Contemplative Studies

The concentration in Contemplative Studies investigates the underlying philosophical, psychological, and scientific bases of human contemplative experience. Students pursue a "third person" academic approach drawn from the humanities and sciences to analyze the cultural, historical, and scientific underpinnings of contemplative experiences in religion, art, music, and literature. This is developed in combination with a "critical first-person" approach based in practical experience of contemplative techniques and methods to provide an integrated understanding of the role of contemplative thought and experience in societies and on the individuals who constitute them.

Concentration Core (6 courses including the Senior Concentration Seminar)

COST 0100 Introduction to Contemplative Studies
Two introductory science courses addressing the biological, psychological, and neurological functioning of the human body/mind complex with health implications, and how contemplative practices affect it.

Select one from the following list: 1

BIOL 0200 The Foundation of Living Systems
CLPS 0200 Human Cognition
CLPS 0500 Perception and Mind
NEUR 0010 The Brain: An Introduction to Neuroscience

Others with approval
Select one from the following list: 1

COST 0200 Meditation and the Brain
COST 1020 Cognitive Neuroscience of Meditation
COST 1080 Meditation, Mindfulness and Health (PHP 1880)

Two humanities courses that present important themes that can emerge from bringing a Contemplative Studies perspective to the study of contemplative religious traditions and to the philosophical analysis of the key questions of human existence.

Select one from following list: 2

ANTH 1240 Religion and Culture
CLAS 0990 Karma and Free Will: The Self in Indian Philosophy
CLAS 1120G The Idea of Self
COST 0040 or RELS 0040 Great Contemplative Traditions of Asia
COST 0145 or RELS 0145 Karma, Rebirth and Liberation: Life and Death in South Asian Religions
COST 0410 Engaged Buddhism
COST 0420 The Theory and Practice of Buddhist Meditation
COST 0450 Stages of the Contemplative Path
PHIL 0010 The Place of Persons
PHIL 0015 Introduction to Philosophy
PHIL 0510 Philosophy and Psychology of Happiness
PHIL 1800 Philosophy of Mind
PHIL 1825 Consciousness
RELS 0056 Spiritual But Not Religious: Making Spirituality in America
RELS 0065 On Being Human: Religious and Philosophical Conceptions of Self
RELS 1370B Philosophy of Mysticism

Track Requirements (6 additional courses Including a Capstone Course)

Students must complete either a Science or Humanities track in addition to the concentration core.

Science Track

The Science track in Contemplative Studies gives concentrators a foundational understanding of the scientific methods used to investigate the biological, psychological, and neurological effects of contemplative practice and their potential implications on physical and mental health both for individuals and for the general public. Students will be taught how to critique current research as well as how to develop, operationalize, and test hypotheses related to contemplative practice. Students will become well-versed in how to study first-person reports related to the phenomenology of contemplative experience as a foundation for formulating third-person tests of the effects of practice on brain function and behavior. The Contemplative Studies Science Track trains students to investigate these types of questions not only for academic scholarship, but also to provide a method of self-inquiry that can be used to augment any area of life.

Five thematic science courses, including a Capstone Course, drawn primarily from BIOL, COST, NEUR, CLPS, and PHP, at least one of which must include laboratory work and two of which must be 1000-level; and one Statistics course for a total of six courses.

The Capstone Course is intended to be a culmination of the students’ concentration in which they will bring to bear what their interests have been in developing their focused work in the program. The Capstone course can be either:

a. A one semester Independent Reading and Research course, either COST 1910 or 1920 OR BIOL 1950 or 1960, depending on the semester; OR

b. A special project done within an existing Contemplative Studies core or related course at the 1000-level in which the student brings to bear the larger concerns of her concentration on a problem or issue within the course. It is expected that such Capstone research papers will be more substantial than a term paper.

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Others with approval

COST 1950 Senior Concentrators’ Seminar

Track Requirements (6 additional courses Including a Capstone Course)

Students must complete either a Science or Humanities track in addition to the concentration core.

Science Track

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## Humanities Track

The Humanities track explores the origin and development of contemplative practices within specific religious, cultural, and historical contexts and gives students a foundation in the Philosophy of Mind relevant to the scientific study of contemplative practice. Students will choose a concentration program that includes three intermediate and three advanced seminars drawn from the two areas below. While it is recommended that students focus primarily on one of these two areas, the precise balance of the individual concentration program for each student will be established with the concentration advisor when the student applies to enter the concentration, normally in their fourth semester of study.

### Six courses, including a Capstone Course, from across the two areas below:

The Capstone Course is intended to be a culmination of the students' concentration in which they will bring to bear what their interests have been in developing their focused work in the program. The Capstone course can be either:

- a. A one semester Independent Reading and Research course, either COST 1910 or 1920 OR BIOL 1950 or 1960, depending on the semester; OR
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### Contemplative Religious Traditions

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<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CLAS 0210Y</td>
<td>The Philosophy of Classical Indian Yoga</td>
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<tr>
<td>CLAS 0820</td>
<td>Epics of India</td>
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<td>CLAS 0850</td>
<td>Mythology of India</td>
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<td>CLAS 0990</td>
<td>Karma and Free Will: The Self in Indian Philosophy</td>
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<tr>
<td>CLAS 0995</td>
<td>India's Classical Performing Arts</td>
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<td>CLAS 1140</td>
<td>Classical Philosophy of India</td>
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<tr>
<td>CLAS 1160</td>
<td>Love and Devotion, Power and Poverty: India's Literary Classics</td>
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<td>COST 0145</td>
<td>Karma, Rebirth and Liberation: Life and Death in South Asian Religions</td>
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<tr>
<td>COST 0420</td>
<td>The Theory and Practice of Buddhist Meditation</td>
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<td>COST 0530</td>
<td>Laozi and the Daodejing</td>
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<td>COST 0535</td>
<td>Self Transformation and Transcendence in Later Daoist Contemplative Traditions</td>
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<tr>
<td>COST 0550</td>
<td>Tibetan Buddhism and the West</td>
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<tr>
<td>COST 0855</td>
<td>The Bhagavad Gītā (CLAS 0855)</td>
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<td>COST 1420</td>
<td>The Contemplative Foundations of Classical Daoism</td>
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### The Philosophy of Mind

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<tr>
<td>EAST 1420</td>
<td>The Confucian Mind</td>
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<tr>
<td>RELS 0045</td>
<td>Buddhism and Death</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELS 0100</td>
<td>Buddhist Thought, Practice, and Society</td>
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<tr>
<td>RELS 0120</td>
<td>The Classical Chinese Philosophy of Life</td>
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<td>RELS 1441</td>
<td>Zen Meditation in China, Korea, and Japan</td>
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<tr>
<td>RELS 0570</td>
<td>Science, Religion, and the Search for Happiness in Traditional Asian Thought</td>
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<tr>
<td>RELS 0580</td>
<td>Experiencing the Sacred: Embodiment and Aesthetics in South Asian Religions</td>
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<tr>
<td>RELS 1370B</td>
<td>Philosophy of Mysticism</td>
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<tr>
<td>RELS 1425</td>
<td>Buddhist Poetry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELS 1442</td>
<td>The History, Philosophy, and Practice of Rinzai Zen Buddhism</td>
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### Others with approval

- APMA 0650 Essential Statistics
- APMA 1650 Statistical Inference I
- BIOL 0495 Statistical Analysis of Biological Data
- CLPS 0900 Statistical Methods
- PHP 1501 Essentials of Data Analysis

### Honors Requirement

Students with a minimum GPA of 3.5 in the concentration may apply for entrance into the Honors program in the middle of their sixth semester. To apply, students submit a proposal for a senior thesis project describing the work to be undertaken and its relevance to the field of Contemplative Studies, along with a copy of their academic transcript. Students accepted into Honors must complete the required Capstone seminar, UNIV 1010, and enroll in an additional semester of independent study in their advisor's department. Students must complete an Honors Thesis to the satisfaction of their advisor and present the results of their studies in formal talks or poster sessions open to all interested faculty and students.