COURSE DETAIL

JAPANESE BUDDHISM AND SOCIAL SUFFERING

Country
Japan

Host Institution
Keio University

Program(s)
Keio University

UCEAP Course Level
Upper Division

UCEAP Subject Area(s)
Religious Studies

UCEAP Course Number
116

UCEAP Course Suffix
W

UCEAP Official Title
JAPANESE BUDDHISM AND SOCIAL SUFFERING

UCEAP Transcript Title
JAPANESE BUDDHISM

UCEAP Quarter Units
3.00

UCEAP Semester Units

2.00

Course Description

This course is offered as a companion course to the course, *Buddhism and Social Change in Contemporary Asia* taught by the same instructor in the first half of the semester. Students are not required to take both courses, but it is recommended to do so for a fuller understanding.

This course analyzes Buddhism in Japan in a very different way – through the actions of Buddhist priests and followers-- to confront the real life problems and suffering of the people in Japan today. The course looks at issues such as:
1) human relationships in terms of: a) dying and grieving, and b) alienation and suicide;
2) economic development in terms of: a) social and economic gaps, aging society, community breakdown and depopulation of the countryside; b) alternatives to globalization and Buddhist economics, and c) alternative energy and the environment;
3) politics in terms of: a) nuclear power and peace, and b) Buddhist complicity with war and work for peace.

The creative solutions some individual Buddhists are developing in response to these problems mark an attempt to revive Japanese Buddhism, which has been primarily associated with funerals and tourism. These efforts are trying to remake the temple as a center of community in an increasingly alienated society.

A variety of teaching methods are employed - from homework, readings, group processes, in-class videos, and guest speakers and this course will aim to be interactive. Students should be ready to reflect on the issues personally as they experience them as residents of Japan, and to express these reflections not only intellectually but emotionally as well. Field trips will be offered on the key issues above so as to deepen appreciation and understanding.

Language(s) of Instruction
English

Host Institution Course Number
N/A

Host Institution Course Title
JAPANESE BUDDHISM AND SOCIAL SUFFERING: PRIESTS AND TEMPLES REVIVING HUMAN RELATIONSHIP AND CIVIL SOCIETY

Host Institution Course Details
https://gslbs.keio.jp/pub-syllabus/detail?ttblyr=2024&entno=50923&lang=en

Host Institution Campus
Keio University

Host Institution Faculty

Host Institution Degree

Host Institution Department
International Center

Course Last Reviewed
2023-2024

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