

# CORC 3202: CLASSICAL PHILOSOPHIES OF INDIA AND CHINA

Study Abroad in China

Professor Saam Trivedi

## COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This class broadly and critically surveys the classical philosophies of China and India, two of the world's oldest civilizations that together account for about 40% of humanity today (and also happen to be two of the world's fastest growing economies). Using selections from original texts as well as recent secondary writing, we will discuss views associated with Confucius, Laozi, Zhuangzi, the Hindu sages who composed the Vedas and Upanishads, the Buddha, and others. These thinkers addressed issues concerning the nature of reality, the self, knowledge, ethics, society, enlightenment, and self-realization.

Field trips will be organized to multiple historical and cultural sites (e.g., Buddhist temples and monasteries, Daoist temple, Confucius Temple, and many museums) in Chinese cities of the program, which will help deepen students' understanding of the topics under discussion.

## REQUIREMENTS:

1. One mid-term in-class exam, worth c. 25% of your overall grade
2. One 3-5 page paper, worth c. 30%
3. One final exam, worth c. 25%
4. Class attendance and participation, worth c. 20%

REQUIRED TEXTS: (1) John Koller, *Asian Philosophies* (Pearson), 6<sup>th</sup> edition;  
(2) John and Patricia Koller (eds.), *A Sourcebook in Asian Philosophy* (Prentice Hall);  
(3) Lao-tzu, *Tao te Ching*, trans. Stephen Addis & Stanley Lombardo (Hackett);  
(4) Stephen Mitchell (trans.), *The Bhagavad Gita* (Three Rivers Press);  
(5) Walpole Rahula, *What the Buddha Taught*, (Grove Press).

## COURSE OUTCOMES:

1. Students will be able to evaluate classical philosophical texts of India and China;
2. Students will be able to understand the classical philosophies of India and China and their shaping of modern Asia; and
3. Students will develop the ability to assess different viewpoints and influential theories in Indian and Chinese cultures, and their relevance for us today.

## SCHEDULE OF READINGS:

Sessions 1-2:

Course-Introduction and Welcome

### Part I: Chinese Philosophy:

*Chinese Philosophy: Overview*

Sessions 3-5

Koller, *Asian Philosophies*: Preface, Introduction + Chapter 14.

Also Kollers, *Sourcebook*, Chapter 18 (pp. 461-75 only).

### *Confucianism*

Koller, *Asian Philosophies*, Chapter 16.

Kollers, *Sourcebook*, Chapter 16: "The Vision of Confucius" (pp. 407-21 only).

Kollers, *Sourcebook*, Chapter 16: "The Vision of Confucius" (pp. 422-43 only).

Kollers, *Sourcebook*, Chapter 19 (pp. 476-500 only).

Site visits: Tiananmen Square, the Forbidden City, and Temple of Heaven/the Summer Palace in Beijing, Confucius Temple, Ming Emperor Tomb, & Dr. Sun Yat-sen Mausoleum in Nanjing, and Yangzhou Museum in Yangzhou.

Sessions 6-7

*Daoism*

*Tao te Ching*.

*Tao te Ching* (contd.).

Kollers, *Sourcebook*, Chapter 17: "The Taoist Vision" (pp. 444-50 only).

Kollers, *Sourcebook*, Chapter 17: "The Taoist Vision" (pp. 450-60 only).

Site visits: Daoist temple and Nanjing Museum in Nanjing.

## **Mid-term Exam**

### Part II: Indian Philosophy

Sessions 8-9

*Indian Philosophy: Overview.*

**Paper-Topics Given Out.** Also Koller, *Asian Philosophies*, Chapter 1

Koller, *Asian Philosophies*, Chapter 3 (also Carvaka handout).

Sessions 10-11

*Hinduism*

Koller, *Asian Philosophies*, Chapter 2.

Kollers, *Sourcebook*, Chapter 1: "Vedas and Upanishads" (pp. 5-11 and 25-30 only).

*The Bhagavad Gita*. Also Koller, *Asian Philosophies*, Chapter 7

Koller, *Asian Philosophies*, Chapter 10 (pp. 120-27 only).

Koller, *Asian Philosophies*, Chapter 8: "Samkhya-Yoga".

**Papers Due.** Also Koller, *Asian Philosophies*, Chapter 9: "Nyaya" (pp. 109-14 only).

Site visits: Tibetan Buddhism temples in Beijing and Nanjing.

Sessions 12-13

### Part III: Buddhism

Koller, *Asian Philosophies*, Chapter 4.

Rahula, Chapters I-V.

Rahula, Chapters VI-VIII.

Kollers, *Sourcebook*, Chapter 9, "Basic Teachings According to the Early Texts."

Koller, *Asian Philosophies*, Chapter 5.

Rahula, "Selected Texts" (pp. 91-138).

Kollers, *Sourcebook*, Chapter 10, "Philosophical Issues in Early Buddhism."

Site visits: Wild Goose Pagoda and Xuanzang Buddhist Statue in Xi'an; Jiming Buddhist Temple in Nanjing

Session 14

Course Summation and Conclusion.

## **Final Exam**