PHIL-3306.001: HISTORY OF EASTERN PHILOSOPHY I  
SPRING 2012, CS 112, 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 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 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.

**GRADE APPEALS:** As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.03, 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. The burden of proof 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 Procedure 13.02.99.C2.03, Student Grade Appeals. These documents are accessible online at: http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/index.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean’s office in the college in which the course is taught. For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html.

**DISABILITIES ACCOMMODATIONS:** The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights 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 accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall 116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

**ACADEMIC ADVISING:** The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. Any amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office
DROPPING CLASS: I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with your academic advisor, the Financial Aid Office, and me, before you decide to drop this course. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class. **April 6th, 2018** is the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W” this term.

THE FINE PRINT: For all matters concerning course withdrawal, appeal of grades, academic misconduct, etc, students are strongly advised to consult the rules outlined in the Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi Student Handbook and on the web at: [http://studentaffairs.tamucc.edu/](http://studentaffairs.tamucc.edu/).

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, pp. 272-328; AP Ch. 4-5

**W6, 02/27** Historical Buddha, Early Buddhism, Theravada (Hinayana) Buddhism
Read IP, X-XV, AP 8-10.

**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 Haku’in’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