



ADVANCED TOPICS IN EAST ASIAN RELIGION.<sup>1</sup>

→ A HYBRID COURSE OF 5 FIELD TRIPS AND 10 IN-CLASS DAYS WITH [DR. MARC S. MULLINAX](#)



DESCRIPTION: Religion's concern is that which ultimately concerns us. The religions of East Asia are culturally-rich sacred quests by their members to develop stories and narratives of meaning about how their visible world works according to unseen laws and forces. Each religion has developed its own vocabulary by which it comes to a satisfactory understanding of such unseen forces. Therefore, each East Asian religion is historically conditioned and culturally enriched; this course will be a rigorous exploration of how East Asian worldviews have developed these religious perspectives.

This course will combine both 10 days of on-campus study and 5 days of off-campus visits to major religious sites in Seoul that are related to our course. We shall study and visit sites relating to:

- Ⓢ Indigenous sacred ways (Shamanism)
- Ⓢ Buddhism (*Seon* or “Zen” Buddhism)
- Ⓢ Confucianism
- Ⓢ Taoism
- Ⓢ More modern Korean Indigenous Religions, (e.g., *Tonghak*, *Chondo-ism*, Unification Church)
- Ⓢ Christianity

**Five of our fifteen class times, we visit at least one religious site.** Anticipated sites include

- Ⓢ [Shamanism - a nearby mountain where a famous shamanic-site operates](#)
- Ⓢ [Buddhism - Temple visit within walking distance](#) or this [Temple visit](#)
- Ⓢ [Confucianism - Jongmyo Shrine](#)
- Ⓢ [The Cheondo-Gyo Shrine](#) and

<sup>1</sup> This course meets the requirements of Ewha Woman University's regular course #37568-01 by the same title

☉ [Christianity - the largest church in the world](#)

→ There will be very small expenses for public transportation for each student. ←

Korea is one of the world’s most “religious” countries, one that takes its religious life seriously. This course portrays these religions as both historical within Korea, yet also “living”. We shall investigate how such religions have been important and influential in Korean History (such as The 3.1 Independence Movement), and we shall see for ourselves how strong and deep these religious roots remain today.

YOUR PROFESSOR: [Dr. Marc S. Mullinax](#)’s 7<sup>th</sup> time to teach at Ewha, he studies how religions and cultures intertwine and shape cultural and personal worldviews. He can be contacted at [mmullinax@mhu.edu](mailto:mmullinax@mhu.edu). Office hours will be held before or after class outside Dr. Robbin Coffee Shop on the lowest level of the Ewha Campus Center. Feel free to drop by!

YOUR BOOKS: All reading materials will be supplied by the professor **free-of-charge**, through Ewha’s CyberCampus course-management system, or through email, GoogleDocs, etc. Our primary text will be Don Baker’s *Korean Spirituality*, University of Hawaii Press, 2008.

OTHER ITEMS YOU WILL NEED OR WANT: (1) Camera (Smart Phone OK), (2) good walking shoes, and (3) umbrella, (4) Video camera optional. (5) Subway apps for your smart phone or device: [Seoul Subway app for iTunes](#); or [Android version here](#). (6) We shall keep in touch through KakaoTalk. Please download this app for your phone or tablet; [iTunes here](#); [Adroid here](#).

PLEASE NOTE: This course will have outside components, at a time in Korea’s weather season that is likely to be very rainy. We will not cancel class because of rain, unless there is a clear danger in having a class trip outside.

HOW YOU WILL BE EVALUATED:

Category	What This Means	Final Score %
Attendance	Being <u>on-time</u> and in class, having already read, watched or otherwise digested the class homework-assignment. This portion of the score also covers <u>regular &amp; basic</u> student involvement in class activities. Each of the first two absences counts 5% off the final score; <i>three unexcused absences merits a failing grade</i> (Ewha policy).	20
Class Leadership	Over-And-Above, and <u>regular</u> student initiative and leadership in class times, raising questions, interaction during our field trips, discussions, etc.	05
Midterm Exam	A mix of objective thinking and reflective writing, with many options for each student’s work; this exam will be well-discussed beforehand. (No one likes surprises!)	15
Journals and Reflections	Four journals (ten points each), on a form provided by the professor (about 500-750 words each).	40
Final Project	Student option: <u>Either</u> a standard in-class “Final Exam,” <u>or</u> a stunning audio-visual-written report on the last day of class regarding your insights and experiences, both on- and off-campus.	20
Total		100%

GRADING SCALE:

The highest two values in each category gets a “+”; the lowest two receives a “-”

A	91-100	B	81-90	C	71-80	D	61-69	F -60 & BELOW
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**Accommodation of Disabilities** - If you work with a documented disability and require accommodation for this class, please see or email me privately to discuss your specific needs. I will be happy to work with you and try to meet your access needs related to your condition.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY** – Students will be expected to model and maintain the highest degree of academic integrity. As such, all work for this class must be your own. If a student cheats or plagiarizes in any way on any course work or on the written reports s/he will automatically receive a grade of zero for that assignment, which cannot be made up.

**Social Media** – This class, the professor feels, goes much better if everyone stays off social media (including texting) during class meeting times. Please “power down” your internet devices unless you are using such to take notes.

WHAT WILL A TYPICAL IN-CLASS EXPERIENCE BE LIKE? We might begin with a video of professor- and/or student-supplied music that links to the themes of our class. Then we see who’s here, gather course insights from students from the reading or viewing, and then we discuss the course content. If our entire course were a 10-part “pie,” you may anticipate 2 parts lecture, 2 parts discussion, 2 parts assignments, and 4 parts contact with these religious expressions in Seoul.

Day and Date	Activity Anticipated in Class. <b>Homework in Highlight.</b>
26 June – Wed	Opening Ceremony
27 June – Thurs	1. Introduction to our class, Syllabus, Housekeeping Duties; Introduction to the “Idea” of Religion: The Realm of the Imagination, Purposes, & <i>Why are People Religious?</i> This class will follow the <a href="#">outline and content of my blog for this first class</a> . <b>Reading this blog before/after class would be great.</b>
1 July – Mon	2. What is Shamanism? ( <i>And why are there more shamanistic centers around Ewha than Christian churches?!</i> ) <b>Readings:</b> <a href="#">NYTimes article on Shamanism in Korea</a> ; “Folk Religion and Animism” Chapter 2 in Baker, <i>Korean Spirituality</i>
2 July – Tues	3. FIELD TRIP TO LOCAL INWANGSAN SHRINE; BEFORE THIS TRIP, PLEASE <a href="#">VIEW THIS BLOG</a>
3 July – Wed	4. Buddhism as a world, and Korean religion; introduction to its teachings. <b>Reading:</b> pp. 30-42 in Baker, Chapter 3
4 July – Thurs	5. Meditation, No-Self, Nirvana, and other central concepts of Buddhism. <b>Reading:</b> <a href="#">View this blog</a> ; <b>1st Journal Due</b>
8 July – Mon	6. FIELD TRIP TO A LOCAL BUDDHIST TEMPLE
9 July – Tues	7. What is Confucianism? ( <i>And why is Korea the most Confucian country in world history?</i> ). Basic doctrines and ideas, some readings from <i>The Analects</i> . <b>Reading:</b> Baker, Chapter 3, pp 42-54.
10 July – Wed	8. Confucianism, Day 2: Some history and influence of Confucianism in Korea, including NeoConfucianism. <b>2nd Journal Due</b> <b>Read:</b> <a href="#">Asia's New Confucianism Boom</a> & <a href="#">Why are 100s of Harvard Students Studying Ancient Chinese Philosophy?</a>
11 July – Thurs	9. FIELD TRIP TO JONG-MYO SHRINE

Day and Date	Activity Anticipated in Class. <b>Homework in Highlight.</b>
15 July – Mon	<p>10. Taoism &amp; Recent Indigenous Religions: Today, Taoism in Korea has received little attention, but today we'll trace what Taoism originally was, has become, note its philosophic forms, and see how these have influenced Korean thought, behavior, medicine and art as a popular religion.</p> <p><b>In-Advance reading:</b> <a href="#">Daoism in the Korean Mountains</a> &amp; Michael Pettid, "Science, Food &amp; Health in Choson Korea" (both via email) View these: ① <a href="#">Taoist-Inspired Exercises</a>, ② <a href="#">2004 World Culture presentation</a>, and first 40 seconds and 7:20-8:00 of ③ <a href="#">this Korea Tao and Meditation</a>.</p> <p><b>3<sup>rd</sup> Journal Due</b></p>
16 July – Tues	<p>11. Mid-term first half of class-time. Second half: <i>Where Confucianism, Western learning, and Christian-oriented religions meet:</i> <b>Cheondogyo Readings</b> (←Click. Be sure to read/click <u>ALSO</u> on "God," "The Cosmos," "Humankind," "Afterdeath" and "Values") <i>Korean-born modern religions</i></p>
17 July – Wed <b>NOTE: 2 field trips</b>	<p>12. FIELD TRIP TO THE CHEONDO-GYO SHRINE NEAR INSA-DONG (AFTERNOON) 13. FIELD TRIP TO YOIDO FULL GOSPEL CHURCH (EVENING). <b>Reading:</b> Baker, chapter 4</p>
18 July – Thurs	<p>14. What is Christianity, and <i>why has it grown so fast (and huge) in Korea? And why does Korea send out more foreign missionaries than any other nation in all church history?!</i> <i>Also:</i> History of Christianity in Korea; READ <a href="#">this story</a> and <a href="#">also this story</a></p>
22 July – Mon	Modified class today because of Wednesday's double class <b>Final Journal Due</b>
23 July - Tues	15. Last Day of class: Final Exams or Final Projects.
24 July – Wed	Closing Ceremony