

## Manas Studies

Course # HUSS 1004

Credits 2

### 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

Upon the completion of the 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 |
|--|--------|
| <p>Class Participation</p> <p>The course be held in the form of lectures, discussions, and activities during the class sessions, so regular attendance and active participation are crucial. Students’ participation grades will be based on their contributions to class discussions and group activities, engagement with lectures and guest speakers.</p> | 30%    |

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|--|--------|
| <p>Listening test</p> <p>A list of listening examples will be loaded into Moodle. Students must listen to musical examples before the test; there will be about seven to ten examples of various genres and artists. Students must recognize the performer and identify the genre (opera, recitation, orchestra, ethnojazz, etc.)</p>  | 10%    |
| <p>Quiz</p> <p>The quiz will contain a series of questions based on the material that has been presented in this course (in class, in readings and in films). The quiz will be a combination of multiple-choice questions and individual questions for which students are required to write detailed answers with an analytical approach</p>   | 10%    |
| <p>Presentation (15 minutes)</p> <p>In the fourth week, students will give a group presentation (three people per group). Students must select an episode from the Manas epic, prepare a presentation plan in their group, and conduct a 15-minute presentation in class. Team members should participate equally in the presentation. The presentation could consist of three parts: a brief retelling of the episode; recitation by one of the participants of the prepared episode; conclusion with a critical analysis of the episode (e.g. language, content, relation to the present time, etc.)</p> | 20%    |
| <p>Final essay (1250-1500 words) and a presentation (10 min.)</p> <p>Following the class discussion students should write a final essay on how the epic is reflective of social context, in which way it expresses the social reality - its role in construction and formation of nation-state and national identity. Students are expected to provide various account of epics and make it explicit how the Manas epic contribute to the nation-building and social cohesion within Kyrgyz society. Student may choose a different topic related to the epic Manas with the instructor's approval.</p>    | 30%    |