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Course description (syllabus) & other information

EA105, Core Romantic Values in East Asian Premodern Literature and Contemporary Film Fall 2009

Instructor: John R. Wallace / Meets: see [Online Schedule of Classes](#)

web sites: www.sonic.net/~tabine and bSpace

Communicating with each other

How to reach me

Office hours: *probably* Mon & Wed 1:15-2:15PM, and *when an appointment is made ahead of time* Fri 1:15-2:15PM.

My office is Dwinelle 3409.

My email is jwallace@berkeley.edu.

- ◆ Please include **EA105** and your first and/or last name in the *subject* line of emails to me. This is very useful when I do email searches. Please see other details accessible via the sidebar link "Email Wallace" on the Home Page. Your thoughtfulness on subject line management will be greatly appreciated.
- ◆ I often do not check email after 9:30PM.

Announcements & schedule

The Home Page at www.sonic.net/~tabine is the **official source of class announcements and schedules**. Please go there for the latest information on this class. *Remember to refresh your browser to insure you are seeing the updated version of the site, since announcements are added throughout the term.* The Home Page should look something like the below (the example is a screen capture from a different class but basically the same). There should be a top banner, a sidebar with links and a main window that shows announcements.

(graphic here)

This class uses two web sites

Because of their different capabilities and limitations, this class uses a primary and secondary web site. Below is a table explaining what material is where:

PRIMARY	SECONDARY
<i>Home Page</i>	<i>materials with restricted access</i>
— www.sonic.net/~tabine —	— bSpace —
announcements	course materials (texts, vocab glosses, sound files, powerpoints, etc.)
class policies, syllabus, etc.	unofficial grade postings
class schedule: topics, assignments, test dates & details, all deadlines	interactive forums (chats & forums)
links to other resources	

General policies

On the sidebar of the Home Page, I have links to my policies about my efforts to be "green" in class operation (including an invitation to contact me if my policy is hindering your learning experience), laptop use in the classroom (basically prohibited), computer trouble (rarely an accepted excuse) and plagiarism/cheating (definition and penalties). Please read them; some of the information there affects your grade.

Accommodation for students with disabilities

If you need accommodations for any physical, psychological, or learning disability or if you want me to have emergency medical information, please email me, or speak to me after class or during office hours.

Course content & goals

This class asks students to generate knowledge through exercises in comparative analysis on how traditional romantic values of three East Asian countries (China, Korea and Japan) endure, change or disappear when there is a change in historical context and narrative media. Romantic values developed in a premodern context and expressed in narratives told through literary prose are compared with postmodern, global contexts and cinema as the medium of expression.

This class works with topics that are complex, not crisply observable, and sometimes poorly understood. The class is open-ended in many ways and the primary burden placed on the student is to think with focused curiosity, substantial discipline, and good self-reflection.

The class is structured with two approximately equal components: first reading and discussion of premodern literary texts, then viewing and discussion of twenty-first century films. All materials take matters of love as a central feature of the narrative. The first half of the course also includes lectures on the impact of Daoism, Confucianism and Buddhism on romantic expectation and perception, as well as discussions of method in comparative analysis.

At the beginning of the term, each student is paired with another and a term paper is developed between the two, with some components researched and written independently and others the result of interaction between the two members of the team.

This class introduces a wide range of topics and encourages the student to think further on questions these topics raise such as: How is “love” defined in different cultural and artistic contexts? What is the relationship of body to culture? How do commonly held “world views” (such as whether the beautiful is enduring or fleeting, whether time is linear, cyclical or multiple) affect expectations about the content and outcome of romance? How much impact does history have on a postmodern East Asian country; that is, can a country’s view of romance be traditional and postmodern at the same time? How do East Asian film directors choose to present their views of romance to an international audience? What is the relationship of profit in artistic production to the endurance of traditional values and romantic views? I ask students to consider their own views of love and whether there might be other equally valid views of “true” love, or whether that is even a relevant question. For example, when one loves someone because s/he reminds him or her of someone else, is that love? Should love be primarily about what it offers for oneself or what one does for another? Is there love without desire? Is the proof of love in its brevity or endurance? Some of these questions involve, of course, the wide range of meanings the word “love” embraces (and of course in East Asia different terms, which we will study, serve this role). They are nevertheless legitimate as questions because in general individuals are not very willing to alter personal boundaries of what s/he is willing or unwilling to call love. We explore those boundaries.

The class sets as an admittedly high goal the student’s ability to locate prejudices within his or her own culture and individual thinking that not only pre-decides what should be called loved and what can be the expected trajectory of a relationship but also determines how various narrative moments will be interpreted. This goal is pursued by the presentation by me of certain foundation material through lecture, pointed discussion during class sessions, individual research, and extensive dialogue with one’s paper partner. Our goal is definitely not to develop a definition of love but rather discover the definitions others hold. Hopefully the student will develop a more informed knowledge of the three East Asian cultures that are taken as the object of analysis, their relationship to each other, and a more nuanced view of how long-held and widely-diffused thought systems work to provide, at times if unpredictably, the context for modern stories. Thus this class looks at specific East Asian cultures, the relationship of premodern culture to modern culture, and the relationship of context-producing thought systems to the personal experience of love.

Course prerequisites

This class has no prerequisites.

Course materials

Much of the assigned reading has been ordered for the class and is available for purchase at Analog Books (1816 Euclid Ave. @ North Gate, tel. 843-1816). The books, in the approximate order that we read them are:

<i>title</i>	<i>notes for those seeking alternate purchase options</i>
The Tale of Genji Penguin classics. By Murasaki Shikibu Trans. by Royall Tyler	Please use Royall Tyler’s abridged edition. You might consider buying the complete edition. Sometimes the prices are not that different. Please do NOT purchase Seidensticker’s translation, either the full or abridged one. The abridged provides different chapters from Tyler and Seidensticker uses different names for the characters. We don’t have time for this sort of confusion. Please proceed with care if using Chinese or Korean translations. Modern Japanese translations are fine. Yosano, Enchi, Tanizaki are all good translations.
Story of the Stone, Vol 1. Penguin classics. By Cao Xueqin Trans. by David Hawkes	Also known as <i>Dream of the Red Chamber</i> in English. The Penguin edition is what we are ordering. This is a multivolume work. We are reading Volume 1, from the first 26 chapters. There are multiple translations and while the romanization of the names might be different other translations could be OKish. I would like all of us to use the Penguin edition if we can but this isn’t completely necessary.
Kuunmong: The Cloud Dream of the Nine Kurodaha Press. By Kim Manjung Trans. by James Scarth Gale	There is also a different translation that can be found inside <i>Virtuous Women: Three Classic Korean Novels</i> . This book can sometimes be purchased for a low price. It is a very good 1970s translation by Rutt. It is on 2-hour reserve at Moffitt. Two hours might not seem like much, but this book is easier to read than the others assigned. There is also an online version of the book to the left (Gale’s 1922 translation). Online editions are convenient in some ways but

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	lead to poor reading in other ways. Before selecting this option keep in mind that this text will be tested regularly and might be a part of the final paper. You will need to read it with care. Here is the link: The Cloud Dream of Nine (Gale's 1922 translation, online with illustrations) .
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Aside from these books, there will be some other readings. They will be provided as pdf files. All films scheduled for this class are available at the East Asian Library Media Center.

Important Dates, Deadlines, Class schedule

Important dates are listed on the Home Page sidebar.

The schedule is accessed through the Home Page. Each class session is assigned a session number. If the box containing this number is not the usual gray but instead, red, that means that day's schedule is still in draft form and definitely subject to change.

Assignment deadlines are listed in the "evaluated events & deadlines" column of the schedule (the final column to the right).

Please DO NOT download this html. There are two serious problems with doing so:

- ◆ Navigating to the Home Page takes you to the announcements. I run the class assuming that you are reading the announcements. Important information not spoken in class or otherwise communicated might be there.
- ◆ The schedule often changes as the class progresses. Since deadlines are on the schedule, and since late penalties are usually a part of assignments, working from a downloaded version of the schedule can cause you to miss deadlines.

Laptops and cell phones

Please read my policy and comments regarding the use of laptops because laptop use can affect a student's grade. It is linked on the side bar of the Home Page.

I can add that laptops should definitely not be used during the screening of films. If you really want to do so, explain your reason to me, sit on the back row, and type as quietly as possible. The work will need to be related to the class and I reserve the right to ask to see that work at the end of the class session.

As a special request to this class, I ask that you remember to silence cells phones, refrain from texting, and such. Class discussions can be very complicated and I might lose the line of thought I am trying to promote through a certain sequence of questions. In the case of films, the effectiveness of a movie can be spoiled by cell phone noise, and since we are "reading mood" as part of the work of viewing the film, cell phone noise can interfere with the effect the direction is trying to achieve.

Attendance and timely arrival

This class, usually, does not require attendance. Those days where attendance is required are identified on the schedule and roll might be taken to confirm presence. However, much of the material needed to do well in the class is delivered during the class and only then. Without this material the student might make the mistakes that this class tries hard to avoid: the employment uncritically of one's personal views for interpretation when one should be trying to draw on new information to build new cultural frameworks, or a failure to ask the right questions in the first place. The paper is not easy to write and needs the class content to be successful.

Please do not arrive late to class—

- ◆ We have a very busy schedule, and since we meet three times a week it is imperative that we do not lose much time on administrative matters at the beginning of class. Arrive ready to think and work in good form.
- ◆ In the second half of the class it is very tempting to arrive late since we are "just watching films". The first 10 minutes of these sessions are devoted to the discussion of the segment screened during the prior session. I very much would like you to be present for those discussions. *Also, while I would not expect this ever to be the case, I will definitely be asking students who appear to be skipping the discussion and arriving in time only for the film to later explain why that was the case.*

Academic honesty

This class has a number of assignments that are to be completed outside the classroom in specific ways, in order for the class to function correctly and for the student to develop his or her individual stance on certain issues, stances that will be needed in writing the final paper. Observations assignments in particular are specifically meant for the student to explore his or her own thinking on a topic. Discussing the assignment can subvert that purpose. **I ask all students who enroll in this class to not discuss how they have, or plan, to answer an assignment in those cases when I have clearly indicated that individual work is expected.** To not do so will be considered, unfortunately, academic dishonesty and can incur grade penalties or more. Further, there are meetings between students outside of class for which the content of that meeting needs to be reported to me. Misrepresenting the length and content of those meetings can be viewed as a type of cheating since that information is used towards the paper grade. **Misrepresenting the forum is included in this, that is, describing a chat session as a face-to-face meeting,** for example. This class has expanded enrollment to meet student needs and uses techniques such as the above to enhance dialogue, a critical element of this class.

Tolerance in the classroom

Discussions in this class frequently take up issues of national identity, religious views, chauvinist social practices, sexual mores, and views of love. I speak frankly about religion and sex in the belief that we need to be clear about what we discuss. Please speak with me right away if you feel offended or that your values seem unwelcome or unfairly challenged by me or other students. I want to challenge you to have a critical awareness your own beliefs, but I am above all interested in creating a class environment where you feel you can express your opinions comfortably. I ask all students not to disparage explicitly or implicitly other students' ideas or the culture of any country.

As for films, by the way, all movies scheduled to be screened are "R-rated" or less and do not include explicit scenes of sex or strong violence, by most definitions. There is one exception: a film segment shown early in the term and which will be pre-announced before presentation with students given the opportunity not to view it. It is an example of a romantic story told both within a "high art" moment (opera) and a "low art" moment (an experimental "indie" film), to explore how context changes the way we perceive the romantic ideals of the story.

I ask that student terms write a paper on two films that they select. **When working with your partner during the paper process, please do not ask him or her to read material or view films about which he or she feels uncomfortable.** If you feel you are being put in such a situation, please contact me right away and we can discuss what might be a resolution that you feel good about.

Plagiarism

I am very concerned about plagiarism. I watch for it and I penalize students who have plagiarized. I have failed students in the past for plagiarism. Please see my full statement on the Home Page side bar by clicking on the link "Plagiarism Policy". It is very difficult to plagiarize in this class, actually, but any plagiarism would be so extremely counter to the goals of the class that penalties are almost certain to be very severe, probably an "F" for the course.

Grades

General comments

- ◆ Students are always welcome to discuss with me concerns about grades. Using "gradeissue" as a keyword in the email subject line might help me spot your question or concern more quickly but I will try to respond quickly to questions about grades in any event.
- ◆ "Curved," when used by me below or in class, means that while I start off with standard cutoffs for letter grades (listed below in this syllabus as "Start point in defining cutoffs ..."), I often adjust these for particular tests or quizzes. The intent is not to create a "bell" curve, but rather to make a grading profile for a particular evaluated event that takes into account the difficulty of the event, what I think students should be able to do on it, and how students have actually performed.
- ◆ **Some grades are reported to bSpace**, though in some cases this report is several sessions after the grade is determined. I try to keep bSpace more or less up to date but it is NOT the official grade book record. There is one exception to this: "General Extra Credit Points" are recorded on the bSpace grade book, in their own category, as a count of events. The information there is official. If you feel you have completed extra credit work for which you have not received credit, please contact me if it hasn't appeared on bSpace within a week of completing the work.) More details about how these are used to calculate the final grade are given elsewhere in this syllabus.
- ◆ All grades in all categories are either originally in, or converted to (curved) a **12-pt scale** where A = 12, A- = 11 and so on. (See the charts at the end of this document.) This is also the way grades are communicated. To tell a student that s/he made a 12 on an assignment is to say that s/he received an "A". Test grades might initially have a raw and/or percent score but this is curved and given a letter grade and it is the letter grade, not the raw score or percent that counts towards the final grade.
- ◆ **Attendance/evaluated events and travel plans:** Students often schedule travel plans very close to class sessions. I do not consider missed flights, delayed or cancelled flights or inexpensive tickets to be excusable reasons for absences. I take our class sessions very seriously and hope you will, too.
- ◆ **Leaving early or arriving late because of midterms in other classes:** I do not consider this a valid reason for missing part of the class. I do have sympathy with a student's desire to arrive early to a test room or when a test runs overtime. However, this explanation is so frequently abused that it is difficult to sort out those who legitimately need to do this and those who do not. Therefore, please email me ahead of time if possible and perhaps we can work something out.
- ◆ I consider the final exam period a firm date. Please do not ask to take an exam early because you have travel or moving plans.
- ◆ **I basically never give incompletes in a class.**

About "Grade categories" & "evaluated events"

By "evaluated events" I mean anything in the class that is scored for a grade. This includes class participation (for some classes), quizzes, tests, papers, and so on. I first group evaluated events under various categories, then weigh category grades to determine a final course grade. I often curve evaluated events, I sometimes curve a student's category grade when warranted.

Since nearly all adjustments are done at the level of each individual event, a student who knows his or her category grades can estimate a final course grade. I do reserve the right, however, to make adjustments to a student's category grade. For details on how I calculate the final grade and an excel worksheet, please see "Grade Calculator" on the sidebar of the Home Page.

“Grade categories” & “evaluated events” for this class

Category—Early exercise in analysis:

This category has two events, a quiz and a very short paper statement. The **quiz** is an in-class, closed-book, 20-minute multiply-choice style quiz designed to see if you have read the assigned reading with reasonable care. It will not ask for extensive analysis. The **short written statement**'s topic is not yet announced. It will be a comparative analysis of some aspect of “Song of the Faithful Wife” and “Chunhyang”. The length will also be later announced, but it will probably be a one page or shorter. See the schedule for submission details. The written statement is not a letter-graded assignment. It receives a pass/no-pass grade only. However, until the student receives a pass on this assignment, the quiz grade on “Song of a Faithful Wife” is “0”.

Calculating the category grade: The category grade is the quiz grade, unless the written statement has not received a pass grade for some reason. In that case, the category grade is “F” (0).

Category—Tests on premodern readings & lectures:

The details of these exams are not yet completely worked out but in general they will likely be in-class, closed-book, 30-minute tests. **Students are allowed to make up exams only due to very unusual circumstances.** Please contact me as soon as you know that you will miss an exam. Makeup exams are not the same exam as the one given on the date of the exam but there is no penalty for making up an exam. Thus the student either receives an “F” for a missed exam (unable to make it up) or is graded with full credit in mind when a test is made up.

Calculating the category grade: The three test scores are averaged equally.

Category—Observation & Analysis (OAs):

Several times during the term the student will be asked to submit in writing observations or short comments about the assigned reading or film. Unlike the quiz category, each of these submissions receives a letter grade. The primary function of the observations assignments is to help position the student well for the final paper process, so, while graded, their primary function is check & guidance.

Calculating the category grade: This is a single score at the end of the term that is not the mathematical result of the scores of individual assignments. Rather, when the student's performance on all the assignments is collectively considered based on these two questions: Is the student developing a foundation for analysis along the themes of the course? and, Is the student vigorously pursuing well-considered analysis? The reasons there is no fixed formula are several, including the substantial difference in types of observations requested, that low grades might be given to signal to the student to fix something (more of a diagnostic grade than an evaluation of performance), and so on.

Category—Term Paper:

For the purpose of exploring one's own views on romance and various East Asian cultures, the paper process pairs students to work together during the second half of the term towards a paper that is jointly written.

This process has about six stages, some of which are simple meetings, some of which require submission to me. Some of these stages require direct dialogue with one's partner to produce a joint written document, other stages require work “blind and silent” to the partner.

About four of these stages are graded.

Some grades are individually assigned while others are jointly shared. There is a procedure in place to resolve conflicts or to protect one's grade should one's partner become uncooperative for any reason.

While this class does not have a final, **students will definitely need to meet with their partner during finals week to complete the last stage of the paper process. This final meeting, in the past, has averaged taking about 2-3 hours to successfully complete.** Please keep that in mind.

Calculating the category grade: The four graded submissions are averaged equally.

Category—Miscellaneous Category:

This class pursues topics as they develop and thus there may be exercises created to help sharpen the students understanding of a topic. These may or may not be graded but if they are graded, they fall within this miscellaneous category, as does attendance on the days of required attendance and general participation in the course as measured by attendance, attentiveness, participation in discussion, emails and other exchanges outside the classroom and so on.

Calculating the category grade: There is no distinct measure at this time of how this category is graded; it will be announced as the course develops. However, it can be said that attentive attendance but substantial lack in participation in discussion rates about an “A-minus” and regular but passive attendance or attendance that includes multitasking of other courses rates about a “B” in this category and irregular or frequent inattentive presence or the sense that the student is not actively engaging the material—thinking it over, so to speak—rates about a “C” or less in this category. This class is about listening and thinking and I will be somewhat unforgiving in the grades related to these core

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activities. Such “participation/engagement” grades would be balanced against other assigned events that might or might not be part of the calculation.

Category—General Extra Credit Events:

◆ Extra credit earned on assignments is calculated into the assignment grade. “General Extra Credit Points” are other types of extra credit actions that aren’t strongly related to a specific graded assignment or exam. During the course of the term you might hear me say “Extra credit if you ...”. When students complete such suggested activities in good form, it is recorded on bSpace. Regardless of the type of event (and some are much more difficult than others), the count number is always “1” – it is not meant to measure the size of extra credit work but just track that it has been recorded. At the end of the term I look at such activity from a total perspective (the nature of the extra credit work done, the spirit in which it was done, each student’s work in relation to the other extra credit work done by the rest of the class, and so on). I reduce the various events into simple descriptive tags such as “very strong” “strong” “median” “some” “negligent” “none”. These appear on the grade summary page directly next to the final grade column. They serve as an important reference to me as I reconsider each student’s grade before making a final decision and submitting grades to the University:

- ◇ When a student is n.4 as a final grade (11.4, 10.4, etc.), “strong” or better extra credit activity might help round the student up in grade level. (Normally an 11.4 is rounded to 11 and an 11.5 is rounded to 12, for example.) This is one of three important ways I use the general extra credit grade category. However, in truth, for most students this will not become an active element, since most students are not on the n.4 (or sometimes n.3) point of the scale.
- ◇ I also use this grade category to help me decide the “A+”s at the end of the term, if there are to be any.
- ◇ The most important plus for the student in terms of general extra credit activity of this sort, aside from the increased learning (and pleasure) that comes from increased participation, is that the student creates for him- or herself a positive environment that might help in some difficult to quantify way.
- ◇ These general extra credit activities are not measured in points and do not help improve weak grades and should never be done under the assumption that they will help reverse a poor grade on an evaluated event.

How grade categories are weighted for the final course grade

Early exercise in analysis: “Chunhyang”	10%
Tests on premodern readings & lectures (3@10% each)	30%
Observation & Analysis (OAs)	10%
Term paper process (4 graded steps@10% each)	40%
Miscellaneous category (includes participation)	10%

Equivalents of 12-pt scale numbers to letter grades

When a “12-pt scale” grade is reported on bSpace or appears on a graded event, the letter grade equivalent to that number is:

13 / A+	10 / B+	7 / C+	4 / D+
12 / A	9 / B	6 / C	3 / D
11 / A-	8 / B-	5 / C-	2 / D-
			0 / F

Conversion of 12-pt scale course average to letter grades for the final course grade

At the end of the term, the 12-pt scores for each grade category are calculated together, according to weight, for the final grade. That mathematical result is then rounded to the nearest letter grade step. In other words, an 11.50 is rounded up to 12 while an 11.49 is rounded down to 11, and so on. The student can calculate possible scenarios by using the excel sheet provided on the Home Page. Below are the cutoffs for each final course letter grade.

Course 12pt average	letter grade reported to the university	Course 12pt average	letter grade reported to the university	Course 12pt average	letter grade reported to the university	Course 12pt average	letter grade reported to the university
When given, highest 1 or 2 class averages	A+	≥ 9.5	B+	≥ 6.5	C+	≥ 3.5	D+
≥ 11.5	A	≥ 8.5	B	≥ 5.5	C	≥ 2.5	D
≥ 10.5	A-	≥ 7.5	B-	≥ 4.5	C-	≥ 2	D-
						< 2	F

Start point in defining cutoffs for grades when “percent correct” is the criterion used to determine a letter grade

≥ 100	A+	86.5	B+	76.5	C+	66.5	D+	< 60	F
93	A	83	B	73	C	63	D		

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90 A-

80 B-

70 C-

60 D-

My expectations, and suggestions for scoring well in this class

Attend regularly. Listen well to me and other students (both sources of information are very important). Try to keep an open, curious mind. Try to avoid these things: being disinterested in types of love that you do not define as real love, being overly interested in proving that your definition of love is correct, and thinking that it will be easy to interpret the love stories of your films.