PHIL-3306.001: HISTORY OF EASTERN PHILOSOPHY I 
SPRING 2012, BH-235, M 7:00-9:30

INSTRUCTOR AND OFFICE INFORMATION: Stefan Sencerz, Ph.D. FC 261; 825-2392; Office hours: MW 3:15-5:30; M 9:30-10 p.m. T 2:15-3:15 and by appointment. E-mail: stefan.sencerz@tamucc.edu; web: http://falcon.tamucc.edu/~sencerz/eastern-zen.htm

COURSE DESCRIPTION: What is the nature of reality? What are the relationships between reality and mind? Does the self endure through time? Is science the only way to cognition? Is intuition an alternative (or supplement) to scientific approach? What is the importance of spiritual practice? Does spiritual practice lead to a genuine cognition?

These topics appear to have been treated differently in the East and the West. Eastern philosophical and spiritual traditions seem to assume that reality is mind-dependent -- they seem to lean towards some versions of idealism. Western schools of thinking tend to assume that reality is mind-independent -- they seem to display realist leanings. Eastern traditions seem to put emphasis on meditation and spiritual practice. In the West we tend to put emphasis on science and intellectual quest. Are these differences real and fundamental or only apparent?

In the course we will attempt to address this issue by studying the points of view of both Eastern and Western philosophy. We will focus on the various schools of Hinduism and Buddhism -- especially the schools of Madhyamika Buddhism (exemplified in Zen Buddhism and Vajrayana (Tibetan) Buddhism). The readings will include the classic Indian, Chinese, Tibetan and Japanese texts, as well as some writings by contemporary practitioners and scholars.

TEXTS: S. Radhakrishnan and Ch. A. Moore, A Source Book in Indian Philosophy [hereafter, IP]
Additional readings will be distributed in class as handouts [H]
Recommended additional readings posted on line. [http://falcon.tamucc.edu/~sencerz/zen.htm]

HANDOUTS/OUTLINES: If you miss a class, make sure that you have copies of any handout distributed in the class. Some required readings will be distributed in class in form of handouts. Make sure you will have them. There may be additional handouts are intended primarily as aids to the understanding of the lectures and readings. They do not cover all of the material, and they do not contain complete accounts of the topics they do cover. Merely memorizing the handouts will not enable you to pass the course.

COURSE ORGANIZATION: Class meetings will consist of both lectures/presentations and discussions. Questions, discussions, disagreements and arguments is expected and strongly encouraged at any time. Thus, we will allow ourselves to spend more time on an issue if we think it deserves the attention.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES: Students taking the course will be expected to:
1) demonstrate (on test questions) an understanding of a variety of philosophical theories and principles;
2) write essays and case studies in which those theories and principles will be explained and applied to philosophical controversies;
3) develop their reasoning skills and demonstrate that development on quiz and test questions.

REQUIREMENTS: Complete the assigned readings before the class for which they are assigned. Attend every class, arrive to class on time and remain in class until it is over. Complete all graded assignments.

ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION: All materials discussed in the lectures and covered in the readings are the potential basis for test and exam questions. Students are therefore expected to attend all class meetings and keep up with assigned readings. In general, if you don’t attend class or don’t read required texts, don’t expect to pass. About every other class meeting, there will be an attendance quiz testing material to be discussed on a given day. One worst grade will be dropped; the rest will contribute 20% to your final grade. Each additional unexcused absence will result in the loss of credit you would have earned during that class. Attendance quizzes and homework will mostly consist of multiple-choice questions and short reading summaries.
**GRADED WORK:** Tests will include a combination of multiple-choice questions and short essays.
- 10% -- the meditation paper
- 20% -- homework and attendance (see above under attendance and participation)
- 20% -- The 1st test (March 05)
- 20% -- The final test (May 07, M, 7:15-9:45)
- 10% -- Draft of a paper (March 19)
- 20% -- The final version of a paper (April 30)

Grading will be on the standard scale: 90-100% = A, 80-89% = B, etc.

**THE FINAL PAPER.** The point of this paper is to relate material from our meetings and readings to an issue in meditation, the relationships between spiritual practice and arts, the philosophical principles underlying contemplative life, historical and philosophical developments of various schools of Buddhism, Hinduism, Taoism, various kinds of meditation, etc.

**PLAGIARISM AND ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:** As a student at TAMU-CC, you are bound by the student code of conduct. Cheating, plagiarism or any other form of academic dishonesty are grounds for failing the course. Representing someone else’s work as your own is known as plagiarism. Whether it is done intentionally (e.g. cheating) or innocently (e.g. failing to place proper quotation marks) plagiarism is a serious offense. Plagiarized work will be assigned a grade of “F.”

**MAKE-UP TESTS AND INCOMPLETES:** Unless it is a case of demonstrable emergency, all papers must be turned in on time; I do not accept late homework or in class work. An incomplete for the course is possible only in cases where course work is nearly complete, and the student has a good excuse for not completing the course work by the end of the semester. Grading will be on the standard scale: 90-100% = A, 80-89% = B, etc.

**ADVISEMENT:** Academic advisors are available to assist students with course selection, degree plans, and other academic matters. Each college has an academic advising center, staffed by full-time professionals. In the College of Liberal Arts the undergraduate advisor is Natasha Crawford (825-3466; Natasha.crawford@tamucc.edu). The graduate advisor is Rachelle Stanley (825-5896; Rachelle.stanley@tamucc.edu). Both are located on the second floor of Driftwood.

**AMERICANS WITH DISABILITY ACT (ADA)** is a federal ant-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil right protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodations of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact Disability Service Office at 825-5816 or visit their office in Driftwood 101.

**GRADE APPEAL PROCESS:** AS stated in University Rule 12.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. It is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Rule 13.02.C2, Student Grade Appeals, and University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, student may contact the office of Student Affairs.

**TENTATIVE SCHEDULE**
W1, 01/23, General Introduction and Organization; Introduction to meditative practice:
  - Readings: Sheng Yen, Zen Meditation [H]; Meditation-instructions available on the web
  - Also, IP, General Introduction; and AP, Ch. 1
W2, 01/30 General Introduction to Indian Philosophy continued
   IP, General Introduction; and AP, Ch. 1
   Karl H. Potter, Presuppositions of Indian Philosophies [H]
   The Vedic Period [IP, The Vedas, The Upanishads; AP, Ch. 2]
   Meditation paper is due

W3, 02/06 The Vedic Period continued [IP, The Vedas, The Upanishads; AP, Ch. 2]

W4, 02/13 The Epic Period
   Readings, IP, Bhagavad Gita, Mahabharata, The Laws of Manu, AP, Ch. 7

W5, 02/20 The Heterodox Systems: Jainism (Buddhism)
   IP, 250ff, AP Ch. 3-4; additional readings will be assigned

W6, 02/27 Historical Buddha, Early Buddhism , Theravada (Hinayana) Buddhism
   IP, pp. 272-328; AP Ch. 4-5

W7, 03/05 Mahayana Buddhism (Yogacara and Madhyamika
   Readings IP, pp. 328ff, AP Ch. 6)
   The 1st Test (20 %)

   03/12-16 SPRING BREAK

W8, 03/19 Karma , Determinism, and Freedom in Buddhism
   Readings: Venerable Mahasi Sayadaw, Theory of Karma in Buddhism [Web]
   Sogyal Rinpoche, "Evolution, Karma, and Rebirth" (from The Tibetan Book of Leaving and Dying, Harper 1993) [H].
   A draft of the paper is due (10%)

W9, 03/26 Orthodox Hindu Systems [Nyaya, Vaisesika, Samkhya, Yoga, Purva Mimansa, Vedanta)
   Read IP, X-XV, AP 8-10.

W10, 04/02 Taoism and Confucianism
   Tao Te Ching [Web]; AP, Ch. 14-17.

W11, 04/09 Tibetan Buddhism [Readings TBA]

W12, 04/16 Zen Buddhism

W13, 04/23, Approaches to Nirvana
   Readings: Albert Low. “Master Hakuin’s Gateway to Freedom.” [H], “Three Approaches to Nirvana” (Tricycle) [H]

W14, 04/30 , topics and readings TBA
   The Final Papers are due (20%)

W15, 05/07 THE FINAL TEST, 7:15-9:45