COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this course we will focus on identifying many of the methods that human beings have found, across cultures and across time, to concentrate, broaden and deepen conscious awareness. We will study what these methods and experiences entail, how to critically appraise them, how to experience them ourselves, and how they influence the development of compassion and empathy, health and well-being. We will also be careful to study the cultural and historical contexts from which these experiences emerge. In doing this, we will thus be adopting both third-person approaches, which study contemplative experience from a presumed objective position outside ourselves and critical first-person approaches, which study contemplative experiences from a presumed subjective position within them. The former approaches will be from the perspectives of the fields of philosophy, cognitive science, psychology, neuroscience, and comparative religious thought; they will be presented and discussed through lectures. The latter approaches will center on the well-developed techniques for the cultivation of attention and self-examination that are found in the Asian meditative traditions of Daoism and Buddhism. These will be pursued in the twice-weekly Meditation Lab, as well as in weekly readings.

- Daoist meditation will be based on the reconstructions developed by Professor Roth. Buddhist meditation will be historically accurate but also informed by modern versions of these practices.
- Course readings include primary texts presenting methods and results of contemplative practice and secondary works that discuss issues and critical methods in the philosophical and scientific understanding of the results and significance of contemplation.
Meditation Labs are an integral part of the course. They provide the opportunity to develop direct experiential knowledge to complement the readings and to give new perspectives on the subjective experience of the participants.

As it is a writing designated course, in this course we will also discuss how to write a clear, well-supported argumentative essay with properly formatted citations.

**PRE-REQUISITES**

None

Enrollment limited to Semester 01-04 students, others by permission of instructor. Enrollment limit is 40.

Preference given to current or intended Contemplative Studies Concentrators.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

- Regular attendance and participation in Seminar and Lab; this will be an important factor
- Recording brief comments to post 4X6 notecards after every lab session.
- At least one presentation based on the readings
- A well-thought out question or response to the readings that you will post on Canvas and bring to each week’s discussion section.
- Attendance at All COST Events and Monday Movies this semester
- One 5-Page Midterm
- **One 8-10 page final paper** on a topic to be decided upon with the professor; This will be developed over the course of the semester, with an abstract and working bibliography (due April 21st). The final paper will be due on May 5th.

**READINGS**

**BOOKS**


**NEW EDITION 2016**

ONLINE SOURCES


Nanamoli Thera, “The Practice of Lovingkindness as Taught by the Buddha in the Pali Canon”. Access to Insight: http://www.accesstoinsight.org/lib/authors/nanamoli/wheel007.html


ARTICLES ON CANVAS


COURSE OUTLINE

JANUARY 25: INTRODUCTION: WHAT IS “CONTEMPLATIVE STUDIES”
### WEEKLY SEMINAR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Primary Texts</th>
<th>Secondary Works</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2/01</td>
<td>“Scientific Materialism,” the Disappearance of Introspection and the Rise of Contemplative Studies</td>
<td>Early Daoist Wisdom Poetry on Meditation: Roth, <em>Original Tao</em> 35-118</td>
<td>Wallace, 3-56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/08</td>
<td>Combining Third and First Person Perspectives in A New Science of Consciousness</td>
<td>Roth, <em>Original Tao</em>, 125-71</td>
<td>Wallace 57-122; 177-88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### MEDITATION LAB

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reconstructed Daoist Meditations from Guanzi’s “Inward Training:”</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/30</td>
<td>Setting up “the container,”</td>
<td>1/30: Setting up “the container,”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unfocused Awareness of Breathing: Coiling and Uncoiling</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/01</td>
<td>Coiling and Uncoiling</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2/06</td>
<td>Revolving the Breath</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5:30 PM</td>
<td>COST EVENT: Viewing of new Film on Chan Buddhist Monasteries in China: Filmmaker Edward Berger</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/08</td>
<td>The One Word As Mantra: Dao</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Reconstructed Daoist Meditations from Laozi</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/13</td>
<td>Bellows Breathing</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/15</td>
<td>Centered Observation</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/20</td>
<td>Free and Easy Wandering</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/22</td>
<td>Fasting of the Mind</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Due: 2/27 by 6:00 PM</td>
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</table>

**Mid-Term Take Home Exam Handed Out**
### WEEKLY SEMINAR

**3/01:** Experience and the Cognitivist Hypothesis

Secondary: Varela, Thompson and Rosch: 1-36; 59-81; Saron in Singer, pp. 345-61

**3/08:** The Embodied Mind and Middle Way

Primary: Young, “How Meditation Works”; Rosenberg, pp. 1-50;
Secondary: Varela, Thompson and Rosch: 105-30; Handgartner in Singer, pp. 481-91

**3/15:** An Ethic of the Groundless Self: The “Four Immeasurables”

Primary: Nyaponika; Handgartner in Singer, pp. 153-64;
Secondary: Varela, Thompson and Rosch: 133-84; Klimecki, Ricard, Singer in Singer, pp. 273-87

**SPECIAL Jon Kabat-Zinn reading:** *Contemporary Buddhism* 281-306

### MEDITATION LAB

**3/06:** COST EVENT: 5:30 Lecture by Rhonda Magee on Mindfulness+Diversity

3/06: Noting and Labeling: thought, feeling, image

3/08: Noting and Labeling: thought, feeling, image

3/13: Slow Walking Meditation

**3/13 Monday Movie:** MONDAY MOVIE: Monte Grande: *What is Life?* (5:30 PM Location Smith-Buanano 201)

3/15: Metta: Lovingkindness meditation

**3/16:** COST EVENT: 5:30 Lecture by Jon Kabat-Zinn

**3/17:** Student Forum with JKZ 1:30

**3/18:** COST EVENT: 19AM-4:30PM: Introduction to Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction by JKZ

**3/20:** COST EVENT: 5:45 Lecture by the Ven. Yifa, Ph.D.

3/20: Metta

3/22: Metta

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**SPRING BREAK**
## WEEKLY SEMINAR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Primary</th>
<th>Secondary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4/05</td>
<td>The Neuroscience of Contemplative Practice</td>
<td>Sekida, 29-90</td>
<td>Austin, 1-60.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/12</td>
<td>Zen Meditation and Neuroscience</td>
<td>Sekida, 91-159.</td>
<td>Austin, 61-124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/19</td>
<td>Meditation and The Neuroscience of Exceptional Experiences</td>
<td>Sekida, 160-237.</td>
<td>Austin 127-96; Cahn and Polich, “Meditation States and Traits”</td>
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## MEDITATION LAB

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4/03</td>
<td>Japanese Zen Meditation</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/05</td>
<td>Bamboo Breathing: eyes open</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/10</td>
<td>Rinzai Zen Style: Kôan 1; eyes open</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/12</td>
<td>Rinzai Zen Style: Kôan 2; indoor walking meditation</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/17</td>
<td>Open Awareness Sôtô Zen Style: Shikan Taza: Just Sitting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/18</td>
<td>COST EVENT: 5:30 Lecture by Carolyn Jacobs on Contemplative Education and Diversity</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/19</td>
<td>Shikan Taza: Just Sitting; facing window or wall</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**4/21** SUBMIT PAPER ABSTRACT AND WORKING BIBLIOGRAPHY
### CLINICAL AND NEUROSCIENTIFIC APPLICATIONS OF CONTEMPLATIVE PRACTICE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEKLY SEMINAR</th>
<th>4/26: Mindfulness and Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary and Secondary Works:</td>
<td><strong>Contemporary Buddhism:</strong> 19-40; 71-88; 263-80; 219-35; Brown, Ryan, and Creswell, “Mindfulness Meditation...”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<tr>
<th>MEDITATION LAB</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4/24: MBSR : Body Sweep</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/24 Monday Movie: “Enlightenment Guaranteed”) 5:30-7 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/26: MBSR : Body Sweep</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5/05 FINAL PAPERS DUE

### ADVICE FOR CLASS PRESENTATIONS

Each student will be asked to do at least one class presentation, with three students presenting each week. Please prepare a 10 minute presentation in which you speak about the parts of the reading that you felt were most compelling. Some questions you may ask yourself when preparing your presentation are:

- What is the argument or main idea of the reading? Do you agree with it? Why or why not?
- How do you interpret the reading? Can you provide metaphors, stories, or personal experiences that help you explain the reading?
- How does this reading compare with one or more of our other readings up until this point?

Do not just try to summarize the reading, but instead incorporate your own viewpoint about it. References to specific passages in the text will be helpful.
AN ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK FOR RELIGION

I. Descriptive-Prescriptive Axis (after Clifford Geertz)

A. Descriptive

How the universe functions and how humans fit into it

1. Mythology: the pre-philosophical expression of the human understanding of the universe
2. Cosmology: theories of the various forces and elements that construe the cosmos and how they interact
3. Cosmogony: theories about the origins of the cosmos
4. Ontology: theories about the nature and activity of Being, or the reality that underlies the cosmos, both in its essence and its manifestations
5. Epistemology: theories about what we know about the cosmos and how we know it
6. Anthropology: theories of the nature and essence of human beings

B. Prescriptive

How the understanding of the nature of the universe is applied to the concrete problems of how we are to lead our lives

1. Ethics: principles of how human beings should relate to each other
2. Sacrifice, devotion, faith: how human beings should relate to the power or powers that underlie the universe
3. Prayer, yoga, meditation: how human beings can transform themselves and attain the ultimate goals envisioned in their religious tradition

II. Institutional-Personal [Experiential] Axis (after William James)

A. Institutional

1. Sacred space: churches, temples, monasteries, etc.
2. Clergy
3. Religious rituals
4. Sacred texts

B. Personal

1. Numinous experience: experiencing the Absolute as “Wholly Other” (most often in theistic religions)
2. Mystical experience: attaining union with, or unitive experience of, the Absolute (most often in monistic religions)
3. Mundane experience: daily practice of religious prescriptions