HISTORY OF EAST ASIAN MARTIAL ARTS

East Asian martial arts are often portrayed as ancient, timeless, and even mystical, but they have a history. In this course we explore how military techniques intended for use in war, policing, and banditry came to be practiced as methods of moral, spiritual, and physical self-cultivation. We examine the historical dynamics that shape martial arts transformation, transmission, and spread. All students conduct at least one field trip to a local martial arts demonstration or school, and consider the question: "What is East Asian about East Asian martial arts in Ithaca?"