

EAST ASIAN STUDIES (EAST)

EAST 2201b / EALL 2190b / HUMS 214b / PHIL 1119b / RLST 171b, Introduction to Chinese Philosophy Lucas Bender

This course represents an introduction to the most important philosophical thinkers and texts in Chinese history, ranging from roughly 500 BC–1500 AD. Topics include ethics, political philosophy, epistemology, and ontology. We discuss the basic works of Confucian and Daoist philosophers during the Warring States and early imperial eras, the continuation of these traditions in early medieval “dark learning,” Buddhist philosophy (in its original Indian context, the early period of its spread to China, and in mature Chinese Buddhist schools such as Chan/Zen), and Neo-Confucian philosophy. The course emphasizes readings in the original texts of the thinkers and traditions in question (all in English translation). No knowledge of Chinese or previous contact with Chinese philosophy required. HU o Course cr

EAST 2202a / CHNS 2000a / EALL 2000a / HUMS 4527a, The Chinese Tradition Staff

An introduction to the literature, culture, and thought of premodern China, from the beginnings of the written record to the turn of the twentieth century. Close study of textual and visual primary sources, with attention to their historical and cultural backdrops. Students enrolled in CHNS 200 join a weekly Mandarin-language discussion section. No knowledge of Chinese required for students enrolled in EALL 200. Students enrolled in CHNS 200 must have L5 proficiency in Mandarin or permission of the course instructor. HU o Course cr

EAST 2221b / CPLT 2650b / EALL 2560b / GLBL 2251b / HUMS 2720b, China in the World Jing Tsu

Recent headlines about China in the world, deciphered in both modern and historical contexts. Interpretation of new events and diverse texts through transnational connections. Topics include China's international relations and global footprint, language and script, Chinese America, science and technology, and science fiction. Special topic for AY 2025-2026 with guest speakers: AI, U.S.-China futurism, and tech policy Readings and discussion in English. HU o Course cr

EAST 2301a / HIST 1421a, China from Present to Past Staff

Underlying causes of current issues facing China traced back to their origins in the premodern period. Topics include economic development, corruption, environmental crises, gender, and Pacific island disputes. Selected primary-source readings in English, images, videos, and Web resources. Preference given to first years and sophomores.

WR, HU o Course cr

EAST 2321b / HIST 304b, The History of Modern China, 1911-2025 George Remisovsky

An introduction to modern Chinese history spanning from the fall of the Qing Empire to the present. Examines the factors that led to the end of China's dynastic system, the political and social divisions that emerged after the Qing Dynasty's collapse, and the various alternative visions for China's future that have arisen from the late nineteenth century onward. Focuses on aspects of political, economic, and social history. HU o Course cr

EAST 2403a / HSAR 3305a, Time in Chinese Art Staff

This class explores the theme of “time” in Chinese art from the traditional to the contemporary period. Drawing upon scholarship on Chinese philosophical understanding of time and clockworks, this course explores how art made manifest notions of the future, past, and present, the passage of time, *ksana*, aeons, eternity and deadlines. This class also investigates manipulations of time – how the unique format, artistic ideas and medium and materials of Chinese art helped to pause, rewind, compress and shorten time. Observing such temporalities, we analyze narrative murals and handscrolls, “this life” v. afterlife in funeral art, paintings of immortality, the significance of bronze corrosion in antiquarianism, uses of the past in traditional Chinese painting and contemporary art, the future and agelessness in movies and digital art, the materiality and nostalgia of old photography and time-based artworks, as well as the history of People’s Republic of China as presented at the Tian’anmen Square. HU o Course cr

*** EAST 3122a / ANTH 4824a / ANTH 5824a, Politics of Memory** Yukiko Koga

This course explores the role of memory as a social, cultural, and political force in contemporary society. How societies remember difficult pasts has become a contested site for negotiating the present. Through the lens of memory, we examine complex roles that our relationships to difficult pasts play in navigating issues we face today. This course explores this politics of memory that takes place in the realm of popular culture and public space. The class asks such questions as: How do you represent difficult and contested pasts? What does it mean to enable long-silenced victims’ voices to be heard? What are the consequences of re-narrating the past by highlighting past injuries and trauma? Does memory work heal or open wounds of a society and a nation? Through examples drawn from the Holocaust, the atomic bombing in Hiroshima, the Vietnam War, genocide in Indonesia and massacres in Lebanon, to debates on confederacy statues, slavery, and lynching in the US, this course approaches these questions through an anthropological exploration of concepts such as memory, trauma, mourning, silence, voice, testimony, and victimhood. HU, SO

*** EAST 3222a / EALL 3000a, Sinological Methods** Pauline Lin

A research course designed for graduate and advanced undergraduate students working on early, imperial or modern China in preparation for their theses. Students use their own research topic as a focus to explore and utilize the wealth of primary sources and tools available in China, Japan, and the West. As a group, we learn about the history of Chinese book collecting, classification of knowledge, the compilation of the encyclopedia *Gujin tushu jicheng* and the canon *Siku quanshu*, as well as the darker aspects of censorship from ancient times to the present. For native speakers of Chinese, the course includes secondary literature in English and instruction in professional writing in English about China. Other topics include Chinese bibliographies, bibliophiles’ notes, specialized dictionaries, maps and geographical gazetteers, textual editions, genealogies and biographical sources, archaeological and visual materials, major Chinese encyclopedias, compendia, and databases, and evaluating variations and reliability. The course is supplemented by materials from the Beinecke rare books collection. Prerequisite: CHNS 171 or equivalent. Formerly CHNS 202. HU

* **EAST 3401a / HSAR 4449a, Nanban Art: Japan's Artistic Encounter with Early Modern Europe** Mimi Yiengpruksawan

Exploratory and investigative in nature, this seminar is conceived as a baseline engagement with the intersections of art, religion, science, commerce, war, and diplomacy at Kyoto and Nagasaki in the age of Japanese, Chinese, Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch, and English political and mercantile interaction in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It addresses a set of themes whose point of entry is the entangled character of visual production and reception in Japan at a tipping point in the emergence of global modernity, when what were called the Nanbans – “Southern Barbarians,” i.e. Europeans – began to arrive in Japan. The question of whether or not much-theorized nomenclatures such as *baroque*, *rococo*, *mestizo*, and even *global modernity* are pertinent to analysis from the Japanese and Asian perspective constitutes the backbone of the course and its primary objective in the study of a corpus of visual materials spanning the European and Asian cultural spheres. As such the seminar is not only about Japan, per se, or about Japanese objects, or the shogunal eye. It is equally about how Japan and Japanese objects and materials, along with objects and materials from other places, figured in a greater community of exchange, friction, confrontation, conquest, and adaptation in times when Portuguese marauders, Jesuit missionaries, Muslim traders, and Japanese pirates found themselves in the same waters, on ships laden with goods, making landfall in the domains of Japan's great military hegemony. HU

* **EAST 4101b / ANTH 4101b / ARCG 4101b, Archaeological Plant Remains from East Asia and Beyond** Staff

Archaeology asks who we are, and how did humanity get to where it is today. This course explores the subfield of archaeobotany that is dedicated to understanding the same questions through the analysis of plant remains from archaeological sites. Students gain foundational knowledge of archaeobotanical methods, the kinds of plant remains studied, and key research themes including climate and ecology, subsistence economies, plant domestication and spread, and non-food plant uses. There is a long history of research on archaeological plant remains in East Asia. We examine how ancient peoples interacted with their environments mainly through macro plant evidence, i.e. seeds and fruits. We discuss the social impact of choices people made about different kinds of domesticated and wild plants for foods and for production of objects for daily life. The course also highlights contemporary advancements in theories and methodologies within the discipline, supported by case studies from around the globe, with a particular emphasis on East Asia. SO

* **EAST 4120b / ANTH 4120b, Islam and Communist Modernities in Central Asia and Xinjiang** Staff

In the early 20th century, Central Asia and Xinjiang – two Muslim-majority regions with a shared history – fell under the rule of two communist states, the USSR and China. Both states facilitated the emergence of local nations while launching aggressive secularization policies aimed at suppressing local Islamic beliefs and practices. This course takes a comparative approach to the interwoven trajectories of Islam, nation-building, and secularization in Central Asia and Xinjiang. In so doing, it pursues two overarching objectives. The first is to trace the major historical events that have shaped these regions since the late 19th century. The second is to examine the main theoretical frameworks scholars have employed to better understand these historical transformations. Key conceptual questions explored in this course include: What is

nationalism and how did Central Asian nations emerge? What is Islam as an object of scholarly inquiry? What is secularism, and how does it shape and regulate religion? How did Soviet and Chinese secularization campaigns transfigure Islam in Central Asia and Xinjiang? What forces facilitate the ongoing ethnocide of the Uyghurs in Xinjiang?

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* **EAST 4121a / ANTH 4121a, Asian Foodways in the “Anthropocene”** Staff

Together with other creatures on the earth, we have formed food chains. In the “Anthropocene,” people have discovered food, improved it, and lived with it. The rich and varied definitions of food have also enabled humans, the animal at the top of the food chains, to create many new ones. Food enters and becomes a part of the human body; in other words, the food we consume has become ourselves. How we define food also determines the way in which we relate to other living beings. We will explore cultural practices of food chains in East Asian societies, with a focus on China, Japan, and South Korea. class will guide students to think about the origins, production, and creation of food, as well as the politics, ethics, and technologies that are intertwined with the circulation of food. By reading ethnographies of food, this class provides students with the theoretical and methodological means to observe and analyze perhaps the most common thing in life. Food is not just a static object, but part of the global food chains that are constantly circulating, and part of the circulation with the human body. so

* **EAST 4122a / ANTH 4122a, The Rise of Biosovereignty: Biopolitics, Technology, and Governance** Staff

This seminar critically explores the concept of “biosovereignty” – a framework of ideas and practices through which the state safeguards and utilizes biological resources – to examine how East Asian countries have conceptualized and governed “life” through science and technology. Through this seminar, the goal is to develop a critical understanding of “biosovereignty” and to use the concept to analyze how East Asian states have perceived “life” and “life forms” as assets and properties, as well as to discuss the stakes and implications of their biosovereignty practices. Themes such as the genetic makeup of crops, traditional medicines, seed wars, stem cells, pandemics, and human DNA inform our discussions. We also discuss how international political organizations envision biosovereignty through international treaties and projects. so

* **EAST 4221b / EALL 2850b, 100 Years of Japanese Pop Literature** Luciana Sanga

We cover a variety of genres, from historical fiction to light novels, and authors ranging from Edogawa Rampo to Murakami Haruki. We analyze these works against the literary and socio-historical context of Japan and consider questions of canon formation, literary taste and value(s), and the concept of genre. Occasionally we discuss highbrow or canonical texts and interrogate the validity of the highbrow/popular distinction. All texts are available in English, no prior knowledge of Japanese or Japan is needed. HU

* **EAST 4222b / EALL 2860b, Reading and Translating Modern Japanese Literature** Luciana Sanga

In this class, we read Natsume Sōseki’s canonical 1908 novel *Sanshirō* in its original Japanese. One of the most beloved works of modern Japanese literature, *Sanshirō* features an eponymous protagonist struggling to navigate college life, love, and friendship. I provide vocabulary lists as well as the historical background necessary to understanding the text, with a focus on its format as a newspaper serialization.

Students are expected to come to class having carefully read the assigned chapter. We translate selected passages into English and discuss the text in the context of its initial publication venue and beyond. Students gain a deep understanding of this Japanese classic and become more aware of some recurrent challenges in translating Japanese into English. Prerequisite: third year Japanese or equivalent. Graduate students from any discipline who wish to take the class should email the instructor. HU

*** EAST 4301a / HIST 2443a, Environmental History of Japan (1600 to the present)**
Staff

This course explores Japanese concepts of nature and the environment from the Tokugawa period to the present. Split into three modules, we consider how the Japanese government and society have responded to environmental change, degradation, and destruction. The first module – Tokugawa Nature (1600-1868) – examines shifts in agriculture and forestry, urbanization, and the emergence of scholarly knowledge of the natural world. The second module – Modern Transformation (1868-1945) – focuses on Japan’s rapid industrialization, disaster preparedness, and imperial expansion, tracing the environmental consequences of these processes on both the archipelago and East Asia. The third module – Postwar Developmentalism (1946-present) – addresses industrial pollution diseases, the Fukushima nuclear disaster, and the environmental struggles related to the American military bases in Okinawa. HU

*** EAST 4322a / HIST 2464a, Law and Society in East Asia, 1600-Present** George Remisovsky

What have been the primary concerns of lawmakers in China, Japan, and Korea throughout history? Were their ideas primarily shaped by “Confucian” ideas or by other, more material concerns? How did the public try to make the legal system work for them? This seminar explores these questions in three parts. Part I examines the structure of the Tang legal system and how it shaped the institutions of both Japan and Korea. Part II focuses on case studies from the seventeenth through nineteenth centuries, showing how these legal systems operated in areas ranging from land disputes to violent acts of revenge. Part III then looks at some of the dramatic changes that began in the late 19th century, as foreign imperial pressure impelled their transition to Western-style laws and court systems. HU

*** EAST 4401b / HSAR 4393b, The Transcultural Life of Things: Case Studies from East Asia** Staff

From production to circulation and consumption, the life of an artifact often unfolds across multiple geographic locations and varied environments. The movement of things in space and time offers valuable insights into the waxing and waning of maritime and terrestrial networks that fostered transregional connectivity. This course introduces students to a variety of objects from premodern East Asia with a view to understanding the histories of intercultural exchange inscribed into their designs, materials, and itineraries. It begins by familiarizing students with methodologies, interpretive frameworks, and critical vocabulary for studying interconnected material cultures. The rest of the course is organized as a series of case studies on specific object types and structured into four modules, each focusing on a different sphere of exchange defined by shared geography, trade, religion, or ecosystem. Through this diverse group of objects, we will explore the entanglement of material culture with evolving structures

of power, networks of interregional and long-distance exchange, and the physical environment in East Asia. HU

* **EAST 4520b / PLSC 3133b, Chinese Thinking on International Relations** Feng Zhang

How have the Chinese thought about international relations and their country's role in the world? How has such thinking influenced China's foreign relations past and present? This advanced seminar canvasses Chinese thinking on international relations from the imperial epoch to the present, focusing on the post-1949 era of the People's Republic of China. It is structured around three core engagements: the historical background of Chinese thinking; policy thinking of the successive PRC leaderships; and new strands of thinking at present. It examines both the evolutionary process of thinking and a body of prominent ideas and doctrines. Throughout the course, students have the opportunity to place China's foreign policy in a broader and deeper intellectual context than is often the case. SO

* **EAST 4521a / PLSC 3134a, China's International Relations** Feng Zhang

This course examines China's international relations with a focus on both historical context and contemporary developments. Beginning with imperial China's traditional foreign relations and the "century of humiliation," the course traces the evolution of Chinese foreign policy through the Cold War period to the present day. Students analyze China's relationships with major powers and regions, including the United States, Russia, Northeast Asia, Southeast Asia, and India, while exploring critical issues such as the Taiwan question, territorial disputes in the South China Sea, and China's growing role in global governance. Special attention is paid to understanding the drivers of China's recent assertive turn in foreign policy under Xi Jinping, theories of international relations as applied to China's rise, and the implications of China's increasing power for the international order. Through engagement with scholarly works and contemporary policy debates, the course provides students with a comprehensive understanding of China's foreign relations and its emergence as a global power. SO

* **EAST 4601b / RLST 3430b, Tibetan Buddhism** Staff

This course provides a broad introduction to the intellectual history, philosophy, practices, and culture of Tibetan Buddhism. In this course, we will approach Tibetan Buddhism through four topics: 1) the historical development of Buddhism in Tibet and its key characters, including major gods, goddesses, and human figures; 2) Buddhist ideas about a central theme in nearly all religions: human suffering; 3) ideas and practices that address the problem of human suffering; and 4) the lives of individuals in contemporary Tibetan Buddhist communities. We will read and discuss excerpts from Tibetan Buddhist literature; learn to appreciate and analyze Tibetan art and architecture; and watch short documentaries about Tibet that allow us to see how the ideas and practices from the texts connect to peoples' lives today. HU

* **EAST 4602a / RLST 2290a, Buddhist Ethics** Staff

In this course, we will explore ethical issues in Buddhism across a wide range of contexts and time periods. Together, we will examine how Buddhism addresses fundamental moral and ethical questions, such as: How should I behave? What are the implications of my actions? What is good and bad? How can we bridge the gap between knowing what is right and acting accordingly? The course is divided into two parts. In the first part, we will explore foundational topics in Buddhist ethics, focusing

on themes such as retribution, precepts, the Bodhisattva's path, meditation, and the role of feelings. The second part centers on Buddhism's responses to contemporary ethical issues, including abortion, gender, race, and environmental ethics. This course integrates both the theory and practice of ethics. The structure and assignments are designed to help you engage with theoretical systems that may differ from those you are familiar with, while also applying these abstract ideas to reflect on the relationship between theory and practice. HU

*** EAST 4620a / RLST 4250a, Korean Religions** Staff

This seminar examines the diverse and dynamic religious traditions of Korea including shamanism, Confucianism, Buddhism, Christianity, and New Religions from the pre-modern developments to religious experience in contemporary Korea including North Korea. This course adopts an interdisciplinary approach by discussing the histories and philosophies of religions, and their roles in Korean culture and society. It also deals with women's position in traditional and contemporary Korean religions. Why study Korean religions? How can we approach Korean religions from an academic perspective? What role have religions played in Korean history, culture, and society? Through a reflection on Korean religions, students are encouraged to think critically about the concept of religion and its role. HU

*** EAST 4890a or b, Independent Study** Lucas Bender

For students with advanced Chinese, Japanese, or Korean language skills who wish to pursue a close study of the East Asia region, not otherwise covered by departmental offerings. May be used for research, a special project, or a substantial research paper under faculty supervision. A term paper or its equivalent and regular meetings with an adviser are required. Ordinarily only one term may be offered toward the major or for credit toward the degree. Permission to enroll requires submission of a detailed project proposal, signed by the adviser, by the end of the first week of classes and its approval by the director of undergraduate studies.

EAST 4900a or b, One-Term Senior Essay Lucas Bender

Preparation of a one-term senior essay under the guidance of a faculty adviser. Students must receive the prior agreement of the director of undergraduate studies and of the faculty member who will serve as the senior essay adviser. Students must arrange to meet with that adviser on a regular basis throughout the term.

*** EAST 4910a and EAST 4920b, Senior Research Project** Lucas Bender

Two-term directed research project under the supervision of a ladder faculty member. Students should write essays using materials in East Asian languages when possible. Essays should be based on primary material, whether in an East Asian language or English. Summary of secondary material is not acceptable. Credit for EAST 491 only on completion of EAST 492. ½ Course cr per term