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To the Sabbatical Leave Committee

Dear Committee Members,

I would like to request a sabbatical leave for academic year 2010-2011. My plan is to undertake a year of formal study in the Eastern Classics Program of St. John's College in Santa Fe, New Mexico. St. John's is an accredited institution of higher education. Their graduate Institute in Liberal Education awards an MA in Eastern Classics upon successful completion of their three-semester program. I have enclosed a copy of their Graduate Institute catalogue, the last page of which outlines the Eastern Classics curriculum. While I am not especially interested in the formal degree, they only accept full time students. Their program of study entails reading original writings from the great traditions of India, China, and Japan as well as studying either Chinese or Sanskrit (to acquire a cursory reading knowledge to be able to do some translation). As far as I know their program is unique among institutions of higher learning and is enormously attractive to me.

St. John's has forged a reputation for its unique undergraduate program based on the "Great Books." Continuing their tradition of reading original texts and conducting seminar style classes, the goal of their Eastern Classics Program, as stated in their catalogue, "is not in-depth knowledge of any one tradition, but a basic introduction to the breadth and richness of these traditions, and an exploration of how the conversation among them lends insight into the fundamental and enduring questions of humankind." This, to me, should be the goal of all liberal arts education and corresponds with our own mission goal of "introduction to the broad areas of human knowledge and understanding."

My association with St. John's College goes back to my years as an undergraduate in Annapolis, MD, where I earned my BA degree in 1973. My life was profoundly affected by my undergraduate experience at St. John's, where I developed a love for reading the great works of philosophy, literature, history, poetry, and art. The program engendered my lifelong love of learning and gave me my vocation as a teacher. It has had an enduring effect on my teaching and, in general, on my life. To this day I have an abiding relationship with the college from which I graduated 36 years ago and I still participate in seminars with local alumni on program books.

The St. John's undergraduate curriculum is deeply entrenched in the western intellectual tradition. In fact, the entire first year comprises readings that are almost exclusively Greek, from Homer to Plotinus. Over the years many members of the community have lobbied for the inclusion of readings from the eastern tradition, but their request was rejected mostly on practical grounds. To add the eastern tradition to an already densely packed program of study, it was argued, was simply too much. Eventually, however, a compromise was reached and a graduate program in Eastern Classics came to life.

Influenced by my own background, deeply rooted in the western tradition, I had for years neglected the great writings of the east and relied exclusively on western thought in my teaching.

Gradually, however, I began to read some of the Vedas, *The Bhagavad Gita*, *The Tao te Ching* the *Analects* of Confucius and a few others. Then, when I was still teaching part time at California Lutheran University, prior to being hired full time at Moorpark, I was invited to assist for two years in teaching and leading seminars in World Civilization with the Chair of the history department. My interest in eastern history, culture, and thought began to grow and since then I have been incorporating their religious and philosophical thought, as well as the history of the east, into my teaching. Finally, I decided that the best way to learn is to teach and last semester I taught Phil. 12, Survey of Religions East, for the first time. In my view the class was entirely successful and the student survey responses were very positive. Still, I probably realize how much there is to learn better than any of the students.

I have spent most of my adult life studying, reading, and teaching philosophy, largely from a western perspective, and now it is time to expand and enrich my command of the eastern tradition to broaden and improve my teaching. This would be especially useful for our Phil. 12 course, which is part of the IGETC and CSU transfer pattern and thus contributes to our core mission. It would also help in my teaching of Humanities, where we read selections from world literature. Additionally, World Civilization instructor Nenagh Brown and I have discussed the possibility of collaborating in the future on a possible Eastern Civ. Program.

Eastern philosophy has always been attractive to thoughtful young people. The growth in this country of interest in yoga and Buddhism are evidence of this attraction. Here, at Moorpark, we offer in our catalogue seventeen courses in philosophy, but only one that overtly deals with eastern thought. For as long as I have been here only one section of that course has been offered each semester. We are missing an opportunity to broaden that market. Even if we don't increase the number of sections or expand our program, we will undoubtedly continue to offer Phil. 12 and my proposed course of study will contribute directly to the quality of my instruction. When I began teaching at Moorpark, we had a philosophy instructor named Elton Hall, who had a wonderful reputation as a teacher of eastern thought. Students flocked to his classes. In this respect, I want to follow in Elton's footsteps.

My motives for teaching have always had a large component of self-interest. I regard myself as a learner along with the other students in the classroom. Years in the classroom can sometimes contribute to staleness and stagnation. It's time for me to undertake a year of study and renewal in a course that will pay handsome dividends for me and for Moorpark College.

I appreciate very much your consideration.

Sincerely,



# { THE EASTERN CLASSICS PROGRAM }

## FALL SEMESTER

### CHINESE TUTORIAL

Pronunciation and grammar  
Confucius: *Analects*\*  
Lao Tzu: *Tao Te Ching*\*

### SANSKRIT TUTORIAL

Gonda, *A Concise  
Elementary Grammar of  
the Sanskrit Language*  
Devanagari script

### SEMINAR

Lao Tzu: *Tao Te Ching*  
Confucius: *Analects, The  
Great Learning and The  
Doctrine of the Mean*  
Mo Tzu: *Basic Writings of Mo  
Tzu*\*  
Chuang Tzu: *Basic Writings*  
Mencius: *Works*\*  
Hsün Tzu: *Writings of Hsün  
Tzu*\*  
Han Fei Tzu: *Writings of  
Han Fei Tzu*\*  
Ssu-ma Ch'ien: *Records of  
the Grand Historian*\*  
*I Ching*  
*Rig Veda*  
*Brihad-Aranyaka  
Upanishad*  
*Kena Upanishad*  
*Mundaka Upanishad*  
*Katha Upanishad*  
Ishvara Krishna: *Sankhya  
Karika*  
*Tattva-Kaumudi*\*  
Patanjali: *Yoga Sutra*  
Jayadeva: *Gitagovinda*

### PRECEPTORIAL (examples)

*Mahabharata* (required)  
*I Ching*  
Confucius: *Analects*  
Chuang Tzu: *Basic Writings*  
Lao Tzu: *Basic Writings*

## SPRING SEMESTER

### CHINESE TUTORIAL

T'ang Poetry  
Mencius: *Works*\*

### SANSKRIT TUTORIAL

*Bhagavad-Gita*\*  
Nagarjuna: *Madhyamika-  
shastra*\*

### SEMINAR

Kalidasa: *Shakuntala,  
Kumarasambhava and  
Meghaduta*  
Jaimini: *Mimamsa Sutra*\*  
Kumarila Bhatta:  
*Shlokavartika*  
*Katha Upanishad*  
*Institutes of Manu*  
Kautilya: *Artha-Shastra*  
*Kama Sutra*\*  
*Mahabharata*  
*Bhagavad-Gita*  
Abhinavagupta:  
*Dhvanyaloka*\*  
Jayarasi Bhatta:  
*Tattvopaplavasimha*\*  
Ashvaghosha: *Buddhacarita*  
*Majjhima Nikaya*\*  
*Vimalakirti Sutra*\*  
Nagarjuna: *Madhyamika-  
shastra*  
Chandrakirti: *Prasannapada*  
*Lankavatara Sutra*\*  
Guadapada: *The Great  
Karika on the Mandukya  
Upanishad*  
Shankara: *Commentary on  
the Vedanta Sutras*  
T'ao Ch'ien: *Record of the  
Peach Blossom  
Fountainhead*  
*Chinese Poetry*\*  
*Diamond Sutra*  
*Heart Sutra*

Hui-Neng: *Platform Sutra of  
the Sixth Patriarch*  
Chu Hsi: *Chu Tzu ch'uan-  
shu*, and *Chu Tzu wen-chi*

### PRECEPTORIAL (examples)

*Rig Veda*  
*Upanishads*  
Ts'ao Hsieh-Ch'in: *Story of  
the Stone*  
Ssu-ma Ch'ien: *Records of  
the Grand Historian*  
Neo-Confucian Texts  
Chinese Vernacular Prose of  
the Ming Dynasty

## SUMMER SEMESTER

### SEMINAR

*The Tale of the Heike*  
*Lotus Sutra*  
Sei Shonagon: *The Pillow  
Book*\*  
Kenko: *Essays in Idleness*  
Dogen: *Shobogenzo*\*  
Basho: *The Narrow Road to  
the Deep North*  
\**Chushingura: The Treasury  
of Loyal Retainers*

### PRECEPTORIAL

Murasaki Shikibu: *The Tale  
of Genji* (required)

\*selections

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