

PHIL 6390: Topics in Philosophy—Chinese Philosophy

Fall 2021 Syllabus
Time: Wednesdays, 7pm-9:45pm
Location: JO 4.112

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Office Hours: Mondays, 1pm-2pm, or by appointment

Course Description

This course will be an exploration of major philosophical traditions in early China: Confucianism, Mohism, and Daoism. These thinkers developed a complex and rich debate about ethics, human nature, moral psychology, and self-cultivation. We shall see how the advocates of these different philosophies debated and borrowed ideas from each other. We will also view these philosophies from a comparative perspective, addressing the questions such as: “To what extent does Chinese philosophy touch on problems and issues that appear in different cultural and philosophical traditions?” and “To what extent can its insights be appreciated and incorporated into our own lives?” Texts will be read in English translations, with some reference to Chinese terms and phrases that does not presuppose familiarity with the language.

Course Materials

Readings in Classical Chinese Philosophy, edited by P.J. Ivanhoe and B. Van Norden. [Henceforth, *RCCP*]
All other readings will be provided electronically through *eLearning*.
You can also find translations of classical Chinese texts here: <https://ctext.org>

Course Requirements and Grading

Discussion Leading (45%)

You will be asked to lead discussions in three class sessions. Such session leading may include a very brief presentation of the key points from the reading and posing of questions for discussion.

Term Paper (55%)

Please submit a term paper of approximately 15 double-spaced typescript pages by **December 8th**. I will give you suggested topics for the paper. If you choose to write about something else, please confer with me about the topic.

Tentative Schedule

Date	Topic	Readings
08/25	Confucius	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Eno’s translation of <i>Analects</i>, Books 1-5

09/01	Confucius	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eno's translation of <i>Analects</i>, Books 6-12
09/08	Confucius	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Olberding, "Dreaming of the Duke of Zhou: Exemplarism in the Analects" • Wong, "Early Confucian Philosophy and the Development of Compassion", sections 1 & 2.1
09/15	Mozi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Mozi" in <i>RCCP</i> • Xunzi's Response to Mozi • Mozi Supplement—27. Heaven's Intention II
09/22	Mozi and Inclusive Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mozi Supplement—14-16. Universal Love I-III • Fraser, "Inclusive Care"
09/29	Mencius	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bloom's translation of Mencius, Books 1A (entire), 1B1-2, 1B5, 1B8, 2A2-3, 2A6, 2A8-9. 2B3, 3A3, 3A5, 3B1, 3B3, 3B9, 4A7, 4A17, 4A18-19, 4A26-28, 4B13-14, 4B26, 4B28, 5A1-2, 5A5, 6A (entire), 6B1, 7A1, 7A6, 7A9, 7A15-16, 7A18, 7A21, 7A26, 7A35, 7A37, 7A45-6, 7B14, 7B24, 7B31
10/06	Mencius on Human Nature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wong, "Early Confucian Philosophy and the Development of Compassion," sections 2.2 & 2.3 • Tomasello, <i>Why We Cooperate</i>, selections • Watch "A Lecture on the Origins of Human Cooperation and Morality" here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rOHxsZBD3Us
10/13	Confucianism and the Self	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shun, "The Conception of the Person in Early Confucian Thought" • Hall and Ames, "The Focus-Field Self in Classical Confucianism"
10/20	Confucianism and Feminism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gilligan, "Images of Relationship" • Li, "The Concept of Jen and the Feminist Ethics of Care"
10/27	Xunzi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Xunzi" in <i>RCCP</i>
11/03	Xunzi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wong, "Early Confucian Philosophy and the Development of Compassion," section 3 • Berkson, "Xunzi as a Theorist and Defender of Ritual"
11/10	Zhuangzi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Zhuangzi" in <i>RCCP</i> • Huang, "The Ethics of Difference in the Zhuangzi"
11/17	Zhuangzi on Emotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Olberding, "Sorrow and the Sage: Grief in the <i>Zhuangzi</i>" • Wong, "The Meaning of Detachment in Daoism, Buddhism, and Stoicism"
11/24		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fall Break, No Class
12/01	Paper Presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Reading