

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY
Faculty of Arts
Department of Religious Studies

Course Outline FALL 2010
RELS 603.07/703.07 L01: Themes and Comparisons in Eastern Religions

INSTRUCTOR: Leslie Kawamura

CLASS TIME AND ROOM: Tuesday 13:00-15:45 Rm. SS 1332

OFFICE HOURS: Tuesday 16:00-16:30 or by appointment

TELEPHONE: 403-220-5886 (Religious Studies Department office) or
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Required Textbook:

Matthieu Ricard & Trinh Xuan Thuan, *The Quantum and the Lotus*, NY., Three Rivers Press, 2001.
Previously published as *L'infini dans la paume de la main*.

Further Readings:

1) For students who have not had an introductory level course on Eastern Religions, any introductory textbook that covers Religions of India (Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism), Religions of China (Confucianism, Daoism, Buddhism), Religions of Tibet (Bonpo and Buddhism), and Religions of Japan (Shinto and Buddhism).

2) Handouts on Religion and Science:

Ervin Laszlo, *Introduction to Systems Philosophy- Toward a New Paradigm of Contemporary Thought*
Chapter 1 (pp.3-13), Chapters 10, 11, 12 (pp. 181-256), and Systems Philosophy: Conclusions (pp. 296-299).

Alfred North Whitehead, *Science and the Modern World*, Chapters VI, VII, VIII, and IX (pp. 95-156) and Chapter 12 (pp.181-192).

W. Mays, *The Philosophy of Whitehead*, Chapters I and II (pp. 29-56) Chapters XI-XIII (pp.161-191).

Rudolf Carnap, *Meaning and Necessity – A study in Semantics & Modal logic*, Chapter III sections 28-32 (pp. 118-144) and section 45 Conclusions to the book (pp. 202-204).

Gregory Bateson, *Mind and Nature, a necessary unity*. Chapter II, Every Schoolboy Knows...(pp. 23-64), Chapter IV Criteria of Mental Process (pp. 91-128), and Appendix: Time is out of Joint (pp.215-223).

Werner Heisenberg, *Physics and Beyond – Encounters and Conversation* Chapters 3 (pp. 27-42), 5 (pp.58-69), and 7 (pp.82-92).

3) Suggested Readings on Buddhism and Science:

Cho, Francisca. "Why the Buddha Lied: Getting beyond the literal, the metaphorical, and the rift between religion and science." *Search - DC* 19, no. 5 (September 2008): 42-47. (LINK Academic OneFile)

English, L. "On the 'Emptiness' of Particles in Condensed-matter Physics." *Foundations of Science* 12, no. 2 (June 2007): 155-171. (LINK SpringerLink – CRKN – Archives E Journal)

Fair, Frank. "Buddhism, Christianity, and Modern Science: A Response to Masao Abe." *Buddhist - Christian Studies* no. 25 (November 2005): 67-74. (BQ2.B827.V.25.2005)

Kato, Hiroki. "Zen and psychology." *Japanese Psychological Research* 47, no. 2 (May 2005): 125-136. (LINK Academic Search Complete OR Pschyological & Behaviour Science Colletion OR Wiley-Blackwell Journals)

Klostermaier, Klaus. "The nature of Buddhism." *Asian Philosophy* 1, no. 1 (March 1991): 29. (LINK Taylor & Francis Social Sciences and Humanities Library E Journal)

Kohl, Christian Thomas. "Buddhism and Quantum Physics." *Contemporary Buddhism* 8, no. 1 (May 2007): 69-82. (LINK Taylor & Francis Social Sciences and Humanities Library E Journal)

- Lai, Pan-chiu. "Buddhist-Christian Complementarity in the Perspective of Quantum Physics." *Buddhist - Christian Studies* no. 22 (November 2002): 149. (LINK JSTOR "Arts and Sciences III Collection OR SpringerLink – CRKN – Archives E Journal)
- Mansfield, Victor. "Relativity in Madhyamika Buddhism and modern physics." *Philosophy East & West* 40, no. 1 (January 1990): 59. . (LINK JSTOR "Arts and Sciences III Collection)
- Pickering, John. "Buddhism and cognitivism: A postmodern appraisal." *Asian Philosophy* 5, no. 1 (March 1995): 23. (LINK Taylor & Francis Social Sciences and Humanities Library E Journal)
- Ratanakul, Pinit. "Buddhism and Science: Allies or Enemies?." *Zygon: Journal of Religion & Science* 37, no. 1 (March 2002): 115. . (LINK ATLA Religion Database with ATLA Serials OR Wiley-Blackwell Journals)
- Thomsen, Dietrick E. "Mystic Physics." *Science News* 116, no. 5 (August 4, 1979): 94. (JSTOR Life Sciences Collection)
- Wallace, B. Alan. "A Response to 'Against Cognitive Imperialism'." *Religion East & West*, no. 8 (October 2008): 27-32. (LINK ATLA Religion Database with ATLA Serials OR Academic Search Complete)
- Yong, Amos. "Mind and Life, Religion and Science: His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Buddhism-Christianity-Science Dialogue." *Buddhist - Christian Studies* no. 28 (November 2008): 43-63. (BQ2.B827.V.25.2005)

General Remarks:

In our study of the themes of the Eastern religious traditions, we will discuss them from a thematic perspective rather than an historical one. This means that we, in making our comparisons, will not focus solely on religious points of view; rather we will try to understand these traditions from the perspective of various themes. Hence, the views of writers such as Alfred North Whitehead, who focuses on process thinking, Bertrand Russell, whose philosophy on language questions the ontological value of objectivity, and Newton, whose principle of relativity was questioned by Einstein and further queried by scientists such as Heisenberg, will be utilized in the comparison of our selected themes with East Asian Religious traditions. Once the theme has been selected, the student will present it, in the first instance, as an explanation of theme, methodology, expected outcome, and bibliography for the paper proposal due early in the course and finally, as a presentation of the full paper during the last two days of classes (see below for schedule).

Objectives of the Course:

A close reading of one's sources, along with supplementary supporting materials found through the internet or library searches, are expected. Also, on the basis of the theme selected for the student's final presentation, there is the expectation that students will contribute to the weekly discussions of the assigned readings. The objective, therefore, is to quickly grasp the essentials of the Eastern Religious Traditions and the contents of the assigned readings so that we will have a common basis for sharing our research and problems by means of informed discussions.

Core Competencies:

As part of the course requirements, students will learn to do research and write a research paper based upon thorough investigation and documentation. A topic of interest that is related to the subject matter of the course will be selected in consultation with the instructor. Because the paper proposal and the research paper will be presented orally to the class, the students will learn how to prepare a summary for this purpose. Through their oral presentations and subsequent question periods, the students will have an opportunity to share their findings with the rest of the class. Because the content of the course is East Asian Religions, this course will offer the students an opportunity to participate in the investigation of such themes as Eastern Religions and Science, Eastern Religions and Belief in Atheism, or Eastern Religions and others.

Preamble:

For the sake of those students whose undergraduate training may not have included a course on Eastern Religions that covered the Indian, Chinese, Tibetan, and Japanese religious traditions, we will spend the first three weeks of the course (projected dates of September 14, 21, and 28, but less if we can complete our objective) going quickly through the Brahmanical traditions and Early Buddhism of India, the Chinese Confucian, Taoist, and Buddhist traditions, the Sarma and Ningma historical periods of Tibetan Buddhism, and finally the Shinto, Buddhist, and Christian traditions of Japan.

Whenever possible, a guest speaker will be invited to give a lecture and to interact with the students.

The main textbook for the course provides an example of one possible model of what could happen when a scientist (Matthieu Ricard) becomes a religionist and a religionist (Trinh Xuan Thuan) becomes a scientist.

Course Requirements:

Because at the beginning of the course students may not yet have chosen a topic (thematic issue), we will begin the presentations of research proposals on October 5 and then have the presentations of the final research paper towards the end of the semester (Nov 30 and Dec 7). The research proposals should be ready to share with the other members of the class as of October 5, 2010.

I. Paper Proposal (due on Tuesday, October 5)

20 points

A proposal indicates the thesis, contents, methodology, and proposed bibliography that you will be utilizing in writing your research paper.

Please note that the proposal should state the thesis (as distinct from methodology), the methodology that will be employed (note that to compare ideas does not constitute a thesis statement, but it does constitute a methodology), and the anticipated conclusion. A proposed bibliography of sufficient extent and related to the research should be given.

Your research proposal will be shared with the rest of the class, so please make as many copies as will be necessary and distribute them to each member of the class as soon as possible before or on October 5. In this way, everyone will have an idea of what the other is doing and as a result, while doing one's own research for one's own final paper, can anticipate various problems, suggestions, areas related to one's own interest, and so on.

II. Research Paper

70 points

A research paper of approximately 4,500 words for those registered in RELS 603 and 6,000 words for those in RELS 703 is required. The paper should be based on the research proposal. Bibliography and Notes are in addition to the word count.

The Research Paper will be due on **Tuesday, November 23** at the beginning of class.

The required research paper should be on a topic related to the contents of the course (ie. some specific theme related to Eastern Religion). It should have a clear introduction in which the purpose and scope of the paper is stated. Proper documentation of sources, both quoted and used for reference, should be given in the footnotes and bibliography.

Plagiarism is a serious matter and will automatically result in an F for the paper. It should be noted that a series of quotations does not comprise a research paper. The purpose of the research paper is to investigate a topic and report the result of the investigation in one's own words. It should be clear in pointing out in the notes which parts of the composition are a paraphrase of the sources and which parts constitute the student's own contribution. This distinction between use of sources and the student's own contribution must be transparent.

(a) The student should consult a reference book on how to compose a research paper before attempting to write the paper. The Chicago Manual of Style or the MLA Style Sheet is highly recommended.

(b) Late papers will be disadvantaged by deducting **a grade point for each day late** after the Due Date. That is, an 'A' paper will become an 'A-' if it is one day late, a 'B+' paper if it is two days late, and so on. Because this course meets once a week, "one day" does not mean the next meeting day, but it means the "next day of the week."

(c) The Paper Proposal that is presented to the class will be returned to you by the instructor and must accompany your final research paper.

Writing Skill Statement

Please note that writing skills include not only surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure etc.), but also general clarity and organization.

III. Paper Proposal Presentation and Discussions

5 points

Presentations of the research proposal will begin on October 5. To obtain the 5 points, each and every presentation must be attended. An attendance sheet will be available each day of presentations.

IV. Paper Presentation and Discussions

5 points

The final paper presentations will take place during the last two weeks of the course (ie. Nov. 30 and Dec. 7). Each student will be expected to attend the presentations of the research papers given by other students. The goal of the presentations is to share ideas with each other as both a presenter and as a participant. An attendance sheet will be available each day of the presentation. To obtain the 5 points, a student must attend each and every presentation.

ABSENCE FROM PAPER PROPOSAL AND FINAL PAPER PRESENTATIONS.

If classes are missed, it will be the responsibility of the student to acquire material given in class from other members of the class. The instructor will not impart information covered during the class hours. Also, absence from presentations will not be excused unless the student is ill (certified by a letter from the doctor) or if there has been a death in the family (certified by a copy of the burial permit).

There will be **No Registrar scheduled Final Examination** in this course.

Grading

A letter grade will be assigned to the course according to the University's Graduate Studies Calendar 2010-2011:

Grade	Grade Point Value	Graduate Description
A+	4.0	Outstanding
A	4.0	Excellent – superior performance showing comprehensive understanding of the subject matter
A-	3.7	Very good performance
B+	3.3	Good performance
B	3.0	Satisfactory performance Note: The grade point value (3.0) associated with this grade is the minimum acceptable average that a graduate student must maintain throughout the program as computed at the end of each registration anniversary year of the program.
B-	2.7	Minimum pass for students in the Faculty of Graduate Studies Note: A student who receives a B- or lower in two or more courses will be required to withdraw regardless of their grade point average unless the program recommends otherwise. Individual programs may require a higher minimum passing grade.
C+	2.3	
C	2.0	
C-	1.7	
D+	1.3	
D	1.0	
F	0.0	

All grades below B- are indicative of failure at the graduate level and cannot be counted toward Faculty of Graduate Studies course requirements. A student who receives a grade of F will normally be required to withdraw unless the program recommends otherwise.

Intellectual Honesty:

Students should be familiar with University regulations regarding academic integrity (University Calendar 2010/2011).

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism is a serious offense, the penalty for which is an **F** on the assignment and possibly also an **F** in the course, academic probation, or requirement to withdraw.

The University Calendar states that *"plagiarism exists when:*

a) the work submitted or presented was done, in whole or in part, by an individual other than the one submitting or presenting the work (this includes having another impersonate the student or otherwise substituting the work of another for one's own in an examination or test),

b) parts of the work are taken from another source without reference to the original author,

c) the whole work (e.g., an essay) is copied from another source, and/or

d) a student submits or presents work in one course which has also been submitted in another course (although it may be completely original with that student) without the knowledge of or prior agreement of the instructor involved. While it is recognized that scholarly work often involves reference to the ideas, data and conclusions of other scholars, intellectual honesty requires that such references be explicitly and clearly noted."

Plagiarism occurs not only when direct quotations are taken from a source without specific acknowledgement but also when original ideas or data from the source are not acknowledged. A bibliography is insufficient to establish the portions of the student's work taken from external sources; footnotes or other recognized forms of citation must be used for this purpose.

Safewalk Program:

"You don't have to walk alone...." Call 403-220-5333 and a member of the Safewalk Team will walk you to your car, the LRT, or any destination on campus. Safewalk is available to all students, staff and faculty any time of the day or night. Look for the Campus Security Help Phones located throughout the University. Please don't hesitate to call!

Dates to remember:

October 11, Thanksgiving.

November 11, Remembrance Day. November 11-14, Reading Days – no classes.