

Course Title	: HISTORY OF RELIGIONS IN CHINA
Course Code	: HST3352
No. of Credits/Term	: 3
Mode of Tuition	: Sectional
Class Contact Hours	: 3 hours per week
Category of Major Prog.	: Elective
Prerequisite(s)	: None
Co-requisite(s)	: None
Exclusion(s)	: None
Exemption Requirement(s)	: None

Brief Course Description

Buddhism, Taoism and folk religions in China are examined in terms of their historical development and significance in Chinese politics and society. Topics are organized chronologically and thematically.

Aims

The course examines the history of Taoism, Buddhism, and folk religions at both the levels of the beliefs and practices, showing the significance of religion in state governance, social mobilization, formation of communal identities, and Chinese people's ways of managing death.

Learning Outcomes

Students will be able:

- (1) to demonstrate an academic understanding of different approaches to major issues in Chinese religions.
- (2) to explain the complex cultural interchange in Chinese history in the religious domain from a long-term perspective.
- (3) to reflect on their own attitudes towards Chinese religions in light of the broader historical context, and thus demonstrate a respect for differences in religious beliefs.
- (4) to conduct research using primary and secondary sources critically.
- (5) to develop written and oral communication skills

Indicative Content

- I. Taoism in Chinese society
- II. Buddhism in Chinese society
- III. Religion and the state in imperial China
- IV. Religion and peasant rebellions in imperial China
- V. Temples, festivals, and communal identities
- VI. Movements against "superstition" in 20th century China
- VII. Religion and women
- VIII. Managing death: funerals and the belief in afterlife
- IX. Chinese religions in Hong Kong

Teaching Method

This course is taught partly as lectures, partly as seminars with assigned readings and discussions.

Measurement of Learning Outcomes

- (1) research paper: to evaluate students' written communication skills, their ability to conduct research using primary and secondary sources critically, and to explain the complex cultural interchange in Chinese history in the religious domain from a long-term perspective. (LOs 2, 4, 5)
- (2) fieldwork report: to evaluate students' ability to collect primary sources from fieldworks, and to expose them to different religious practices in order to help them learn to respect religious differences. (LOs 3, 4)
- (3) intensive class discussion: to assess students' verbal ability to critically analyze scholarly literature on Chinese religions, and their awareness to reflect on their own attitudes towards Chinese religions in light of the broader historical context.(LOs 1, 3, 5)
- (4) examination: to evaluate students' written communication skills and their comprehension of different approaches to major issues in Chinese religions. (LOs 1, 5)

Assessment

Continuous Assessment: 100%

- Research project: 30 %
- Field-trip report: 15 %
- Class discussion: 25 %
- Term Paper: 30 %

Required Readings

Selected Readings from the following:

- Chappell, David W., ed., *Buddhist and Taoist Practice in Medieval Chinese Society*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii, University of Hawaii Press, 1987.
- Chen, Kuan-sheng, *Buddhism in China: A Historical Survey*, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1964.
- Gernet, Jacques, *Buddhism in Chinese Society: An Economic History from the Fifth to the Tenth Centuries*, Trans. Franciscus Verellen, New York : Columbia University Press, 1995.
- Holmes, Welch, *The Practice of Chinese Buddhism 1900-1950*, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1967.
- Johnson, David, Andrew J. Nathan, and Evelyn S. Rawski, eds., *Popular Culture in Late Imperial China*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986.
- Lagerwey, John, *Taoist Ritual in Chinese Society and History*, New York: Macmillan, 1987.
- _____, ed., *Religion and Chinese Society*, Hong Kong: Chinese University Press; Paris: École française d'Extrême-Orient, 2004.
- Overmyer, Daniel L., *Folk Buddhist Religion: Dissenting Sects in Late Traditional China*, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1976.
- Teiser, Stephen, *The Scripture on the Ten Kings and the Making of Purgatory in Medieval Chinese Buddhism*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1994.
- Thompson, Laurence G., *Chinese Religion: An Introduction*, Belmont: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1996.
- _____, *The Chinese Way in Religion*, Belmont: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1997.

- Watson, James and Evelyn Rawski, eds., *Death Ritual in Late Imperial and Modern China*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987.
- Wolf, Arthur, *Religion and Ritual in Chinese Society*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1974.
- Wright, Arthur. *Buddhism in Chinese History*, New York: Atheneum, 1965.
- Yang, C.K. *Religion in Chinese Society*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1961.

Important Notes:

- (1) Students are expected to spend a total of 9 hours (i.e. 3 hours of class contact and 6 hours of personal study) per week to achieve the course learning outcomes.
- (2) Students shall be aware of the University regulations about dishonest practice in course work, tests and examinations, and the possible consequences as stipulated in the Regulations Governing University Examinations. In particular, plagiarism, being a kind of dishonest practice, is “the presentation of another person’s work without proper acknowledgement of the source, including exact phrases, or summarised ideas, or even footnotes/citations, whether protected by copyright or not, as the student’s own work”. Students are required to strictly follow university regulations governing academic integrity and honesty.
- (3) Students are required to submit writing assignment(s) using Turnitin.
- (4) To enhance students’ understanding of plagiarism, a mini-course “Online Tutorial on Plagiarism Awareness” is available on <https://pla.ln.edu.hk/>.