



TEACHING AND LEARNING IN A DIGITAL AGE

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6 AT 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM

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LOCATION: MODERN LANGUAGES AUDITORIUM

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The claim that “online learning” is simply today’s version of once highly hyped but ultimately failed attempts to spread education through new media (print, radio, television) is the result of a narrow view of education, on one hand, and an obliviousness to the social and cultural consequences of the digital age, on the other. Higher education teaches stuff, but learning can also be (as Confucius said), “for oneself.”



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PETER BOL is the Charles H. Carswell Professor East Asian Languages and Civilizations and Vice provost for Advances in Learning. As Vice Provost he is responsible for HarvardX, the Harvard Initiative in Learning and Teaching, and research to advance the science of learning. Together with William Kirby he teaches ChinaX course, the longest of the HarvardX courses. His research is centered on the history of China’s cultural elites at the national and local levels from the 7th to the 17th century. He is the author of “This Culture of Ours”: Intellectual Transitions in T’ang and Sung China and Neo-Confucianism in History among other works. He led Harvard’s university-wide effort to establish support for geospatial analysis in teaching and research; in 2005 he was named the first director of the Center for Geographic Analysis. He also directs the China Historical Geographic Information Systems project, a collaboration between Harvard and Fudan University in Shanghai to create a GIS for 2000 years of Chinese history. In a collaboration between Harvard, Academia Sinica, and Peking University he directs the China Biographical Database project, an online relational database currently of 360,000 historical figures that is being expanded to cover the Chinese political elite over the last 2000 years.