

REL 135g

Chinese Religion and Culture



Have you ever wondered about “the way?” Ever heard about “fengshui”? Are you curious about the religious practices you see in Chinese films? Or do you want to know what Buddhists believe about death and dying? If so, this is the class for you! The class will explore the major religions that have been practiced throughout the history of China, with an eye to understanding what people believed and how they enacted that belief in their bodies and in their society. We will approach the material thematically by addressing questions of living and dying, order and chaos, and the spirit world. The class will finish the semester by analyzing a newly-released and highly acclaimed martial arts novel set in 19th century Chinatown, San Francisco. Upon completion of this course you will have been immersed in new (and yet very old) ways of thinking and will be able to explain and interpret references to Chinese culture and religion that are frequently cited in popular culture.

Fulfills GE B / Old GE Category II

SPRING 2017

Tue, Thu 9:30-10:50 AM, SGM 101

Instructor Stephanie Balkwill

balkwill@usc.edu