SCHOOL OF DIVINITY, HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY

ACADEMIC SESSION 2015-2016

RS3013 Understanding New Religious Movements

15 Credits : 11 weeks

PLEASE NOTE CAREFULLY:

The full set of school regulations and procedures is contained in the Undergraduate Student Handbook which is available online at your MyAberdeen page. Students are expected to familiarise themselves not only with the contents of this leaflet but also with the contents of the Handbook. Therefore, ignorance of the contents of the Handbook will not excuse the breach of any School regulation or procedure.

You must familiarise yourself with this important information at the earliest opportunity.

COURSE CO-ORDINATOR
Dr Lukas Pokorny
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Office hours upon arrangement

Discipline Administration:
Mrs Claire Hargaden
50-52 College Bounds
Room CB001
01224 272366
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TIMETABLE
Tuesday 4-6pm

*Students can view their university timetable at*

COURSE DESCRIPTION
The focus of this year’s course will be on the development and the main
doctrinal tenets of selected East Asian (i.e. Korean, Japanese, Chinese and
Vietnamese) ‘new’ religious movements. Theoretical approaches of defining
‘new’ religions will be examined. Major characteristics and similarities in terms
of organisation structure and doctrine will be discussed.

INTENDED AIMS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES
Students will become familiar with a) the crucial stages in the development
and b) the major teachings of significant East Asian new religious movements
(NRMs). They will be able to critically assess different theoretical approaches
towards new religions. Students will gain sound knowledge regarding the
characteristic features of NRMs.

LECTURE/SEMINAR PROGRAMME
Essential readings will be available to students online. The general reading
provides you with some basic ideas (e.g. for your essays). However, there is a
lot more instructive reading out there for you to find.

Introduction (Weeks 7-8)
for Keeping the “Nova”. In: Nova Religio: The Journal of Alternative and
Emergent Religions 8:1, 88-102

Cohn, Norman. 2004 [1957]. The Pursuit of the Millennium: Revolutionary Millenarians and Mystical Anarchists of the Middle Ages, London: Pimlico


**Korean NRMs (Weeks 9-12)**

**Case Studies: Unification Movement, Wŏn Buddhism**


Japanese NRMs (Weeks 12-15)
Case Studies: Sōka Gakkai and other Lōtus Sutra based NRMs; Sekai Kyūseikyō; Kōfuku no Kagaku


**Vietnamese and Chinese NRM (Weeks 16-17)**

Case Studies: Đại Đạo Tam Kỳ Phổ Độ; Fǎlún Gōng


Revision Week (Week 18)

ASSESSMENT

PLEASE NOTE: In order to pass a course on the first attempt, a student must attain a Common Grading Scale (CGS) mark of at least E3 on each element of course assessment. Failure to do so will result in a grade of no greater than CGS E1 for the course as a whole.

(one two-hour written examination (50%) / one 2500 word essay (30%) / one class presentation (using PowerPoint) (10%) / one handout (10%)

Click to view the University Level Descriptors (ANNEX A).

Click to view the University Assessment Scale Band Descriptors (ANNEX B).
ESSAYS
Essays should be around 2500 words long, including quotations and footnotes; students should note that they will be penalised for work which is either too long or too short. Please be careful when using internet sources and remember that, for instance, Wikipedia is not acceptable as a primary source.

LIST OF ESSAY TOPICS
Essay topics will be discussed with the course co-ordinator in class.

ASSESSMENT DEADLINES
The essay should be submitted by Friday, 20 November 2015, 3.00pm.

SUBMISSION ARRANGEMENTS
Submit one paper copy to the drop boxes in CB008 in 50-52 College Bounds and one electronic copy to Turnitin via MyAberdeen. Both copies to be submitted by 3.00pm on the due date.

Please note: Failure to submit both to Turnitin, and also one identical hard copy with the Turnitin receipt attached will result in a deduction of marks. Failure to submit to Turnitin will result in a zero mark.

EXAMINATION
The two-hour written examination will comprise three sections. Students will choose to answer one question in each section.

RESIT INFORMATION
Resit: one two-hour written examination (100%)

Access to the resit which is provisional on:

- All submitted coursework having been submitted and graded at CAS 6 or higher.
- Student having a valid Class Certificate. Students with C7’s are not eligible for resits.
Past exam papers can be viewed at http://www.abdn.ac.uk/library/learning-and-teaching/for-students/exam-papers/.