

University of Oregon, PHIL 213, Eastern Philosophy, Summer 2007, Syllabus
Instructor: Thomas Nail [PLC 63, Hours: M 4pm-5pm, W 4-5]

Course Objective: We will examine various Asian religious and philosophical traditions including Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, and Taoism. Rather than provide a comprehensive survey of all Asian philosophies (which is impractical given the time constraints), this course emphasizes in-depth understanding of selected traditions through the study of primary religious texts supported by secondary readings. We will study key philosophical ideas within the context of various cultural and historical issues such as gender, class, and ritual.

Requirements:

1. Participation – This is an intensive course and so even one absence can put you behind as well as compromise class discussion. You are allowed to miss two classes, after which your final grade will be dropped by a letter grade for each class missed after those two.

2. Critical Reflections (Maximum of 8 – 25%).

Each week there will be in class writing assignments in which you will reflect upon the material. The days of the writings will not be announced, and late assignments will not be accepted.

3. Essays: Three (25% each – 75% total)

Each paper will be 4-5 pages in length. The due date for each is marked on the syllabus. The final essay will be due on the last day of class and can either be written on an assigned topic or a topic of the student's choice (which must be approved by me prior to the due date). The final paper should be 5-6 pages in length. All papers should follow the paper writing guidelines distributed by the instructor. No late papers or extensions will be granted without prior approval.

Reading Schedule: (*we will read selections only from each of the following texts*)

| | | |
|------------------------------------|--|------------------------------------|
| Week 1 | Introduction and Plan of the Course. <i>Rig Veda</i> / History | |
| | <i>Bhagavad Gita</i> | (Indian Hinduism) |
| | Nagarjuna, <i>The Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way</i> | (Indian Buddhism) |
| Week 2 | Nagarjuna, <i>The Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way</i> | |
| | Confucius, <i>The Analects</i> | (Chinese philosophy: Confucianism) |
| First Paper Due [due date] | | |
| Week 3 | Zhuangzi, <i>Basic Writings</i> , | (Chinese philosophy: Taoism) |
| | Dogen, <i>Shobogenzo</i> | (Japanese: Zen Buddhism) |
| Second Paper Due [due date] | | |
| Week 4 | <i>The Buddha Eye</i> , | (Contemporary Japanese Buddhism) |
| | Nishitani, <i>What is Religion?</i> | |
| Final Paper Due [due date] | | |

Suggested Supplementary Readings to be Posted on Blackboard