

## **REL 253 Religion, Love, and Death: East & West CRN 17503 MW 2:00-3:20p.m. + Discussion Section**

Instructor: Mark T. Unno, PLC 812, Ph. 346-4973, Office hours: Wednesdays 3:30-4:30 p.m., Fridays 1:00-2:00 p.m. Email: munno@uoregon.edu Home Page: www.uoregon.edu/~munno/

This course examines the interplay of themes of religion, love, and death in selected strands of Asian and Western sources. Examining both theoretical and narrative sources, this course places these sources within the larger framework of narrative and self, paying particular attention to the role of cultural stereotypes as well as structures and motifs of self-narratives of religion, love, and death. Within this narrative framework, the course examines the diverse dimensions of love and death: love in relation to family, sexuality, society, nature, and the religious dimensions of the divine, *dharma*, and *dao*; social, psychological, physical, and religious significations of death. These are set against the background of a range of themes including class, gender, and sexuality.

### **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. Attendance at weekly discussion sections is mandatory.
2. Short exams: Two in-class exams, based on materials from the readings, lectures, and course web site.
3. Shorter papers: Three shorter papers based on the required readings, of two to four pages each.
4. Presentation: Students will make a presentation on the readings for one of the section meetings. The presenter should NOT summarize the reading but should use the presentation to discuss why the selected ideas/passages in question are important for understanding the reading and proceed to explain and well as raise questions about these ideas/passages. Students will prepare handouts with questions and quotations from relevant passages from the required texts. Presentation guidelines will be provided on the course web site.
5. Medium-length paper: Each student will hand in a medium length final paper of 4-7 pages double-spaced at the end of the course. 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.
6. Late policy on written assignments: Three grace days total will be allotted excluding the medium-length 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.

### **Grades**

- Exam A 10%                      Exam B 10%                      Presentation 15%                      Discussion participation 10%
- Shorter paper I 10%              Shorter paper II 10%              Short paper III 10%                      Medium-length paper 25%

### **Required Texts** (Information listed here is given in footnote/endnote format.)

1. Burton Watson, trans., *Zhuangzi: Basic Writings* (NY: Columbia University Press, 2003).
  2. Ety Hillesum, *An Interrupted Life + Letters from Westerbork* (NY: Owl Books, 1996).
  3. Alice Walker, *The Color Purple* (New York: Harvest/Harcourt Books, 2003).
  4. Maura "Soshin" O'Halloran, *Pure Heart, Enlightened Mind* (Boston: Wisdom, 2007).
  5. *Course Reader, REL 253 Religion, Love, and Death: East and West*  
Available at the *Copy Shop*, 539 E. 13th Street, Eugene, OR 97401, TEL 485 6253
-

## **Reading Schedule: REL 253 Religion, Love, and Death: East & West**

(CR: Course Reader; CR1=Course Rdr Selection 1; RT=Req Text)

### **Week 1 – Introduction: Stories of Religion, Love & Death**

9/24 Mon. Introduction: Syllabus; The Storied Self: Religious Narrativity

9/26 Wed. Paul Brockelman, *Time and Self: Phenomenological Explorations*, 7-17, 71-83 (CR1); Jerome Bruner, “The “Remembered Self,” 41-51 (CR2); Michel Foucault, “What Is an Author?” 101-120 (CR3);

### **Week 2 – Broken Stories of the Self: Ruptures, Secrets, and Contradictions**

10/1 Mon. Elspeth Graham et al, “Pondering All These Things in Her Heart,” 51-71 (CR5); Hilde L. Nelson, *Damaged Identities, Narrative Repair*, 1-35, 176-188 (CR4).

10/3 Wed. Robert Akeret, “Naomi: The Dancer from the Dance,” *Tales from a Travelling Couch*, 19-57 (CR7); Sue Campbell, *Relational Remembering*, 25-45 (CR6).

### **Week 3 – Archetypes of Self Narratives: Augustine and Freud**

10/8 Mon. Mark Freeman, *Rewriting the Self: History, Memory, Narrative*, 25-49, 222-232 (CR8).

Gillian Clark, *Augustine: Confessions*, vii-viii, 54-69 (CR9).

Augustine, *The Confessions*, ix-xxvi; Book II, 23-31; Book VI, 98-103; Book VII, 105-125; Book VIII, 129-133 (CR10).

10/10 Wed. Sigmund Freud, *Totem and Taboo*, 88-99, 140-155 (CR11). Paper 1 due in class.

### **Week 4 – Self Beyond Self: Dao Beyond Dao in the Zhuangzi**

10/15 Mon. Burton Watson, trans., *Zhuangzi*, 1-30, 31- 88 (focus pages: 31-49, 62-63, 78-81)(RT);

Philip Ivanhoe, "Zhuangzi on Skepticism, Skill," 639-654 (CR13).

10/17 Wed. Burton Watson, trans., *Zhuangzi* 89-140 (focus pages: 94-95, 126-140)(RT);

Philip Ivanhoe, "Zhuangzi's Conversion Experience," 13-25, (CR12).

10/19 Fri. Public Lecture (Recommended): 7:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m., Lawrence 177 *The Storied Self: Buddhist Narrativity*.

Keynote Speakers, Dr. Jason Wirth, Seattle University, Dr. Willoughby Britton, Brown University.

### **Week 5 – Many Faces of God: Spirit, Heart, and Body in the Color Purple**

10/22 Mon. Alice Walker, *The Color Purple*, 1-150 (RT).

10/24 Wed. *The Color Purple*, 150-304 (RT); Audre Lorde, "Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power," 53-59 (CR14). Paper 2 due in class.

### **Week 6 – The Seer and the Seen: the Bible and the Buddha in Jacob’s Ladder**

10/29 Mon. Sandy Gunther, "An Alternate View of Reality: Understanding Mystical Experience in Jacob’s Ladder," 1-10 (CR15).

10/31 Wed. Film: *Jacob’s Ladder*. Exam A in class.

### **Week 7 – The Zen Heart of Love: Pure Heart, Pure Enlightenment**

11/5 Mon. Maura “Soshin” O’Halloran, *Pure Heart, Enlightened Mind*, 1-150 (RT).

11/7 Wed. Maura O’Halloran, *Pure Heart*, 150-312 (RT). Katsuki Sekida, *Zen Training*, 108-146 (CR16);

“The Ten Oxherding Pictures,” in *How to Practice Zazen*, 26-45 (CR17). Paper 3 due in class.

### **Week 8 – Love Unto Death: An Interrupted Life**

11/12 Mon. Etty Hillesum, *An Interrupted Life*, vii-xxiv, 1-153 (RT).

11/14 Wed. Etty Hillesum, *An Interrupted Life*, 153-231; Laurie Brands Gagné, *The Uses of Darkness*, x-xiii, 1-21 (CR18)

Denise de Costa, *Anne Frank & Etty Hillesum: Inscribing Spirituality and Sexuality*, 141-165, 207-239 (CR19). Exam B in class.

### **Week 9 – Who Defines the Love of Death, the Death of Love? Buddhist, Christian, Atheist**

11/19 Mon. Maggie Callanan and Patricia Kelley, *Final Gifts*, 171-183, 211-237 (CR20);

Ira Byock, *Dying Well: Peace and Possibilities at the End of Life*, xiii-xv, 1-24, 35-57 (CR21).

11/21 Wed. Stephen Levine, *Meetings at the Edge: Dialogues with the Grieving and the Dying, the Healing and the Healed*, 61-61-70, 109-125, 200-211 (CR22).

### **Week 10 – Whence and Whither the Self: Religion, Love, and Death**

11/26 Mon. Comparative Insights; Discussion of paper topics

11/28 Wed. Final lecture. **Final papers due in class.**

**Course Reader, REL 253 Religion, Love, and Death: East and West**

1. Paul Brockelman, *Time and Self: Phenomenological Explorations*, AAR Studies in Religion (NY: Crossroad), 1985, 7-17, 71-83.
2. Jerome Bruner, "The "Remembered Self"," in Ulric Neisser & Robyn Fivush, eds., *The Remembering Self: Construction and Accuracy in the Self-Narrative* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 41-51.
3. Michel Foucault, "What Is an Author?" in *The Foucault Reader*, ed. Paul Rabinow (NY: Pantheon, 1984), 101-120.
4. Hilde L. Nelson, *Damaged Identities, Narrative Repair* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001), 1-35, 176-188.
5. Elspeth Graham et al, "Pondering All These Things in Her Heart," *Women's Lives/Women's Times: New Essays on Autobiography*, eds. Trev Lynn Broughton and Linda Anderson (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1997), 51-71.
6. Sue Campbell, *Relational Remembering: Rethinking the Memory Wars* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003), 25-45.
7. Robert Akeret, *Tales from a Travelling Couch* (NY: Norton, 1996), 19-57.
8. Mark Freeman, *Rewriting the Self: History, Memory, Narrative* (NY: Routledge, 1983), 25-49, 222-232.
9. Gillian Clark, *Augustine: Confessions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), vii-viii, 54-69.
10. Augustine, *The Confessions: Books I-XIII*, trans. F. J. Sheel (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing), ix-xxvi; Book II, 23-31; Book VI, 98-103; Book VII, 105-125; Book VIII, 129-133.
11. Sigmund Freud, *Totem and Taboo* (NY: W.W. Norton), 1990, 88-99, 140-155.
12. Philip Ivanhoe, "Zhuangzi's Conversion Experience," *Journal of Chinese Philosophy*, Fall 1991: 13-25.
13. Philip Ivanhoe, "Zhuangzi on Skepticism, Skill," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* LX:4 639-654.
14. Audre Lorde, "Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power," *Sister Outsider* (Freedom, CA: Crossing Press, 1984) 53-59.
15. Sandy Gunther, "An Alternate View of Reality: Understanding Mystical Experience in Jacob's Ladder," Unpublished Paper, 1-10.
16. Katsuki Sekida, *Zen Training* (NY: Weatherhill, 1975), 108-146.
17. "The Ten Oxherding Pictures," in *How to Practice Zazen*, Institute for Zen Studies, 26-45.
18. Laurie Brands Gagné, *The Uses of Darkness: Women's Underworld Journeys, Ancient and Modern* (Notre Dame, IN: Notre Dame University Press), x-xiii, 1-21.
19. Denise de Costa, *Anne Frank & Etty Hillesum: Inscribing Spirituality and Sexuality*, trans. Mischa F. C. Hoyinck and Robert E. Chesal (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press), 141-165, 207-239.
20. Maggie Callanan and Patricia Kelley, *Final Gifts* (New York: Bantam Books), 171-183, 211-237.
21. Ira Byock, *Dying Well: Peace and Possibilities at the End of Life* (New York: Riverhead Books), xiii-xv, 1-24, 35-57.
22. Stephen Levine, *Meetings at the Edge: Dialogues with the Grieving and the Dying, the Healing and the Healed* (New York: Anchor Doubleday), 61-61-70, 109-125, 200-211.