

Course Report for EAST4504 – East Asia: Great Traditions, Spring 2017

Lectures for the course EAST4504 in spring 2017 followed the lecture plan without any significant deviations. 5 students took the final exam – slightly less compared with the previous year (then, there were 6 students). Generally, the numbers used to vary between 2 and 4-5 students. While 2 students received grade "A" and two others received grade "D", one student received a "C". This statistic allows us to assess the motivation level of the students as relatively satisfactory. Indeed, having two "A" essays among the five submitted is a very rare, rather exceptional occurrence.

Only two students among the five answered the questionnaire, so it should be deemed only partly representative. It looks as if the course was liked in general (it was evaluated with the grades ranging from 5 to 6). However, one of the answers indicated that the students wished to have more seminars. Next time, I will try to include at least some seminars into the plan, which for now consists exclusively of the lectures. Another problem mentioned in students' answers is varying quality of the lectures: the course was co-taught by several teachers. While variations in quality between lectures by different lecturers is not something I can comment upon, it is quite visible that such a co-taught course might have needed better coordination between different co-teachers. One way of improving such coordination may be to increase the number of co-taught individual classes, so that different teachers share a single class and make the content of teaching more comparative, rather than country-specific. Then, we may need more meetings of the co-teachers in the duration of the course, so that better coordination could be discussed; and better mutual exchange of teaching materials (PPTs should be sent to all the participating teachers in advance, I think). Another justifiable complaint was that reading load was too heavy for some particular weeks. I will have to go through the whole schedule again and make sure that the weekly reading loads are reasonable in all the cases.

It is not easy to draw definite conclusions from the students' answers to the questionnaire, since less than half of them ever answer it. If we take these answers as representative, however, it looks as if the students mostly are satisfied. It also looks as if the course description gives a satisfactory picture of the course and, together with Fronter, provides the students with the needed information.

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