

Osaka Gakuin University 2017-2018 Spring Semester
Japanese Spirituality as a Channel to Peace
Instructor :
Rev. Mari Sengoku, Ph.D
E-mail: sengokumari@live.jp
Lesson : Tuesday 14:30-16:00 Thursday 12:50-14:20
Office: N/A
Office Hours : After class or upon consultation
Subject code : 2032
Course Description:
How can we make peace in ourselves in this chaotic and competitive modern world? By learning Buddhist philosophy and self-healing techniques, students will be given the opportunity to come up with their own solutions. Students will also learn and discuss the significance of Shintoism, Bushido (The way of Bushi), natural environment and new religions in Japan.
Resources
Handouts will be provided for each class.
Evaluation
The grade will be given based on participation in the class and discussions (25%), one group research project and presentation (25%) and two individual papers; book review and short essay (25% each). For each day late on any of the assignments 5% will be deducted.

Notes:
Course Schedule:
Week 1: Introduction and discussion for the group and individual project and field work
Week 2: Introduction of Shintoism – Guide to the Japanese system of beliefs and traditions known to Shinto, including history, rites of life and ethics etc.
Week 3: Shintoism and Literatures of Lafcadio Hearn A British national of Greek and Irish descent, he was known best for his books about Japan, especially his collections of Japanese legends and ghost stories.
Week 4: Buddhism #1 – Sects, rituals and practices of Pure Land Pure Land Buddhism is a broad branch of Mahayana Buddhism and one of the most widely practiced traditions of Buddhism in Japan. Sects, rituals and practices of Pure Land Buddhism in Japan will be discussed.
Week 5: Buddhism #2.- Sects, rituals and practices of Shingon & Tendai Both Shingon and Tendai Buddhism have Chinese antecedents. Shingon and Tendai Buddhism simultaneously gained influence in Japan during the Heian period, when the imperial court flourished in the capital Kyoto, known as Heian "Peace and Tranquillity." The characteristics of both sects, rituals and practices will be discussed.
Week 6: Buddhism #3.- Sects, rituals and practices of Zen The essence of Zen Buddhism is achieving enlightenment by seeing one's original mind or nature directly, without the intervention of the intellect. The history and fundamental teaching of Zen will be introduced with practices.

Week 7: Zen and Bushido

A great deal of samurai thought, Bushido, was based on the teachings of Zen Buddhism. The life style of Samurai, relationship between Bushido and Zen will be discussed.

Week 8: Japanese Therapies based on Buddhist teaching

#1 Naikan Psychotherapy

Naikan, a self-reflection method is based on Pure Land Buddhist teaching and effective those people suffer from depressive disorders, addictions, neurosis etc. The process and practice of Naikan will be introduced.

Week 9: Japanese Therapies based on Buddhist teaching

#2 Morita Psychotherapy

Morita therapy is based on the philosophy of Zen and effective for obsessive-compulsive disorder and symptoms of nervousness. The process and treatment method of Morita will be discussed.

Week 10: Buddhist Meditation practices for being at peace

Buddhist meditation practices including Naikan, zen, and other methods from Tibetan traditions will be practiced for inner peace and improving communication with others.

Week 11: Japanese Cults

Aum Shinrikyo is a Japanese doomsday cult founded by Shoko Asahara. They carried out the deadly Tokyo subway sarin attack in 1995. The background and characteristics of the cult will be discussed to discover social problems in Japan in relation to spirituality.

Week 12: Japanese spirituality and values to make peace

Learning from history of Japanese Americans who overcame difficult experiences in the U.S., spirituality and values sustained their lives will be reviewed and discussed.

Week 13: Field Work

trip to Kyoto to visit shrines and temples to feel the history and energy of Shintoism and Buddhism.

Week 14: Group project presentation

Group presentation of projects based on Japanese spirituality

Week 15: Discussion and class evaluation.

Discuss how can we make peace in ourselves and create bounds beyond ethnic groups and religions as the final thought and evaluation of the class.

Course schedule is subject to change depending on the class size and the discretion of the teacher.