The first aim of this course is to question the problematic title and existence of the course. Such questioning requires an understanding of the complex ways in which distinctions of “East” and “West” arose and became naturalized. Likewise, it requires an investigation into the origins and justification of the idea, “the history of philosophy.”

The second aim of this course is to attempt to read with care some of the seminal texts from diverse philosophical traditions, which are themselves internally diverse. Traditions include Brahmanic, Buddhist, Daoist, Confucianist, and Islamic traditions. Texts will range from ancient to contemporary times. Texts will reflect epistemological, metaphysical, ethical, aesthetic, and political concerns, while challenging conventional “Western” division of these topics.