

Political Science 113A
East Asian Thought in Comparative Perspective
Fall 2008

Professor Victor Magagna

Lecture: MWF 12:00p - 12:50p, Peterson Hall 108

OH: MWF, 10:30-11:30 in SSB375, and after class

Course Description

The rapid economic development of East Asia since 1950 has generated an enormous and often polemical debate concerning East Asia's future global role. Much of this hinges on the question of globalization and the extent to which East Asia will or will not become part of a supposedly global culture. Unfortunately, a good deal of this discussion is logically and empirically flawed, because it assumes East Asia will become more like the West rather than becoming in sense more intensively East Asia. Moreover, the globalization argument also assumes that all culture and institutions must conform to a common model, something completely unsupported by any real evidence.

Given the decisive and problematic status of the one-world hypothesis, it is necessary to reconsider the whole debate by focusing on those cultural and behavioral similarities and differences that have historically characterized by the East Asian and Western traditions. That is the purpose of this course, and the lectures will accordingly focus on the core values and traditions of East Asia's thought in comparative perspectives.

Grading

There are no pre-requisites for this course, and grades will be based on one take-home mid-term (40% of your grade) and one take-home final (60% of your grade). Students must submit all essays to Turnitin.com. Graduating seniors may substitute a 12-15 pages research paper for the mid-term and final with the instructor's permission.

Readings

The readings can be done in any order, and not all readings are required for grading purpose.

Weeks One to Five:

Yao, *An Introduction to Confucianism*, entire.

Bell, *Beyond Liberal Democracy*, pp. 1-83.

De Bary, et al., *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, vol. I, pp. 41-223.

Weeks Six to Ten:

Bell, *Beyond Liberal Democracy*, pp. 121-205 and 255-322.

Bell & Hahm, eds., *Confucianism for the Modern World*, chapters 1-4, 6, 9-14.

De Bary, et al., *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, vol. I, pp. 587-924.