Martial Arts in Chinese Literature and Film

Time: MWF 2:00 pm - 2:50 pm  
Location: Anderson Hall 00306

Instructor: Dr. Yun Zhu (yun.zhu@temple.edu)  
Office: Anderson 351  
Office Hours: Monday & Wednesday 9:55 am – 10:55 am, or by appointment

Course Description

This course explores the spiritual dimension of martial arts literature and film in relation to relevant Chinese cultural traditions, such as Confucianism and Taoism. We will examine the values and ethics embodied in this utopian realm between past and present, the real and the fantastic, the central and the marginal. Through the representation of martial arts heroes and heroines, we will also investigate such issues as social justice, masculinities/femininities, and the construction of Chinese-ness within the context of socio-economic transformation and globalization.

The format of the course will be lecture-discussion. Each student will be required to give a presentation and write three one-page reading responses. Both the midterm and the final exams will be composed of an essay section and a series of short-answer questions drawn from the course materials and lectures. A 5-7 page paper will be due in class on Wed. 11/27. The course will be conducted in English, and no knowledge of Chinese language will be required.

Course Outcomes

In this course, students will:

- Obtain a familiarity with the works covered in this course and their respective cultural historical backgrounds;
- Deepen their understanding of Chinese cultural traditions;
- Improve their skills to critically read and analytically write about literary and cinematic texts.

Evaluation and Course Requirements

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<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance &amp; Participation</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentation (10 minutes)</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blackboard Reflections (200-300 Words x 3)</td>
<td>15%</td>
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Pop Quizzes 10%
Midterm Exam 15%
Final Exam 15%
Term Paper (5-7 Pages, Times New Roman 12, double-spaced) 20%

Grades will be assigned as follows:

92.5% and above: A
87.5-89.99%: B+
80-82.49%: B-
72.5-77.49%: C
67.5-69.99%: D+
60-62.49%: D-

90-92.49%: A-
82.5-87.49%: B
77.5-79.99%: C+
70-72.49%: C-
62.5-67.49%: D
Below 60%: F

Disabilities Statement

This course is open to all students who meet the academic requirements for participation. Any student who has a need for accommodation based on the impact of a disability should both contact Disability Resources and Services (http://www.temple.edu/studentaffairs/disability/index.html) and meet the instructor privately to discuss the specific situation as soon as possible.

Honor Code

Students are expected to practice the highest possible standards of academic integrity and should avoid any form of dishonesty, including plagiarism (from books, internet sources, or other people’s works). Please refer to “Student and Faculty Academic Rights and Responsibilities” at http://policies.temple.edu/PDF/99.pdf for information, and the university statement on plagiarism and cheating can be accessed at http://ww2.cis.temple.edu/cis166/plagiarism.htm. Please note that according to the statement “The penalty for plagiarism or cheating as a first offense is normally an "F" in the course in which the offense is committed and a report to the Dean. A subsequent offense may, in addition, be referred to the university disciplinary committee.”

Policy on Attendance and Participation

Much emphasis will be placed upon class participation, which includes timely attendance and active as well as constructive participation in class.
**Excused Absences:** The only excused absences are either those for which a student arranged for an absence three days or more in advance in order to observe a religious holiday or those for documented university-authorized absences.

**Unexcused Absences:** You will be allowed four unexcused absences. If you are sick or have a family emergency or have to attend to some other matter that keeps you from class, that absence will count as one of the four. If you have more than four unexcused absences, your grade will be automatically lowered half a grade. For example, a B+ under this policy would be lowered to a B.

**Tardiness:** Class begins on the hour. If you are not present and seated at the start of class, you will be counted as absent. Please also be informed that most pop-up quizzes will be given at the beginning of class, and no makeup quizzes will be given except for prearranged absences to observe a religious holiday.

**Make-Up Exams:** Normally no makeup tests/exams will be allowed, unless with proper documentation and timely notice.

**Preparation for Class**

Students are expected to come to class prepared. For this purpose, it is likely that most students will have to spend 4.5-6 hours a week outside of class studying the required materials and working on the assignments. Please bring the required readings with you (hard copy) to class; failures to do so will be counted as absences from class. The recommended materials are only for those (especially presenters) looking for extra information. They are not required and will not be tested on.

**Pop Quizzes:**

Pop quizzes will be given from time to time at the start of a class meeting without prior notice to check students’ readiness for class. Most quizzes will consist of one or two questions about some specific (but not too detailed) content from the readings or films.

In cases when you do not know the answer to a day’s quiz questions, please still turn in the answer sheet with your name on it. Otherwise, you will be marked as absent for the day.

**Presentation**

Each student will give a 10 minute presentation based on the materials they have signed up for. The presentations are expected to provide contextual information, provoke critical thoughts, raise
questions, and trigger class discussions. You are **required** to talk to the instructor (for suggested readings, etc.) when you prepare for your presentation.

**Blackboard Reflections**

Students will be assigned three 200-300 word reflections on the course materials to submit through Blackboard. The deadlines have been highlighted in the schedule. You are highly encouraged to write and post your reflections ahead of the deadlines to help with class discussions. Also, you are welcome to write “reflections upon reflections,” i.e., responses to others’ reflections, but these will not be counted or credited. We will discuss all the postings in class.

**Term Paper**

A 5-7 page term paper will be due in class on **Wednesday, November 27th, 2013**. In the process of developing your argument and writing your paper, you are required to meet the instructor at least twice (see the suggested timeline in the schedule) to discuss your paper project. A **written** paper proposal and an outline will be due respectively at these meetings. You are welcome to discuss early drafts with the instructor before final submission.

**Policy on Late Assignments**

Late assignments (including papers) will be read and commented on, but every day of lateness will be penalized with a deduction of 20% from the points gained for the assignment.

**Religious Holidays**

If religious holidays prevent you from attending class or fulfilling course requirements on time, your absence will be excused and you may make up the missed work. However, you must inform the instructor within two weeks of the beginning of the semester – or three days before any holiday that fall within the first two weeks of class.

**No Use of Electronic Devices Allowed in Class**
* This syllabus is a guideline for the course and is subject to change with advance notice. Please check your email/Blackboard for updates.

** All the required texts and films have been put on reserve at the library. For the required reading assignments, please **print out and bring the hard copies** with you to class.
**Required Textbook**


(http://www.amazon.com/Fox-Volant-Snowy-Mountain-Yong/dp/9622017339/ref=sr_sp-atf_title_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1371587981&sr=1-1&keywords=Fox+Volant+of+the+Snowy+Mountain)

All the other required materials (including video recordings) are on reserve in the library, and you can access them via the library website under “Reserves.”

**Schedule**

**Mon. 8/26**  
Introduction

**Wed. 8/28**  
In-Class Viewing and Discussion: Clips from *Shaolin Temple* (1982, dir. Chang Hsin Yen)

**Fri. 8/30**  
In-Class Viewing and Discussion: *Once Upon A Time in China* (aka *Wong Fei-hung*, 1991, Tsui Hark)  
* Recommended Reading: Stephen Teo, “Introduction” to *Chinese Martial Arts Cinema: The wuxia Tradition*, 1-16

**Mon. 9/2**  
LABOR DAY HOLLIDAY – NO CLASS

**Wed. 9/4**  

**Fri. 9/6**  
Continued Discussion on *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*  

**Mon. 9/9**  
Required Reading: Felicia Chan, “*Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*: Cultural Migrancy and Translatability,” in *Chinese Films I Focus II*, pp. 73-81.  

Introduction to the World of wuxia 武侠
Knights-Errant in Traditional Chinese Literature and Their Modern Film Adaptations


Mon. 9/16 Required Viewing: *Hero* (2002, dir. Zhang Yimou) [Under the title *Ying xiong* on reserve at Paley]

Wed. 9/18 Continued Discussion on *Hero*
Required Reading 2: Sunzi on “subduing the other’s military without battle” in *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, 2nd Ed., Vol. 1, pp. 213-216. [The entire chapter “The Military Texts: *The Sunzi*” is on reserve, but only the chosen pages are required.]

**First Blackboard Reflection Due by 12 Noon**

Fri. 9/20 Continued Discussion on *Hero*
Required Reading: Kam Louie, “*Hero*: The Return of a Traditional Masculine Ideal in China,” in *Chinese Films in Focus II*, pp. 137-143.

* Recommended Online Research: Sima Qian (“The Grand Historian”) on Knights-Errant


Mon. 9/30  Continued Discussion on *The Water Margin*


Mon. 10/7  Continued Discussion on “Wu-Shuang” and “The Sung Founder”


Fri. 10/11  Continued Discussion on *The Romance of the Gods*

**Second Blackboard Reflection Due by 12 Noon**


Fri. 10/18  Required Reading: Stephan Teo, “The Zen Finale,” in *King Hu’s A Touch of Zen*, pp. 91-105.
* Recommended Reading: Mary Farquhar, “*A Touch of Zen*: Action in Martial Arts Movies,” in *Chinese Films in Focus II*, pp. 219-226.

Mon. 10/21  **Midterm**

*It’s highly recommended that you start reading *Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain* as early as possible.*

Modern Martial Arts Fiction: The Case of Jin Yong

Wed. 10/23  Required Reading: *Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain*, Chapter 1

Fri. 10/25  Required Reading: *Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain*, Chapter 2

Mon. 10/28  Required Reading: *Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain*, Chapter 3
Wed. 10/30 Required Reading: *Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain*, Chapter 4

Fri. 11/1 Required Reading: *Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain*, Chapter 5

Mon. 11/4 Required Reading: *Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain*, Chapters 6-7

Wed. 11/6 Required Reading: *Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain*, Chapter 8

By 12 noon this day, you should have talked to the instructor about your term paper proposal.

Fri. 11/8 Required Reading: *Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain*, Chapter 9


Mon. 11/11 Required Reading: *Fox Volant of the Snowy Mountain*, Chapter 10

**Third Blackboard Reflection Due by 12 Noon**

Themes and Isms Revisited: Gender, Nation, Loyalty, Justice, and Geopolitical Identities


Fri. 11/15 Continued Discussion on *Ashes of Time*


Mon. 11/18 Required Viewing: *Seven Swords* (2005, dir. Tsui Hark)

By 12 noon this day, you should have talked to the instructor about your term paper outline.

Wed. 11/20 Continued Discussion on *Seven Swords*


Mon. 11/25 Continued Discussion on *Kung Fu Hustle*


**Term Paper Due in Class**

Fri. 11/29  THANKSGIVING HOLLIDAY – NO CLASS

Mon. 12/2  In-Class Viewing and Discussion: *Kung Fu Panda* (2008, dirs. John Wayne Stevenson & Mark Osborne)

Wed. 12/4  Wrap-Up

**FINAL EXAM: Monday 12/9, 1 pm – 3 pm**