

# ***REL303 F11 Japanese Religions Syllabus***

## ***Religious Studies 303 Japanese Religions, Fall 2011***

CRN 16297

Instructor: Mark T. Unno, Office: PLC 812, Tel. 346-4973, Email: munno@uoregon.edu

Unno Home Page: <http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~munno/>

Class meetings: 10:00-10:50 MWF, 16 PAC

Office Hours: Wednesdays & Fridays 1:00-2:00 p.m.

This course traces select themes and developments in the history of Japanese religion. Based on an interdisciplinary approach, various aspects of intellectual and social history are examined including: the relation between state and religion; issues of gender, class, and cultural identity; religious experience; and ritual and institutional practices. We will examine representative samples of primary texts in translation supported by secondary scholarly literature. Various forms of Japanese Buddhism including Zen and Pure Land as well as Shinto will be examined through such genres as journals, shamanic oracles, philosophical texts, monastic schedules, poetry, fiction, folk tales, and cooking instructions.

### ***Requirements***

1. Attendance: Required. Students can have one unexcused absence without penalty. Each class missed thereafter without prior permission will result in 1/2 grade penalty for the course grade.
2. Short exam: There will be two short, in-class exams, based on materials from the readings, lectures, and course web site. The first exam will also contain questions on writing papers.
3. Short papers: Students will write two short papers based on topics that will be provided by the instructor.
4. Final paper: Each student will hand in a medium length final paper of 5-6 pages (approx 1500 words) double-spaced. Suggested topics will be provided. Students may choose to create their own topics with the consent of their section leader. In the case of the latter, a one-paragraph description of the topic must be submitted by email to the instructor one week prior to the due date.
5. Late policy on written assignments: Three grace days total will be allotted excluding the medium-length final paper for which no extensions will be given. For all other assignments, a cumulative total of three late days will be allowed without penalty. Thereafter, each late day will result in a two-point deduction from the course grade. Weekends are not counted against the grace days.

*Email accounts.* Students should all have email accounts. Your email address will be used to communicate with you during the course.

### ***Grades***

\* Short exam 1 10% Short paper I 15% Short paper II 20%

\* Short exam 2 10% Final paper 30% Attendance and participation 15%

***Note: You must complete all assignments in order to receive course credit.***

Even if you are too late for an assignment to receive a passing grade, you must hand it in.

### ***Required Texts***

Natalie Goldberg, *Long Quiet Highway* (New York: Bantam Books, 1994).

Shunryu Suzuki, *Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind* (New York: Weatherhill, 1970).

Taitetsu Unno, trans., *Tannisho-A Shin Buddhist Classic* (Honolulu: Buddhist Study Center, 1996).

*Course Reader*, REL 303 Japanese Religions, Fall 2006,

available at the *Copy Shop*, 539 E. 13th Street, Eugene, OR 97401, TEL 485 6253.

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### ***Weekly Schedule REL 303 Japanese Religions***

(Reading assignments are to be completed by the date under which they are listed.)

## **Part I: The Religion of the *Kami* and the Development of State Religion**

9/26 Introduction: Themes of Japanese Religion and Culture

9/28 Tribal Origins and the Formation of State Religion

Reading: CR: Paul Varley, *Japanese Culture* 1-23, 32-36.

9/30 Social and Mythic Patterns of Early Japanese Religion

Reading: CR: Hayao KAWAI, "Japanese Mythology: Balancing the Gods" 67-97.

10/3 Development of State Religion: *Kojiki* and *Nihonshoki*

10/5 Shamanism in Early Japanese Religion

Reading: CR: Carmen Blacker, *The Catalpa Bow* 104-139.

10/7 Shamanism in the New Religions of Modern Japan

Reading: CR: Carmen Blacker, *The Catalpa Bow* 186-207; Christal Whelan, "In the Palace of the Dragon King," 4-8.

10/10 Divine Madness in Modern Japanese Religion

Reading: CR: Mark Unno, "Divine Madness" 96-112.

10/12 Inari - A Case of Contemporary *Kami* Devotionalism

Reading: CR: Karen A. Smyers, "My Own Inari" 85-95.

10/14 Shamanism, Madness, and Inari - *Kami* at the Divine Intersection **Exam A in class**

Reading: CR: Karen A. Smyers, "My Own Inari" 96-106.

## **Part II: Medieval Japanese Buddhism - Zen and Pure Land Examples**

10/17 Zen Master Dogen

Reading: CR: Mark Unno, "Philosophical Terms in the Zen Buddhist Thought of Dogen."

CR: Norman Waddell & Abe, tr. "Shobogenzo Genjokoan," by Dogen Kigen 129-133.

10/19 Reading: CR: Norman Waddell & Abe, tr. "Shobogenzo Genjokoan," by Dogen Kigen 134-140

10/21 Reading: CR: Barbara Ruch, "The Other Side of Culture in Medieval Japan" 500-511.

Pure Land Path of Shinran **Paper I due in class.**

10/24 Reading: CR: Mark Unno, Key Terms: "Pure Land Buddhism of Honen and Shinran"

10/26 Reading: CR: Mark Unno, "The Nembutsu of No-Meaning and the Problem of Genres" 1-9.

RT: T. Unno, tr., *Tannisho-A Shin Buddhist Classic*, SECTIONS 1, 3, 13, 4, 8, Afterword.

10/28 Reading: RT: T. Unno, tr., *Tannisho-A Shin Buddhist Classic*, SECTIONS 9, 5, 10, 6; Epilogue.

## **Part III: Buddhism, Pluralism, Art, and Culture**

10/31 Film: [\*Paprika\*](#)

11/2 Myoe and Pluralism

Reading: CR: Robert E. Morell, "Zeami's *Kasuga ryujin* (Dragon God of Kasuga)" 103-122.

11/4 Way of Tea - Culture, Commerce, Religion, and Art

Reading: CR: Theodore Ludwig, "The Way of Tea: A Religio-Aesthetic Mode of Life" 28-50

11/7 Art, Religion and Death

Reading: CR: Stephen Grant, "Thoughts on Rikyu's Death" 1-2; NISHITANI, "Ikebana" 33-35; LaFleur, "Chapter 2: In and Out of the Rokudo." **Paper II due in class**

## **Part IV: Buddhism Between America and Japan**

11/9 Readings: RT: Shunryu Suzuki, *Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind* ix-xxi, 1-13, 18-27.

11/11 Readings: RT: Shunryu Suzuki, *Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind*. 38-55. CR Fischer, "The Two Worlds."

11/14 Reading: RT: Natalie Goldberg, *Long Quiet Highway* xi-82.

11/16 Reading: RT: Natalie Goldberg, *Long Quiet Highway* 82-162.

11/18 Reading: RT: Natalie Goldberg, *Long Quiet Highway* 163-238.

11/21 **Exam B in class**

11/23 Discussion of Paper Topics.

11/25 (Thanksgiving Break)

11/28 Zen Nuns Then and Now

Reading: CR: Paula Arai, "Soto Zen Nuns in Modern Japan" 38-51; Kumiko UCHINO, "The Status Elevation Process of Soto Sect Nuns in Modern Japan" 177-184.

11/30 Reading: CR: Inoue YASUSHI, "Sekitei," trans. Mark Unno. *Kyoto Journal* 4 (Fall 1987) 1-8.

12/2 Final Lecture: What is Japanese Religion? **Final papers due in class**

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### **Course Reader, REL 303 Japanese Religions**

(Readings listed in order included. Entries given below follow footnote/endnote format.)

1. Major Periods and Cultural Epochs of Japanese History (from Paul Varley, see below)
2. Paul Varley, *Japanese Culture*, 3rd ed. (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1984), 1-23, 32-36.
3. Hayao KAWAI, "Japanese Mythology: Balancing the Gods," in his *Dreams, Myths and Fairy Tales in Japan* (Daimon, 1995) 67-97.
4. Christal Whelan, "In the Palace of the Dragon King," *Dharma World* Jul/Aug 2005 Vol.32
5. Carmen Blacker, *The Catalpa Bow* (London: George Allen & Unwin) 104-139, 186-207.
6. Mark Unno, "Divine Madness-Exploring the Boundaries of Modern Japanese Religion," *Zen Buddhism Today* 10: 96-112.
7. Karen A. Smyers, "'My Own Inari' - Personalization of the Deity in the Inari Worship." *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 23:1-2 (1996) 85-116.
8. William LaFleur, "Chapter 2: In and Out of the Rokudo," in his *The Karma of Words* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986) 26-59.
9. Mark Unno, "Philosophical Terms in the Zen Buddhist Thought of Dogen."
10. Norman Waddell and Masao Abe, tr. "Shobogenzo Genjokoan," by Dogen Kigen, *The Eastern Buddhist* 5:2 (10/1972) 129-140.
11. Barbara Ruch, "The Other Side of Culture in Medieval Japan," in *The Cambridge History of Japan- Volume 3 Medieval Japan*, ed. by Kozo Yamamura (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990) 500-511.
12. Mark Unno, Key Terms: "Pure Land Buddhism of Honen and Shinran"
13. Mark Unno, "The Nembutsu of No-Meaning and the Problem of Genres in the Writings and Statements of Gutoku Shinran," *The Pure Land* 10-11 (12/1994) 1-9.
14. Robert E. Morell, "Zeami's *Kasuga ryujin* (Dragon God of Kasuga)," in his *Kamakura Buddhism: A Minority Report* (Berkeley, CA: Asian Humanities Press, 1987) 103-122.
15. Theodore M. Ludwig, "The Way of Tea: A Religio-Aesthetic Mode of Life," *History of Religions* (1974) 28-50.
16. Stephen A. Grant, "Thoughts on Rikyu's Death," *Wakamatsu* 22 (1990) 1-2.
17. Keiji NISHITANI, "Ikebana." *Kyoto Journal* 4 (Fall 1987) 33-35.
18. Paula Arai, "Soto Zen Nuns in Modern Japan: Keeping and Creating Tradition." *Bulletin of the Nanzan Institute for Religion and Culture* 14 (Summer 1990) 38-51.
19. Kumiko UCHINO, "The Status Elevation Process of Soto Sect Nuns in Modern Japan," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 10:2-3: 177-184.
20. Norman Fischer, "The Two Worlds," *The Sun* (April 2007) 18-21.
21. Inoue YASUSHI, "Sekitei," trans. Mark Unno. *Kyoto Journal* 4 (Fall 1987) 1-8.