty must strive in the classroom to maintain a climate conducive to thinking and learning. PPM 8-12.3, B. Students have a right to support and assistance from the University in maintaining a climate conducive to thinking and learning. PPM 8-10, II. Please consult the following website for History’s departmental policies on Academic Misconduct. [http://history.utah.edu/students/misconduct-policy.php](http://history.utah.edu/students/misconduct-policy.php).

**Accommodations Policy**

Some of the readings, lectures, films, or presentations in this course may include material that may conflict with the core beliefs of some students. Please review the syllabus carefully to see if the course is one that you are committed to taking. If you have a concern, please discuss it with me at your earliest convenience. For more information, please consult Section Q of the University of Utah’s Regulations Library, Policy 6-100: Instruction and Evaluation, which appears at: [http://regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-100.php](http://regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-100.php)

**Diversity Statement**

The Department of History recognizes the barriers that have systematically marginalized and excluded people and communities based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual identity, socioeconomic background, age, disability, national origin, and religion. We are committed to fostering equity, diversity, and inclusion, because it is just and because these are essential to a rich academic, intellectual, and cultural environment. Every member of this class must show respect for others. To report a bias incident, please go to: [https://inclusive-excellence.utah.edu/](https://inclusive-excellence.utah.edu/)

This syllabus is not a binding legal contract. It may be modified by the instructor when the student is given reasonable notice of the modification.