INSTRUCTOR AND OFFICE INFORMATION: Stefan Sencerz, Ph.D. Office: FC 261; 825-2392;
hours: MW 4:45-6:30; M 9:30-10 p.m. T 2:15-3:15 and by appointment. E-mail:
stefan.sencerz@tamucc.edu; web: 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 Eastern
philosophy, with a special emphasis on the various schools of Buddhism. The readings will include the
classic Indian, Chinese, Tibetan and Japanese texts, as well as contemporary commentaries.

Mark Sideritis, Buddhism as Philosophy: An Introduction (Hackett 2007) [hereafter, BP]
Additional readings will be distributed in class as handouts [H]
Recommended additional readings posted online. [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 04)
- 20% -- The final test (May 13, M, 7:15-9:45)
- 10% -- Draft of a paper (March 19)
- 20% -- The final version of a paper (April 29)

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 (and Hinduism and Taoism), various kinds of meditation, etc. The paper should be about 10-12 pp long, font 12pp or smaller, standard margins, doubled spaced.

**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.

**BOOKS YOU MAY FIND USEFUL FOR WRITING YOUR PAPER**
- H.M. Enomya-Lassalle, The Practice of Zen Meditation
- Shinichi Hisamatsu, Zen and the Fine Arts, Kodanska International 0-87001-519-7
- Kapleau, The Three Pillars of Zen;
Nancy Wilson Ross, *Buddhism: A Way of Life and Thought*; and *The World of Zen*.  
Lucien Stryk, *The Awakened Self: Encounters with Zen* (Kodansha)  
Shunryu Suzuki, *Zen Mind, Beginners Mind*.  
Yamada, *Gateless Gate*: Shibayama, *Zen Comments on the Mumonkan*  
Yampolsky, *The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch*  
John C.H. Wu, *The Golden Age of Zen*

**TENTATIVE SCHEDULE**

W1, 01/28, General Introduction and Organization; Introduction to meditative practice:  
Readings: ZT, Chapters 1-3; Sheng Yen, *Zen Meditation* [H]

W2, 02/04 Buddhism as a Philosophy and basic teachings of early Buddhism: (BP, Ch. 1-2)  
**Meditation paper is due**

W3, 02/11 Non-Self: Empty Persons (BP, Ch. 3)  
Things to Pay Attention to during Meditation (ZT, 4)

W4, 02/18 Buddhist Ethics (Buddhism and Hinduism) (BP, Chs. 4-5)

W5-6, 02/25 & 03/04 Abhidharma: The Metaphysics of Empty Persons (BP, Ch. 6)  
Physiological Effects of zazen (ZT, Ch. 5)

**March 11-15 Spring Break**

W8, 03/18 The Rise of Mahayana (BP, Ch. 7)  
**The 1st Test (20%)**

W9, 03/25 Yogacara and the rejection of physical objects (BP, Ch 8)

W10, 04/01 Madhyamaka and the doctrine of emptiness (BP, Ch. 9)

W11, 04/08 The School of Dinnaga: Buddhist Epistemology (BP, Ch. 10)

W12, 04/15 Zazen Wasan (Ch. 6)

W13, 04/22 The Ten Oxherding Pictures (ZT, Ch. 7) &  
Disanto & Steele, “A Mystical Map” [H]

W14, 04/29 Tibetan Buddhism, readings TBA

W15, 05/06 Zen Arts, readings “Zen and Poetry”, “Zen and Psychoanalysis” [h]  
**The Final Papers are due (20%)**

W16, 05/13 **THE FINAL TEST**, 7:15-9:45