



CENTER FOR CHINESE STUDIES  
UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I AT MĀNOA

# CCS

## FALL 2019 SEMINARS ON CHINA

*The public is cordially invited to attend. Free admission.*

### “Iolani School’s Asian Studies year-long elective – what the students learn”

*Jeffrey Hackler*, Teacher, ‘Iolani School

Wednesday, September 25, 2019, 12:00–1:30pm

Moore Hall, Room 109, University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa

Iolani’s Asian Studies course, a year-long elective, offers 11th and 12th grade students a historical and cultural appreciation of China and Japan, the two dominant Asian countries, from prehistoric times to 1911–1912. We examine religions, literature and philosophies, learn each country’s geography and study numerous art slides from each time period. Throughout the course, students write research papers, make frequent oral presentations, work in groups and follow current events.



For the past 31 years, I have divided the year in four parts: start with China from Ban Gu up to the Tang, then Japan, from Izanami and Izanagi up to the Heian period, back to China - up to the end of the Qing and back to Japan - up to Meiji. One of my luxuries of teaching a year-long course is that I can dive into certain topics, such as geography. The students learn to identify all the provinces of China, the 20 major cities and 50 physical features. When they study Confucianism, Taoism, Mohism and Legalism, the ensuing debate by four groups of student-philosophers tries to solve a real problem from 250s BC in front of judges. In the past, some judges have been UH graduate students. The biggest concern I have as a teacher is how to engage the students without losing them by having them memorize too much. One way is that I allow open-notes for all quizzes and student-produced study guides for all tests. This allows me to ask more thoughtful questions. On top of all of this, I assign a variety of research projects, both individual and group, both written and visual.

The final exam includes a writing component, both an individual section and a group section, and an arts section –30 slides that they have never seen before, for which they answer “Is it Chinese or Japanese? From what time period?” and a third question specific to the object. I will show you the final exam slides, and welcome your feedback.