

Manas Studies

Course # HUSS 1004

Credits 2

Pre-requisites and Co-requisites: None

Course Description

The aim of this course is to explore and analyze ideas, knowledge and practice associated with the Manas epic as well as the role that the Manas epic has been playing in formation and development of Kyrgyz society and construction of national identity. The Manas epic is reflective of history, culture, identity and society of Kyrgyz people whose origin traces back to Yenisei Kyrgyz – an ancient Turkic people who dwelled in the upper basin of Yenisei River. The course draws on a variety of interpretations and meanings attached to the Manas epic in different historical periods. This course applies historical approach to interpretation of the Manas epic enabling students to analyze it from different perspectives: while there can be different interpretations on the history of the Manas epic, the course does not focus on identifying its “true” story or historicity. The idea is rather to look at how the Manas epic can create a new reality, the reality of a nation-state and national identity and how the Manas epic is harnessed to perpetuate the current reality. By critically approaching the Manas epic, students learn how reality is constructed, how identity is formed and forged through beliefs, ideas, religion, and associated practices.

Course Learning Outcomes

At the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Identify the core messages and meanings communicated through ideas, belief and practices associated with the Manas epic;
- Provide an example of how knowledge, belief and ideas can be constructed and perpetuated;
- Examine the role of myth, tradition, religion and culture in construction of society and identity;
- Expand knowledge of various musical genres by exploring how the themes of the epic are incorporated into different musical styles.

Course Assessments and Grading

Item	Weight, %
Class Participation	30%
Listening test	10%
Quiz	10%

Item	Weight, %
Presentation	20%
Final essay	30%