

UC Berkeley
TeaCal Syllabus Fall 2021
An Exploration of Tea and Mindfulness
English 198, 1 Unit P/NP

Time & Location:

Wed. 5:45-7:45PM, Zoom Online Class: Remote Instruction until further notice*

[*We plan to hold in-person TeaCal @ Universal Chan Zen Center (445 Colusa Ave, Kensington) once restrictions loosen up. The 79 AC Transit Bus will take you directly to Universal Chan.]

Office Hours: Tea Chan Club, every other Saturday 3-5pm

Student Facilitators: Jennifer Song, Melody Chen, Aastha Upadhyay, Yvonne Gonzales, Leila Fayad

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.

Students will be asked to donate \$5 each time they come to class as a symbolic fee to generate blessings, practice generosity, and to help cover the cost of tea*. *For in-person TeaCal

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, and hands-on activities

Materials to bring: Notebook (optional)

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 (9/1): Introduction & Getting to Know Tea
Readings: *Tea: A Global History, Chapter 1 "What is Tea?"*
- Week 2 (9/8): Meditation & Three Minds Tea Chan
Readings: *Tea & Tao Magazine, Issue 85, "A Bowl of Zen Emptied" pp. 20-25*
- Week 3 (9/15): Meditation & Learning How to Steep Tea
Readings: *A Thirst for Empire, Chapter 1, Section: "East and West"*
- Week 4 (9/22): Meditation & Tea Tasting
Readings: *The One Taste of Truth, Chapter 1 "Fundamentals" & Chapter 2 "No-Mind/Nondualism"*
- Week 5 (9/29): Meditation & Chinese Green Tea
Readings: *Tea: A Global History, Chapter 5 "Tea Comes to the West" & Tea & Tao Magazine, Issue 52, "Green Tea" pp. 3-22*
- Week 6 (10/6): Meditation & Oolong Tea
Readings: *Tea & Tao Magazine, Issue 56, "Traditional Processing" pp. 7-9 & "A Basic Introduction to Taiwanese Oolong Tea" pp. 17-25*
- Week 7 (10/13): Meditation & Red Tea
Readings: *Tea & Tao Magazine, Issue 61, "Tea of the Month (Vitality)"*
- Week 8 (10/20): Meditation & Puerh
Readings: *Tea & Tao Magazine, Issue 85, "Tea of the Month (Temple Gate)" pp. 5-12*
- Week 9 (10/27): Meditation & White Tea
Readings: *A Thirst for Empire, Chapter 8 "Tea Revives the World"*
- Week 10 (11/3): Meditation & Indian Tea
Readings: *Tea: A Global History, Chapter 6 "India, Sri Lanka and Indonesia"*
- Week 11 (11/10): Meditation & Korean Tea
Readings: *Tea: A Global History, Chapter 3 "Japan, Korea and Taiwan"*
- Week 12 (11/17): Meditation & Tea and Health/Physiology
Readings: *Tea: A Global History, Chapter 2 "China" & "The Science of Tea's Mood-altering Magic"*
- Week 13 (12/1): Meditation & Tea and Nature
Readings: *Tea & Tao Magazine, Issue 56, "Tea of the Month (Nostalgia)" pp. 3-7 & "Organic Oolongs of the North" pp. 57-58 & "Respect for Great Nature" pp. 59-61*

Required Readings:

De, Wu. "Green Tea" *Tea & Tao Magazine*, May 2016, Issue 52, pp. 3-22.

De, Wu. "Tea of the Month (Vitality)" *Tea & Tao Magazine*, Feb. 2017, Issue 61, pp. 3-11.

De, Wu. "Taiwanese Oolong Tea: History, Processing & Lore" *Tea & Tao Magazine*, Sept. 2016, Issue 56, pp. 3-76.

De, Wu. "Zen and Tea Part III" *Tea & Tao Magazine*, Feb. 2019, Issue 85, pp. 5-25.

Rappaport, Erika. *A Thirst for Empire: How Tea Shaped the Modern World* (Princeton University Press, 2017)

Saberi, Helen. *Tea: A Global History* (London: Reaktion Books, 2010)

Wilson, William Scott. *The One Taste of Truth: Zen and the Art of Drinking Tea* (Shambhala, 2013)

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, 2013)

Chinese Tea: Elixir of the Orient (PBS documentary, 2016)

All in This Tea (documentary, 2007): 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>

Assignments and Due Dates:

Response #1 (2 pages): The Social, Cultural, and Historical Significance of Tea **Due: Oct. 6th**

Response #2 (2 pages): How Direct Experience and Mindful Drinking of Tea
Have Shaped Your Perspective on Tea and Your Daily Life **Due: Oct. 27th**

Written Reflection: Pick a passage from Wilson's *The One Taste of Truth* and **Due: Nov. 17th**
comment on how it relates to "letting go"

Paper Format: 12 pt font, double space, 1 inch margins, Times New Roman (or a similar font)

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. Every assignment must be turned in in order to **Pass**.

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.