

**College of Charleston
Department of Religious Studies
Spring 2016**

RELS 248: Religious Traditions of China and Japan
MWF 9AM and 10AM; EDUCATION CENTER 219

Instructor: Dr. Elijah Siegler
Email: sieglere@cofc.edu Office phone: **953-3910**
Office: 4 Glebe St. #206
Office Hours: Tues and Wed 1-3 or by appointment

This course chronologically surveys major religious ideas and practices of China and Japan, including shamanism, Daoism, Confucianism, state religion, popular religion, Shinto, new religious movements, and post-modern religiosity.

This course will fulfill the **General Education Student Learning Outcomes:**
Student Learning Outcome #1: Students analyze how ideas are represented, interpreted or valued in various expressions of human culture.
Student Learning Outcome #2: Students examine relevant primary source materials as understood by the discipline and interpret the material in writing assignments. These two learning outcomes will be assessed by the term paper (worth a total of 20%), which will ask students to analyze and compare primary sources from China and Japan, in terms of the religious, political, and cultural ideas they express.

There are **three** required books:

- Thomas **DuBois**, *Religion and the Making of Modern East Asia*, ISBN: 9781107400405
- Deborah **Sommer**, ed. *Chinese Religion: an Anthology of Sources*, ISBN: 9780195088953
- Eva **Wong**, *Seven Taoist Masters*, ISBN: 9781590301760

And one optional one: Matsuo **Basho**, *Narrow Road to the Interior And Other Writings*, ISBN: 9781570627163

There are also required readings on OAKS. Print these out!
Please always bring the relevant book or printout to class.

Course Requirements:

- *Submit a 5-6 pp. term paper: **20%**
- * Be prepared for 4 “surprise” quizzes (to be announced the class before), of which the lowest score will be dropped: 3x 5%= **15%**
- * Write any 5 out of 10 “memos” in response to the readings: 5x 5%= **25%**
- * Take a midterm exam given in class on March 4: **15%**
- * Take a final exam during Exam Week: **20%**
- *Attend class regularly and on-time, ready to discuss the reading: **5%**

All work must be original and all sources correctly cited. The university's honor code will be strictly enforced. Students can find a complete version of the Honor Code and all related processes in the Student Handbook, available online.

Grading Scale: A: 93-100; A-: 90-92; B+: 87-89; B: 83-86; B-: 80-82; C+: 77-79; C: 73-76; C-: 70-72; D+: 67-69; D: 63-66; D-: 61-62 F: 60 or below.

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

Fri Jan 8: What is this class about?

Mon Jan 11: How do we study religion in China and Japan?

Read: studyreligion.org; DuBois 1-14

Wed Jan 13: What are the roots of Chinese religion?

Read: DuBois 15-18; "Ancestors," 169-171 (OAKS); Sommer 31-32, 35-37, 349-350

Fri Jan 15: What is the "Book of Changes?"

Read: Sommer, 3-6; Skim: "Yijing" (OAKS)

Mon Jan 18: MLK Day- no class

Wed Jan 20: What Are the Five Classics? **Special Guest: Dr. Piotr Gibas**

Read: Sommer 7-12, 17-26

Fri Jan 22: Who was Confucius?

Read: DuBois 18-23; Sommer 41-48

Mon Jan 25: Is human nature good or evil?

Read: Sommer 55-70

Wed Jan 27: How does Confucianism work in practice?

Read: Sommer 105-112; DuBois 36-49

Fri Jan 29: What were the Hundred Schools?

Read: Sommer 49-54; Han Fei (OAKS)

Mon Feb 1: What is Daoism?

Read: DuBois 23-30; Sommer 71-72

Wed Feb 3: How can we interpret the "Classic of the Way and Its Virtue?"

Read: Sommer 73-75; Handout #1

Fri Feb 5: Who was Zhuangzi (Chuang-Tzu)?

Read: Sommer 77-83

Mon Feb 8: Why are longevity and immortality important?
Read: "Body" (OAKS); Sommer 149-151

Wed Feb 10: How are martial arts religious? **Special Guest: Alex Dellaria**

Fri Feb 12: What is Buddhism?
Read: DuBois 30-34; Sommer 119-128

Mon Feb 15: What is Buddhist wisdom literature? **Special Guest: Nick Lavergne**
Read: Sommer 133-138, 142-143

Wed Feb 17: How did Buddhism become Chinese?
Read: Sommer 155-159; DuBois 94-105

Fri Feb 19: How did Chinese literature reflect religion?
Read: Sommer 165-174

Mon Feb 22: What is Apocalypticism?
Read: DuBois 123-141; Wong 1-24

Wed Feb 24: What is the "Complete Reality" School?
Read: Wong xvi-xxiii; 25-100; Sommer 199-206

Fri Feb 26: What is Religious Syncretism?
Read: Wong 101-176; DuBois 34-36

Mon Feb 29: What Is Shinto?
Read: DuBois 53-55, 238; Kojiki, 12-14 (OAKS)
Midterm Exam Study Guide handed out

Wed March 2: Catch-up Discussion and Midterm Exam Review

Fri March 4: Midterm Exam

MARCH BREAK

Mon March 14: How does Shinto manifest in Japanese culture?
Read: Boyd (OAKS)

Wed March 16: How does Shinto manifest in Japanese culture? Cont...
Read: Murasaki (OAKS)

Fri March 18: What is the relationship between Shinto and Buddhism?
Read: DuBois 55-61, 111-113; Kojiki, 21-23 (OAKS)
Term paper proposal due via email

Mon March 21: How did Buddhism become Japanese?

Read: DuBois 61-71; Nichiren (OAKS)

Wed March 23: What is Zen?

Read: DuBois 113-122

Fri March 25: How did Shinto become militarized and nationalized?

Read: DuBois 151-160, 179-191; "Religion as Ideology," 36-39 (OAKS)

Mon March 28: What happened to Shinto after WWII?

Read: "Religion as Ideology," 41-48 (OAKS)

Wed March 30: How did religion and modernity intersect in China?

Read: DuBois 142-151; 161-173

Fri April 1: How did religion and Marxism intersect in China?

Read: DuBois 194-202; Sommer 303-316

Mon April 4: What is Qigong?

Read: "Quiet Sitting" (OAKS); DuBois 213-214; Lowe (OAKS)

Wed April 6: How was Confucianism revived?

Read: Sommer 187-191, 32-34, 37-39; DuBois 176-179, 214-215

Fri April 8: How have Chinese temples changed? **Special Guest: Nick Lavergne**

Read: DuBois 174-175; "Rise of the Tao" (on OAKS)

Mon April 11: What is the role of Christianity in China and Japan?

Read: DuBois 72-93, 191-193, 210-213

Wed April 13: Why does Japan have so many new religions?

Read: DuBois 215-223; "Tenrikyo" (OAKS); "Soka Gakkai" (OAKS)

Fri April 15: How has Zen Become Globalized?

Read: DuBois 224-230; "Zen" (OAKS); Soyen Shaku D (OAKS)

Mon April 18: How were Chinese and Japanese religions reinterpreted in the U.S.?

Read: Soyen Shaku A, B, C (OAKS); Sommer 343-348

Term paper due in class

Wed April 20: How did Daoism become Americanized?

Reas: Wong, xv-xvi, 177-178; Siegler (OAKS)

April 21 (a Thursday!): Final Exam Review

MEMOS

Each **memo** should be between 300-600 words long and typed. (One single-spaced page is the perfect length.) Memos will not be accepted if they are late, even by one hour. Memos should not be sent via e-mail or handed in early: they must be handed in during class.

Excellent memos will be focused and demonstrate a solid understanding of the assigned readings, will answer the questions specifically, will make interesting connections (comparisons or contrasts) between reading, and will provide original insights into the material. Memos do not require any additional research and are more relaxed than formal papers. You do not need an introduction or conclusion: get right to your point! You do not need a works cited page but please use in-text citation for direct and indirect quotes sources from the class. For example: "Daoism was concerned with the quest for immortality (DuBois 29)." Please write clearly and carefully.

You can submit as many of these essays as you wish, but only the best five will be counted towards your final grade (5 x 5% each = 25% of your final grade).

1. On the "studyreligion.org" website, under the "What Is Religion?" tab, ten definitions of religion are offered. Which of these definitions does DuBois seem to use in his first chapter and why?

Due 1/11

2. Confucius, Mencius and Hsun Tzu all place great value on ritual/rites. But they each have different emphases. How are they different? Why is ritual so important to them? Hsun Tzu's account of ritual is the most detailed. Summarize it and explain whether you agree with it or not.

Due 1/25

3. Both Mo Tzu and Han Fei Tzu criticize Confucius, Confucians, and Confucian ideas, but they do so in different ways. What were their critiques? Which critique do you think makes the most sense? What do the critiques tell us about the social location of Confucianism in the Chou dynasty?

Due 1/29

4. An undergraduate student once called Chuang Tzu (Zhuangzi) "a critique of consensus reality." What do you think that student meant by that? Use specific examples.

Due 2/5

5. What is Wang Ch'ung-yang's monastic ideal? Why is monasticism necessary for achieving the Dao, according to Quanzhen (Chu'an-chen) Daoism? How is monastic life dramatized in *Seven Taoist Masters*?

Due 2/26

6. Answer the two reading questions on p. 21 of the “Kojiki” reading on OAKS.
Due 3/18

7. How were religion and politics in Japan linked? Answer by comparing two case studies, Kamakura-era Zen Buddhism and Meiji-era Shinto.
Due 3/25

8. After briefly describing the “Cult of Mao” (1966-1976) and the “Qigong Movement” (1980s), discuss what features they have in common. What do these commonalities tell us about the role of religion in modern China?
Due 4/4

9. “Rise of the Tao” is in part about how the rapid growth of the Chinese tourism industry will affect Chinese religion. Will tourism’s impact be positive, negative or mixed?
Due 4/8

10. Tenrikyo is often considered one of Japan’s first “new religions.” What is new about it? What isn’t? What accounts for its success? (See also the eight reading questions on pp. 30-31 of the “Tenrikyo” reading on OAKS.)
Due 4/13

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Note: Students with documented disabilities who have been approved to receive accommodation through SNAP should feel free to discuss this during office hours. For more information, contact Disability Services at 953-1431.

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The Center for Student Learning has writing labs and can arrange individual tutoring for this particular class. Drop by, go to <http://www.cofc.edu/~csl/> or call 953-5635.

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Technology policy

Let’s face it: technology breaks. **An issue you may have with technology is no excuse for late work.** You need to protect yourself by managing your time and backing up your work. **Turn your cell phone on silent when you come into class. Do not text in class.** If you bring a laptop to class, use it for class. I reserve the right to ask anyone with a laptop or tablet to use it to lookup something to help our class discussion. I also might check your screen to make sure you are not checking your friend’s Instagram, etc.