**Course Title**: A CULTURAL HISTORY OF WATER  
**Course Code**: HST3269  
**Recommended Study Year***: 1, 2, 3  
**No. of Credits/Term**: 3  
**Mode of Tuition**: Sectional approach  
**Class Contact Hours**: 3 hours per week  
**Category in Major Prog.**: Elective  
**Prerequisite(s)**: None  
**Co-requisite(s)**: None  
**Exemption Requirement(s)**: N/A

**Brief Course Description**
This course examines the changing relationship between water and humankind across civilizations, with particular emphasis given to the period from the 17th century to the present. We will explore how the Enlightenment, the Industrial Revolution and the public health movement originated in the West have profoundly transformed people’s attitudes towards Mother Nature and their concepts of cleanliness, and how technological advancement has increased the extent of the exploitation of our water resources. The repercussion of such changes on Asian countries and the overall impact of human exploitation of water on the environment will also be examined.

**Aims**
This course aims to show the interplay between ideas and material culture in cross-cultural and historical perspectives, and the historical process through which modern daily lives have come about.

**Learning Outcomes**
The students will be able
(1) to analyze current water issues from historical and cross-cultural perspectives.  
(2) to gain a better knowledge of the inseparable relationship between human survival and clean water sources, and thus develop a stronger sense of responsibility for the natural environment.  
(3) acquire oral and written communication skills.

**Indicative Content**
I. River and civilization  
II. Cities and the acquisition of fresh water  
III. From gratification to cleanliness: a history of bathing  
IV. Water and the public health movement in the 19th century: running water and water closets  
V. Water and spiritual purification  
VI. Damming the rivers and its environmental impact  
VII. Water, environmental crisis, and the future of human race

**Teaching Method**
This course is taught partly as lectures, partly as seminars with assigned readings and discussions.

**Measurement of Learning Outcomes**
(1) essays: evaluate students’ writing skills and the ability to understand current water issues from historical and cross-cultural perspectives.  
(2) class discussion: evaluate students’ comprehension of reading materials, and their
understanding of current water issues in comparative historical perspective.

(3) examination: evaluate students’ writing skills and their understanding of major issues and themes discussed in lectures and readings.

Assessment
Continuous Assessment  60%
Examination  40%

Required Readings


Supplementary Readings


殷偉、任玫：中國沐浴文化（昆明：雲南人民出版社，2003）