Time & Location:
Mon. 6:00-7:55PM
Zoom Online Class, Remote Instruction
Office Hours: By appointment
Student Facilitators: Melody Chen, Aastha Upadhyay
Contact Email: teadecal@gmail.com

Class Description: This class is an exploration of tea and mindfulness. We will learn about and taste different categories of tea, specifically studying what tea actually is; the history of its production and distribution; the effect of different regions, soil, air quality, and processing on the tea; the connection between tea and nature; and the processes like oxidation, fermentation, and pan frying. Furthermore, students will learn how to make tea, using different tea vessels and tea steeping methods. Finally, this class will also ask students to be mindful while drinking tea, emphasizing the ways mindfulness can change the experience of drinking tea, and the historical relationship between Chan Buddhism and tea. Students will do Chan meditation, relaxation techniques, and Chan exercises, as this class teaches how Chan relates to our daily lives and can be practiced in every moment.

Prerequisites: The desire and willingness to learn; open-mindedness. An ability to drink caffeine; be aware of any medical conditions that would prevent you from doing so. An ability to drink hot drinks. Willingness to learn material about Buddhism, Chan (Zen), and meditation, in conjunction with tea.

Key Learning Outcomes: By the end of the course, students should have a better understanding about the historical origins of tea and be able to differentiate between the different varieties of tea, steep tea, taste different teas, and use mindfulness to enhance their life and tea tasting experiences.

Where this class fits in the curriculum: International Studies, history, culture, botany

Methods of Instruction: Lectures, readings, short papers, discussions, demonstrations

Materials to bring: Gongfu teapot or gaiwan, gongfu tea cup, tea, and thermos of hot water.
PLEASE TURN OFF YOUR CELL PHONES DURING CLASS.
Note: If you have a sensitive stomach, eat something before you come to class. Avoid eating meat, sweets, onion, garlic, and drinking coffee before class—it will affect the tea tasting experience.
Class Schedule:

Week 1  (8/31): Introduction

Week 2  (9/14): Meditation & The Six Categories of Tea
Readings: *Tea: A Global History*, Chapter 3 “Japan, Korea and Taiwan”

Week 3  (9/21): Meditation & Tea Tasting
Readings: *The One Taste of Truth*, “Preface” & “Introduction”

Week 4  (9/28): Meditation & Learning How to Steep Tea
Readings: *A Thirst for Empire*, Chapter 1, Section: “East and West”

Week 5  (10/5): Meditation & Three Minds Tea Tasting—Tea & Chan

Week 6  (10/12): Meditation & History of Tea & Chinese Green Tea
Readings: *Tea: A Global History*, Chapter 5 “Tea Comes to the West”
Readings: *Tea & Tao Magazine*, Issue 52, “Green Tea” pp. 3-22

Week 7  (10/19): Meditation & Chinese Oolong Tea—Rock Tea
Readings: *The One Taste of Truth*, Chapter 1 “Fundamentals” & Chapter 2 “No-Mind/Nondualism”

Week 8  (10/26): Meditation & White Tea
Readings: *A Thirst for Empire*, Chapter 8: “Tea Revives the World”

Week 9  (11/2): Meditation & Yixing Teapots

Week 10  (11/9): Meditation & Red Tea
Readings: *Tea & Tao Magazine*, Issue 61, “Tea of the Month (Vitality)”

Week 11  (11/16): Meditation & Puerh
Readings: *Tea & Tao Magazine*, Issue 85, “Tea of the Month (Temple Gate)” pp. 5-12

Week 12  (11/23): Meditation & Taiwanese Oolong Tea

Week 13  (11/30): Meditation & Tea and Nature

Required Readings:

**Recommended Additional Readings and Videos:**
*New Tea Lover’s Treasury* by James Norwood Pratt
*The Green Tea Book* by Lester A. Mitscher
*Tea: Aromas and Flavors Around the World* by Lydia Gautier
*Tea: The Story of a Leaf* (6-part documentary film)
*Chinese Tea: Elixir of the Orient*: How tea became an integral part in forming China’s culture
*All in This Tea* (documentary film): How to get whole leaf artisanal tea without pesticides
*“The Science of Tea’s Mood-altering Magic”* [https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-019-00398-1](https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-019-00398-1)

**Assignments and Due Dates:**
**Response #1 (2 pages):** How Direct Experience and Mindful Drinking of Tea Have Shaped Your Perspective on Tea and Your Daily Life  
**Due:** Oct. 8th
**Response #2 (2 pages):** The Differences Between Green Tea vs. Oolong Processing  
**Due:** Nov. 5th
**Written Reflection:** Pick a passage from Wilson’s *The One Taste of Truth* and comment on how it relates to “letting go”  
**Due:** Nov. 26th

**Grading:**
- **30%: Attendance** is mandatory—1 excused absence & 1 unexcused absence is allowed.  
  If you miss class for the 3rd time, you must make up the absence by going to one of Universal Chan’s meditation classes. If you do not make up your 3rd absence or you miss more than 3 classes, you will receive a **No Pass**.  
- **30%: Class Participation.** Be involved!!! Everyone must participate, describe the taste, aromas, etc.
- **40%: Written assignments,** listed above.

While not graded or required, to gain the most out of an exploration of tea and self, students will be taught how to meditate and steep tea for themselves; **students are strongly encouraged to spend 30 minutes per week outside of class drinking tea by yourself or with others, and/or practicing some meditation.** The more a student practices drinking tea mindfully, the more they will be able to identify teas, appreciate their qualities, and allow tea to steep into daily life.

**Course Evaluation Form:** At the end of the course, there will be a Google Form for students to give feedback on the TeaCal class and the student facilitators.