

PHIL 350: *Asian Philosophy*

Spring 2014

Class meeting time: T TH 2:30 — 3:45pm
Classroom: H-521
Telephone: (657) 278-7560 (email preferred)
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Instructor: JeeLoo Liu
Office location: H-311(I)
Office hours: T TH 1:00 – 2:15 pm
or by appointment

Required Texts:

1. JeeLoo Liu. *An Introduction to Chinese Philosophy: Ancient Philosophy and Chinese Buddhism*. Blackwell Publishing, 2006. [Available at [Little Professors](#)]
2. *Sourcebook of Chinese Philosophy [selections]* [Available at [Little Professors](#)]

Course description:

Prerequisite: completion of General Education category III.B.2.

This course will teach Asian philosophies with heavy emphasis on Chinese philosophy such as Confucianism, Daoism, Buddhism (especially Zen) and Neo-Confucianism. We will study the different worldviews, conceptions of human nature and the good life from these philosophical perspectives, and where suitable, make comparisons with Western philosophies, religions and values. The course will be conducted in the lecture/discussion format.

Course Learning Outcomes:

1. Students will learn the three major schools of Chinese philosophy: Confucianism, Daoism and Chinese Buddhism.
2. Students will learn to read Chinese philosophy texts.
3. Students will learn to appreciate the differences between Chinese culture and Western culture by learning the philosophical traditions in Chinese culture.

GE Learning Outcomes:

This course meets GE Category C.3.b, Explorations in the Humanities. Learning goals for courses in this category include:

- i. Understand broad, unifying themes from cross-disciplinary perspectives in the humanities.
- ii. Understand the relevance of the humanities for the thoughtful consideration of complex contemporary problems.
- iii. Appreciate the complex relationship and interaction between the humanities and other fields of learning, including the natural sciences, social sciences, and arts.

This course meets all three goals (i) – (iii) in that:

1. This course explains and discusses basic questions of human existence as understood and addressed by Confucianism, Daoism and Buddhism.
2. This course raises basic questions of how human beings should live in society. These are questions that each individual must resolve for him or herself through the study of history, seminal religious and philosophical texts, literature, art and through thoughtful discussion and private reflection. Though focused on seminal Asian texts, such as classics of Asian literature like the *Analects of Confucius* and the *Daodejing*, this course is presented in a socio-economic and historical context and also discusses the influences of religion and philosophy on artistic expression.
3. One of the main issues in this course has to do with different conceptions of society and what it should be like. In this regard, comparisons are made between our own society and the ideals of society found in Confucianism, Daoism and Buddhism. In particular, different conceptions of the relationship between people and society are compared and discussed vis-à-vis social problems having to do with marriage, family, aging, education, child rearing, government, violence and war.

Learning Goals for GE Cultural Diversity

This course also meets GE Category Z, Cultural Diversity. Learning goals for courses in this category include:

1. Demonstrate understanding that culture is socially constructed and fundamental to social interaction.
2. Demonstrate appreciation of the complex relationships that various factors such as gender, ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, religion, and class bring to a discussion of society and culture.
3. Demonstrate understanding that because we live in an inter-connected world, we need to understand the diversity and relationships within and among cultures.
4. Recognize and evaluate how one's cultural history affects one's sense of self and relationship to others. Courses in General Education that meet these learning

This course meets all goals (1) – (4) in that:

1. This course is all about identifying and understanding the cultural assumptions that underlie Asian, as well as Western, cultures. This includes understanding the relationship between these basic assumptions about the nature of human beings and how they relate to norms of social structure and human relationships.
2. Like all religious philosophies, Confucianism, Daoism and Buddhism address issues of gender, ethnicity and class in both theory and practice. In discussing these philosophies we contrast the ways in which they have been institutionalized in society and how they do or do not reflect the basic ideas and ideals of their founders. For example, Confucius' ideas of distinct gender roles poses one of the most serious challenges to the

continued relevance Confucianism in the modern world. However, many oppressive practices attributed to Confucianism, such as female foot binding, are not at all parts of his original philosophy.

3. Studying different Asian philosophies involves understanding both the ways in which they conflict and the ways in which they can co-exist. Comparing Asian cultures to our own involves the same kind of understandings. China is a good example of how the often-conflicting perspectives of Confucianism, Daoism and Buddhism can also co-exist harmoniously in the same society. Similarly comparing Asian and Western cultural assumptions helps us to understand sources of conflict as well as compatibilities.
4. Central to this course are different social conceptions of the human person. For example, students of Asian ancestry are often torn between the individualistic conception of human beings they find in American society and the relational or group conception of self that is found in many Asian families. That central difference lies at the core of our ideas about who we are and how we should relate to parents, friends, spouses, children and society at large.

Grading:

Homework Study Questions (12 sets out of 14)	20 % [max: 120 pts]
One mid-term essay (5 pages)	10 %
One final essay (5 pages)	10 %
Mid-term Exam (in class)	20 %
Final Exam (non-cumulative)	20 %
Debate or panel discussion	10 %
Group presentation of course material	count as one HW
Class participation	10 %
Full attendance (not even excused absences)	2 % extra credit

To receive a final grade for the course, no portion of your grade can be a “zero”.

COURSE GRADES: Calculated on the following scale

97%	A+
94%	A
90%	A-
87%	B+
84%	B
80%	B-
77%	C+
74%	C
70%	C-
67%	D+

64%	D
60%	D-
Under 60	F

Academic Dishonesty:

“Academic dishonesty is comprised of obtaining or attempting to obtain credit for work by the use of any dishonest, deceptive, fraudulent, or unauthorized means.” The most commonly observed forms of academic dishonesty in this course are:

- copying others’ homework answers
- using notes during an exam
- communicating with other students during an exam or copying off another student

Plagiarism, cheating, etc. will result in a course grade of ‘F’. Students who commit acts of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Dean of Students office.

Class Attendance and Participation:

Students must be conscientious about attending classes on a regular basis. Any consecutive absences must be given proper explanation. Students are allowed to miss three classes without prior explanation (however, full attendance will be rewarded with two extra points in the final average). To excuse your absences from that point on, you will need to present credible documentation. After the third absence, any further unexcused absence will result in 2% grade deduction. Class participation includes active discussion in class, raising relevant questions, answering questions, and paying close attention in class. **Everyone (each student as well as the instructor) is responsible for making this class interesting, engaging, and thought-provoking.**

Classroom Etiquettes:

No open laptop in class. No cell phone ringing in class.

Classroom environment is for the instructor and all students to interact with one another in a professional and intellectual manner. Students are expected to observe common classroom etiquettes. Behavior that interferes with classroom activities is considered disruptive behavior. Such behavior includes (but is not restricted to)

- (i) **constant late arrivals;**
- (ii) **early departures without proper explanation;**
- (iii) **chatting with your neighbors during lectures;**
- (iv) **eating in class;**
- (v) **doing things unrelated to the course in class, such as reading other books, doing assignments for other courses, or playing with your laptop.**
- (vi) **not turning off your cell phone in class.**

Students with repeated disruptive behavior will be asked to leave the classroom.

University's Disabilities Policy:

“The University requires students with disabilities to register with the Office of Disability Support Services (DSS), located in UH-101 and at (657) 278-3112, in order to receive prescribed accommodations appropriate to their disability. Students requesting accommodations should inform the instructor during the first week of classes about any disability or special needs that may require specific arrangements/accommodations related to attending class sessions, completing course assignments, writing papers or quizzes/tests/examinations.”

University Sexual Harassment Policy:

UPS 240.100 prohibits “conduct that has the purpose or effect of interfering with a student's academic performance, creating an intimidating, hostile, offensive or otherwise adverse learning environment, or adversely affecting any student's access to campus programs, services and benefits.” This policy applies to both faculty and students.

Class policy:

1. For each reading assignment, I will post study questions on Titanium over the weekend prior to lectures of that week. You are to submit your answers once a week except for the last few weeks. Homework essays must be submitted via the class portal on Titanium, and the submission deadline will be set for one hour before class time. I do not accept late homework whatsoever. In order to receive credit for any homework assignment, you must bring a hard copy of your submitted study questions (print from the portal, not a separate document) to class on the day the assignment is due.
2. Sharing study questions answers with others is considered cheating. Any student suspected of cheating will be questioned. Students caught cheating will automatically fail the course. Serious cases will also be reported to the Dean of Judicial Affairs.
3. Attendance is highly emphasized in this class. Students are allowed up to three absences without explanation. **After the 3rd absence, every unexcused absence will constitute a 2% deduction in your final grade.** Do not squander your three absences – there are always unexpected things that would prevent you from coming to class on a given day. If you use up your free absences, you will have to take the penalty when you do miss one more class. **Full attendance (not even having any excusable absence) will be rewarded 2% extra credit.**
4. Excusable absences will only be granted with legitimate documentation such as a doctor's note. **No excuses will be granted over the phone or through email.**
5. There will be one mid-term essay and one final reflection essay (due on the last day of class). Tardy submission of any of the essays will receive the following penalty in the essay's final grade: **half-grade off (e.g. from B to B-) for each day delayed.**
6. Everyone will be required to participate in one debate. Your grade for this project constitutes 10% of the total grade.
7. After the mid-term, students will form small groups to present course materials. The presentation will take half of the class time and presenters need to prepare either a

- handout (outline for the presentation) or a PowerPoint for the presentation. Each presenter needs to submit the draft of his or her contribution to the group presentation.
8. **No make-up exam will be given unless you obtain permission from the instructor at least two days in advance or if you present your special reason with acceptable documentation.**
 9. Students are expected to arrive on time for exams. Late arrivals will not be given time extension.
 10. To receive a final grade for the course, all assignments must be completed. In other words, if you get a “zero” for any of the assignments (essays, exams, participation and panel discussion), you will automatically fail the course.
 11. The professor will not respond to emails that do not have the proper format – both grammatically and culturally. For instance, if you do not address the professor (Professor Liu or Dr. Liu is preferred) or if you send a text-message, you will not get any response.

Course Calendar

<u>Date</u>	<u>Content of discussion</u>	<u>Assignments for this class</u>
T 1/21	Introduction	None
[Preliminary: Chinese Cosmology]		
R 1/23	<i>Yijing</i> (1)	Handouts
T 1/28	<i>Yijing</i> (2)	Liu, Chapter 1
[Confucianism]		
R 1/30	Confucius (1)	Liu: Chapter 2 SQ#1
T 2/4	Confucius (2) Brink Sourcebook to class	Chan, Chapter 2
R 2/6	Mencius (1)	Liu: Chapter 3 SQ#2
T 2/11	Mencius (2) Brink Sourcebook to class	Chan, Chapter 3
R 2/13	Xunzi (1)	Liu: Chapter 4 SQ#3

- T 2/18 Xunzi (2) Chan, Chapter 4
Mid-term paper topic assigned
- R 2/20 **Debate #1:** Is human nature primarily good, bad or totally neutral? — A contemporary debate on Mencius', Gaozi's and Xunzi's views
- [Mohism]**
- T 2/25 Mozi Liu: Chapter 5
SQ#4
- [Daoism]**
- R 2/27 Introduction to Daoism **Mid-term paper due**
- T 3/4 Laozi (1) Chan, Chapter 7
Brink Sourcebook to class Present one chapter
- R 3/6 Laozi (2) Liu: Chapter 6
SQ#5
- T 3/11 Zhuangzi (1) Chan, Chapter 8
Brink Sourcebook to class
- R 3/13 Zhuangzi (2) Liu: Chapter 7
SQ#6
- T 3/18 **Debate #2:** Between the Confucian moral teaching and the Daoist moral teaching, which one gives the better guidance in life?
- [Legalism]**
- R 3/20 Hanfeizi Liu: Chapter 8
SQ#7
- T 3/25 **Mid-term Exam**
- [Buddhism]**
- R 3/27 Introduction to Chinese Buddhism Liu, Part II Introduction
pp. 209-219
- T 4/1 **Spring Recess**
- R 4/3 **Spring Recess**

- T 4/8 Zen (Chan) Buddhism (1)
Student Presentation #1 Liu: Chapter 12
SQ#8
- R 4/10 Zen (Chan) Buddhism (2)
Student Presentation #2 Chan, Chapter 26
SQ#9

[Neo-Confucianism]

- T 4/15 Introduction to Neo-Confucianism Handouts
- R 4/17 Zhang Zai
Student Presentation #3 Chan, Chapter 30
SQ#10
- T 4/22 Zhu Xi
Student Presentation #4 Chan, Chapter 34
SQ#11
- R 4/24 Lu Xiangshan
Student Presentation #5 Chan, Chapter 33
SQ#12
- T 4/29 Wang Yangming
Student Presentation #6 Chan, Chapter 35
SQ#13
- R 5/1 Wang Fuzhi
Student Presentation #7 Liu, Manuscript
SQ#14
- T 5/6 **Debate #3:** Are material desires incompatible with our pursuit of “the Good”? Are material desires compatible with the “Heavenly principle”? Are we less than moral if our primary goal in life is to get rich? Should we aim to reduce our material and physical desires? Is the concern for righteousness on a higher moral plane than the concern for profit?
- R 5/8 **Last class: Review and Reflections**
Essay due: What is the spirit of Chinese philosophy? What are the major concerns in Chinese philosophy? What is *Dao* or the cosmic principle? How can one employ Chinese philosophy in today’s world?

Final Exam: May 15 (Thursday) 2:30 - 4:20 PM