A one semester course that traces the origins of Eastern philosophy in the cosmological, theological and social views that arose in India and China beginning around 1200 B.C., including Buddhism, Confucianism, and Daoism. We close with a look at two thinkers of the 20th century: Gandhi and the Dalai Lama. Videos, lecture introductions and focused discussion.

1. **Laozi and Daoism—The Way of Nature** Moderator: Marion Ehrlich
Examine Daoism, the second of China’s major philosophies, cultivated by a legendary figure known as Laozi. This school's central text, the Daodejing, offers unique solutions to the problems of social disorder and violence and provides rulers and individuals with practical advice that prefers simplicity and humility over power and ambition.

2. **Confucius—in Praise of Sage-Kings** Moderator: Marion Ehrlich
Focus now on China and the ideas of its first philosopher, Confucius. What was life like during the "age of Confucius"? What are the key ideas and lessons to take away from the Analects, which collect his various sayings? How does Confucianism work for a society? A family? An individual?

3. **Mencius and Xunzi—Confucius’s Successors** Moderator: Robert Ehrlich
Mencius and Xunzi, both followers of Confucius, are likened to the ancient Greek thinkers Plato and Aristotle (who learned from Socrates). Both Chinese philosophers accepted the main precepts of Confucianism, but disagreed on several issues. Compare their views on morality, the existence of evil, the principles of economics, and more.

4. **Sunzi and Han Feizi—Strategy and Legalism** Moderator: Robert Ehrlich
Sunzi was a Chinese philosopher best known for The Art of War, which promoted the merits of strategic, deceptive warfare. Han Feizi epitomized legalism, the philosophical school aimed at strengthening the state through rational means.

5. **The Buddha—The Middle Way** Moderator: Marion Ehrlich
Buddhism, like Jainism, grew as another of India's major heterodox schools of thought. Get an overview of this philosophical and spiritual school by exploring the Buddha's life story, Buddhism's basic principles (including the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path), the daily practices of Buddhists, and more.
6. **Xuanzang and Chinese Buddhism**  Moderator: Marion Ehrlich
After the collapse of the Han dynasty in A.D. 220, Buddhism became widely accepted in China. Explore the ideas of the four major schools of Chinese Buddhism: Tiantai, Huayan (Flower Garland), Pure Land, and Chan (Zen). Also, meet the most important mind behind Buddhism's spread, the monk and translator Xuanzang.

7. **Saicho to Nichiren—Japanese Buddhism**  Moderator: Marion Ehrlich
Take a closer look at the development of Buddhism in Japan. Among the early Buddhist thinkers you encounter in this lecture are Saicho, founder of Japan's foremost Buddhist temple; Honen, who established Japan's Pure Land sect; and Nichiren, whose form of Buddhism is one of the most prominent in modern Japan.

8. **Sima Qian and Ban Zhao—History and Women**  Moderator: Robert Ehrlich
Sima Qian's *Shiji* (The Grand Scribe's Records), offered a comprehensive history of the world that profoundly influenced China's cultural identity. Meet Ban Zhao, the first great female mind of Eastern philosophy and an insightful commentator on the complex relationships between men and women.

9. **Zeami and Sen no Rikyu—Japanese Aesthetics**
Noh drama and the tea ceremony are indebted to Confucian rituals and Buddhist ideals. Learn how the great Noh playwright Zeami and the teamaster Sen no Rikyu epitomize medieval Japanese aesthetics and their emphasis on yugen (profound emotion), wabi (feelings of age and obscurity), and sabi (feelings of simplicity and tranquility).

10. **Mohandas Gandhi—Satyagraha, or Soul-Force, Happiness and Realization**  Moderator: Marion Ehrlich
Mohandas Gandhi is rightfully one of the most well-known Asian philosophers. What are the historical roots of some of his ideas, especially that of nonviolent resistance (satyagraha)? Why were some of his critiques of the West and modernity so controversial? What was the relationship between his ascetic lifestyle and his thought?

11. **HH Dalai Lama XIV—A Modern Buddhist View**  Moderator: Marion Ehrlich
You are introduced to the Dalai Lama's Buddhist-inflected but very modern, secular vision about the universal human goal of happiness. You learn its components and the relationship between their pursuit and the interconnectedness of human life.

**Videos**

*Great Minds of the Eastern Intellectual Tradition* Professor Grant Harvey

*Meaning of Life: Perspectives from the World's Great Intellectual Traditions* Professor Jay L. Garfield