



The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Syllabus

Japanese Religion and Worship - 46114

Last update 14-09-2021

HU Credits: 2

Degree/Cycle: 1st degree (Bachelor)

Responsible Department: Asian Studies

Academic year: 0

Semester: 1st Semester

Teaching Languages: English

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: Dr. DAN SHERER

Coordinator Email: Dan.Sherer@mail.huji.ac.il

Coordinator Office Hours: Monday, 12:30 -14:30

Teaching Staff:

Dr. DAN SHERER

Course/Module description:

The religions of Japan have become known throughout the world. But do our notions of Zen monks and Shinto shrines match up to the way in which the Japanese worshiped and continue to worship? In this course, we will look at the long history of religion in Japan and try to take a wider view of how it has changed and what effect it has had on Japan.

This course will be taught in English.

Course/Module aims:

In this course, the students will trace Japanese religion from its roots to the current day to get a sense of its place in Japanese society.

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

To analyze the role that religion and worship have played in Japanese history.

To identify the broad outlines of the history of Japanese religion.

To appraise the effect that religion and worship has had on Japanese society.

To learn to critically evaluate a wide variety of primary sources.

To debate major issues in the field of Japanese religion.

Attendance requirements(%):

Attendance mandatory, 80%

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: Primarily lectures along with with use of videos and movies.

Course/Module Content:

13/10 Introduction, The Early Worship of the Gods

20/10 From India to Japan: Buddhism

27/10 Buddhism for the State? : Nara Buddhism

3/11 The End is Nigh!: Heian Developments and Kenmitsu Buddhism

10/11 The Mercy of Amida: Pure Land

Essay 1 Due

17/11 The Lotus and the Moon: Nichiren and Zen

24/11 Shinto: Old and New

1/12 Advance and Be Reborn in Paradise! Retreat and Fall to the Hell of Unceasing

Suffering! : Sengoku Buddhism
8/12 Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam: The Rise and Fall of Japanese Buddhism
15/12 Edo Developments
22/12 The Meiji Period
Essay 2 Due
29/12 New Religions
5/1 TBD
12/1 TBD

Required Reading:

Excerpts from:
Japan Emerging, edited by Karl Friday.
Wm. Theodore de Bary et al., Sources of Japanese Tradition Volume 1
Wm. Theodore de Bary et al., Sources of Japanese Tradition Volume 2

Additional Reading Material:

See Moodle.

Course/Module evaluation:

End of year written/oral examination 45 %
Presentation 0 %
Participation in Tutorials 10 %
Project work 0 %
Assignments 20 %
Reports 0 %
Research project 0 %
Quizzes 25 %
Other 0 %

Additional information:

Changes may occur in the final reading list and order of classes.
For the final list, please refer to the moodle2 platform.