



**University of International Business and Economics
International Summer School**

REL 120: Religions of China

Term: May 29 – June 29, 2017

Instructor: Christian Van Gorder

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Class Hours: Monday through Thursday, 120 minutes daily (2,400 minutes in total)

Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1-2PM

Teaching Assistant: TBD

Email: TBD

Discussion session: 2 hours each week

Total Contact Hours: 64 contact hours (45 minutes each, 48 hours in total)

Credit: 4 units

Course Description

This course provides an introduction to the religions of China. Our goal is to gain, as far as is possible, a participant's appreciation of what is cherished by adherents. After an introduction describing the methods, history, and controversies in the academic field of religious studies, we will examine – through a phenomenological lens - the rituals, ceremonies, teachings, beliefs and worldview assumptions of adherents of Traditional Chinese Religions, Taoism, Confucianism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Issues of how religions have affected the historical/cultural development of China will be discussed.

Course Goals

The goals of the course are to aid students in gaining a deeper appreciation of the ways that religions have affected the development of Chinese culture throughout history. Another goal is to provide students with an accurate historical, creedal and experiential introduction to the worldview assumptions and religious experiences of adherents of various traditions. In addition to a sense of basic “literacy” of terms and major historical events and personages in the development of these traditions, students will also be encouraged to reflect on the positive and negative influences of religious faith in Chinese history.

Required Text - (Bring required texts when discussed)

- ✧ Armstrong, Karen *Buddha*. New York: Penguin Books, 2004.
- ✧ Ching, Julia. *Chinese Religions*, Toronto: McMillan Publishers, 2009.
- ✧ Cleary, Thomas. *Essential Confucius (Analects and I Ching)*, New York: Bantam, 2002.



- ◇ Cleary, Thomas. *Essential Tao*. New York: Bantam Books, 1993.
- ◇ Kornfield, Jack, *After Ecstasy the Laundry*. Bantam Books, New York: 2000.

Attendance

Students will be strictly held to the attendance policies of UIBE and are strongly advised to be aware of this policy. For example, only absences approved by the UIBE attendance policy will be accepted without penalty.

Grading Policy

For Written Assignments -You'll be graded on these criteria:

- ◇ Induction: Are the conclusions in writing based on concrete evidence?
- ◇ Accuracy: Are inferences drawn have clear relation to texts consulted?
- ◇ Originality: Is your writing fresh and do you properly cite other sources?
- ◇ Depth: Are issues probed w/thoroughness & focus? Do not simply "re-tell."
- ◇ Organization: Does your writing show a logical procession?
- ◇ Relative thoroughness: Is writing as complete as possible?
- ◇ Clarity: Have you expressed ideas with directness? No page-limit "filler."
- ◇ Format: Have you double-spaced, typed, and proofread all work? Did you avoid sexist language? Is your name/page # on each page? Did you include a cover-sheet with your name/student I.D./Time of class?
- ◇ Late Work is not accepted. Any plagiarism or cheating will not be tolerated and will result in FAILING THE ENTIRE CLASS. Final grades are not reviewable; ask any questions at all before grades are submitted.

Assignments

- ◇ 5-6 page Reflections on The Religions of China/Survey – 100pts.
- ◇ Write about your experience in your community/family of religion (or non-religion) in your life OR in the life of a family member. Be as personal/impersonal as you like. Mention how culture has affected your religion/non-religion. Discuss remaining goals/ideas that you have about this dimension of your life. Be sure and include a cover sheet for this and all other assignments.
- ◇ 5-6 page Responses to Kornfield book (100 x 2 = 200 points) Describe what you learned/questions that arose/remain unanswered from the themes of the book. Add cover sheet.
- ◇ Responses to Analects and Tao Te Ching Readings (100 x2=200 pts.) Include cover sheet
- ◇ Tests (200 points) = Midterm Test (worth 100 pts) and E. Final Examination (100 pts.).

Grading Scale

Assignments and examinations will be graded according to the following grade scale:

- A 90-100
- A- 85-89
- B+ 82-84
- B 78-81
- B- 75-77



C+ 72-74
C 68-71
C- 64-67
D 60-63
F below 60

Course Hours

The course has 20 class sessions in total. Each class session is 120 minutes in length for a total of 2,400 minutes of class time. The course meets from Monday to Thursday.

Class Rules

Turn cell phones to vibrate and DO NOT text in class. If you need to check your phone/email/send a text leave the room. Texting in class, talking in class, late arrivals or early departures will result in points lost from final (without appeal). Computers for note-taking is fine but no hand-held devices are allowed in class. Disruptive students will be asked to leave class to aid other students learning

Tentative Course Schedule

I. Introduction

Monday May 29: Opening Class

Distribution of Syllabus; Student Survey; Discussion of Class Expectations; Assignments

Reading: Ching, chapter on Chinese Traditional Religions

Tuesday, May 30: Traditional Chinese Religions as Moral Guides

Reading: Kornfield, After Ecstasy the Laundry, chapters 1-4

Wednesday, May 31: Traditional Chinese Religions and Societal Cohesion

Reading: Kornfield, chapters 5-8

Thursday, June 1: Traditional Chinese Religions as Maps of Awakening

Readings: Kornfield, chapters 9-13.

Assignment One: 2-3 Page Response to Kornfield, Part I, "After Ecstasy the Laundry" (100 pts.).

Friday, June 2: Review Session/Film

Part II: Buddhism

Monday, June 5: The Buddha- Historical Context and Legend

Reading: Armstrong, 1-65; Ching chapter on Chinese Buddhism.

Tuesday, June 6: The Buddha Sangha – Historical Development and Formation

Reading: Armstrong, 66-121.

Wednesday, June 7: The Buddha Dharma, I – Central Teachings of Buddhism

Reading: Armstrong, 122-187

TBA- Assignment Two: Reading Response to Kornfield, Part II, 2-3 pages (100 points)



Thursday, June 8: Test, Armstrong Glossary Terms

Friday June 9 – Test Review/Return

Monday, June 12: Introduction – Religions in Ancient China, I

Reading: Ching, chapter on Chinese Traditional Religions

Part III: Taoism and Confucianism

Tuesday, June 13: Taoism Introduced in Historical Context and Legend

Reading: Ching, chapter on Taoism; Cleary, The Essential Tao, 1-17

Wednesday, June 14: Tao Te Ching, I

Reading: Cleary, The Essential Tao, 18-50

Thursday, June 15: Tao Te Ching, II

Reading: Cleary, The Essential Tao, 51-81

Thursday: Assignment Three: Exegesis of a Tao Te Ching Passage, 2-3 pages (100 points)

Friday, June 16: Tao Te Ching, III - TBA

Monday, June 19: Confucianism, I – Historical Context and Legend

Reading: Ching, chapters on Confucianism and Neo-Confucianism; Cleary (Analects), 3-42

Tuesday, June 20: Confucianism, II – Confucianism and the Social Order

Reading: Cleary (Analects), 43-79

Wednesday, June 21: Confucianism, III – Confucianism and Moral Obligations

Reading: Cleary (Analects) 82-139.

Thursday, June 22: Confucianism, IV – Confucianism and Filial Piety

Reading: Cleary (Analects) 140-178

Assignment Four: Reading Response; Exegesis of Analects Passage, 2-3 pages (100 points)

Friday, June 23: Confucianism, V -TBA

Monday, June 26: TBA- Special Presentation – Guest Participant/Field Trip/Film

Reading: Cleary, The Essential Tao, 81-115

Tuesday, June 27: Western Religions in China, I

Reading: Ching, chapter on Judaism and Catholic and Protestant Christianity in Chinese History

Cleary, The Essential Tao, 116-160

Thursday, June 28: Western Religions in China, II

Reading: Ching, chapter on Islam in Chinese History

Friday, June 29: Final Examination

Week Two: Buddhism