

ARTSSCI/SCAR 3S03
The East Asian Religious Tradition
McMaster University, Term 1 (2021–2022)

Instructor: Lan Li
Email: lil148@mcmaster.ca
Office: UH B126D
Phone: 365-888-0104

Office Hours: Thursdays 10:30–
11:30am and by appointment

Course Description and Objectives

In this course, we will explore the critical concepts and systematic thoughts of major religious and cultural themes in the societies of China, Japan and Korea, which underlie religion as it has been, and continues to be, practiced in everyday life. Hence, we must consider religion and culture not as abstract, monolithic and ahistorical phenomena but as the expressions of individuals as they engage in social life. I hope the historical scope, the sources materials, and questions from the discussions in this course will encourage a comprehensive understanding of the diverse religious traditions in East Asia.

This course will be unfolded in two dimensions: chronological and thematic. I will first present the different religious traditions in East Asia according to the historical sequence. Then I want to dive into some specific topics and conduct further discussions with students, including the death and rebirth, material culture and ritual objects, gender and family, health and healing in East Asian religions, as well as the modernization of traditional religions and “western” religions in contemporary East Asia.

Readings of this course will focus on the translated primary texts and the latest secondary studies of East Asian religions.

Required Materials and Texts

- Wm. Theodore de Bary, ed. *Sources of East Asian Tradition*, Vol. 1. New York: Columbia University Press, 2008.
- Other weekly readings will be made available on Avenue.

Class Format

This is an asynchronous online course in which all the teaching materials and references will be delivered through Avenue.

Course Evaluation – Overview

1. Discussion Posts and Responses 30%
2. Knowledge Check Quizzes 30%
3. Midterm Assessment 15%
4. Final Research Paper 25%

Course Evaluation – Details

Discussion Posts: 30%

There will be six discussion post assignments. Students will be asked to write 250-400 words on a given theme or question for each discussion and provide two feedbacks to their peers every two weeks. Their discussions and feedbacks must reference the class readings and will be graded on content and completion. All the discussion posts and responses will be submitted to Avenue in two weeks after they are assigned.

Quizzes: 30%

There will be six knowledge check quizzes. Each quiz must be completed in two weeks after its release date. The quizzes contain true or false questions, multiple-choice questions, full-in-the-blanks, and short answer questions. They must be completed within a set time limit.

Midterm Assessment: 15%, due October 31

Students will submit a research proposal that includes: a brief summary of their topic and argument, an outline, and an annotated bibliography, including at least ten sources. It is suggested that the topic of the proposal should be the same or closely related to the final research paper. A tutorial video will be posted to Avenue to help students navigate the library and its online resources.

Final Assessment: 25%, due December 17

Students will submit a research paper (6-8 pages) that describes and analyzes one or several specific topics in East Asian religions. Details of the research paper will be circulated separately via Avenue.

Work submitted late will not be accepted.

Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings

Week One: September 7 to 12

Lecture: Orientation to Course and Earliest Times

Readings: Palmer, "Religion in Chinese Social and Political History," 19 pages; *East Asian Traditions*, 1–28;

Assessments: Discussion Posts and Responses 1

Week Two: September 13 to 19

Lecture: Chinese Religions (I): Daoism

Readings: *East Asian Traditions*, 49–68, 217–222; Kohn, “Introduction: the nature of Daoism,” *Daoism*, 1–11.

Assessments: Knowledge Check Quiz 1

Week Three: September 20 to 26

Lecture: Chinese Religions (II): Confucianism

Readings: *East Asian Traditions*, 29–40, 69–76, 178–187, 336–338 & 351–355.

Assessments: Discussion Posts and Responses 2

Week Four: September 27 to October 3

Lecture: Chinese Religions (III): Buddhism

Readings: Yü Chün-Fang, “Introduction” & “Chapter One: Major Buddhists Sutras and Treatises of Chinese Buddhism,” *Chinese Buddhism*, 1–69.

Assessments: Knowledge Check Quiz 2

Week Five: October 4 to 10

Lecture: Japanese Religions (I): Shintō

Readings: *East Asian Traditions*, 630–639; Hardacre, “The Kami in Myth,” “Shinto and Imperial Japan” *Shinto*, 47–70, 403–441.

Assessments: Discussion Posts and Responses 3

Week Six: Midterm Recess, October 11 to 17

Week Seven: October 18 to 24

Lecture: Japanese Religions (II): Buddhism

Readings: *East Asian Traditions*, 672–678; 698–708; 782–800;

Assessments: Knowledge Check Quiz 3

Week Eight: October 25 to 31

Lecture: Korean Religions: Buddhism & Neo-Confucianism

Readings: *East Asian Traditions*, 497–506, 558–562.

Assessments: Discussion Posts and Responses 4, Midterm Assessment (due October 31)

Week Nine: November 1 to 7

Lecture: Death, Rebirth and the Unseen Realm

Readings: *East Asian Traditions*, 725–727; Stone, “Death,” *Critical Terms for the Study of Buddhism*, 56–76; Kohn, “Immortality,” 190–201; Miracle Tales (selected).

Assessments: Knowledge Check Quiz 4

Week Ten: November 8 to 14

Lecture: Material Culture in East Asian Religions

Readings: Kieschnick, “Chapter One: Sacred Power,” *The Impact of Buddhism on Chinese Material Culture*, 24–82; Huang, “Chapter Four: Materiality of Daoist Sacred Space,” *Picturing the True Form*, 190–244.

Assessments: Discussion Posts and Responses 5

Week Eleven: November 15 to 21

Lecture: Gender, Sexuality and Family in East Asian Religions

Readings: Balkwill, "The Sūtra on Transforming the Female Form," 22 pages; Yü, "Buddhism and Gender," *Chinese Buddhism*, 218–239; Kohn, *Daoism*, "Women and the Family," 99–109.

Assessments: Knowledge Check Quiz 5

Week Twelve: November 22 to 28

Lecture: Health, Healing and East Asian Religions

Readings: Engelhardt, "Chapter Four: Longevity Techniques and Chinese Medicine," *Daoism Handbook*, 74–108; Salguero, "Varieties of Buddhist Healing in Multiethnic Philadelphia," 21 pages; Winfield, "Esoteric Ritual Remedies: Kūkai's Cures for Emperor Kōnin," *Buddhism and Medicine*, 222–225.

Assessments: Discussion Posts and Responses 6

Week Thirteen: November 29 to December 5

Lecture: Modernizations of East Asian Religions

Readings: Fenggang Yang, "Part 1: The Three Markets of Religions in China," *Atlas of Religion in China*, 11–69; Ian Reader, "Turning to the Gods in Times of Trouble," 22 pages; DuBois, *Religion and the Making of Modern East Asia*, 72–93, 194–230.

Assessments: Knowledge Check Quiz 6

Week Fourteen/Final Week: Review and Q&A, December 6 to 12

Lecture: Review

Final Exam (Due December 17)

Course Policies

Submission of Assignments

All assignments should be submitted electronically to the appropriate file folder on Avenue to Learn on the date the assignment is due. Do not submit the assignment via email! Please review the policies on "Avenue to Learn," "Turnitin.com," and "Late Submission of Assignments" included on this syllabus.

Late Submission of Assignments

All reasonable requests for extensions will be considered prior to the assignment's deadline. Late assignments submitted without extension will be penalized by 5% a day. Please request extensions in advance of the deadline.

Grades

Grades will be based on the McMaster University grading scale:

MARK	GRADE
90-100	A+
85-89	A
80-84	A-

MARK	GRADE
77-79	B+
73-76	B
70-72	B-
67-69	C+
63-66	C
60-62	C-
57-59	D+
53-56	D
50-52	D-
0-49	F

SENATE-APPROVED ADVISORY STATEMENTS

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. **It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty.**

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-guidelines/), located at <https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-guidelines/>.

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

- plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which other credit has been obtained.
- improper collaboration in group work.
- copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

AUTHENTICITY / PLAGIARISM DETECTION

Some courses may use a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. For courses using such software, students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via an online learning platform (e.g. A2L, etc.) using plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

Students who do not wish their work to be submitted through the plagiarism detection software must inform the Instructor before the assignment is due. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to the plagiarism detection software. **All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld** (e.g., online

search, other software, etc.). For more details about McMaster's use of Turnitin.com please go to www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

COURSES WITH AN ONLINE ELEMENT

Some courses may use online elements (e.g. e-mail, Avenue to Learn (A2L), LearnLink, web pages, capa, Moodle, ThinkingCap, etc.). Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of a course using these elements, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in a course that uses online elements will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

ONLINE PROCTORING

Some courses may use online proctoring software for tests and exams. This software may require students to turn on their video camera, present identification, monitor and record their computer activities, and/or lock/restrict their browser or other applications/software during tests or exams. This software may be required to be installed before the test/exam begins.

CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the [Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities](#) (the "Code"). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, **whether in person or online**.

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students' access to these platforms.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact [Student Accessibility Services](#) (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or sas@mcmaster.ca to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University's [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#) policy.

REQUESTS FOR RELIEF FOR MISSED ACADEMIC TERM WORK

In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the [Policy on Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work](#).

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION FOR RELIGIOUS, INDIGENOUS OR SPIRITUAL OBSERVANCES (RISO)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the [RISO](#) policy. Students should submit

their request to their Faculty Office *normally within 10 working days* of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

COPYRIGHT AND RECORDING

Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, **including lectures** by University instructors. The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done either by the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

EXTREME CIRCUMSTANCES

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L and/or McMaster email.

NOTES FOR ALL ARTS & SCIENCE COURSES

1. Some of the statements above refer to a "Faculty Office"; please note that the Arts & Science Program Office serves in this capacity.
2. It is the responsibility of students to check their McMaster email regularly. Announcements will be made in class, via A2L, and/or via the course email distribution list.
3. For additional information regarding requests for accommodation, relief for missed term work (e.g. MSAF), deferred examinations, etc., students should read carefully the [Requests](#) and [Resources](#) pages on the Arts & Science Program website.