

R.224.A Religious Thought of China & Japan  
Moravian College  
Fall, 2010

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Office: Comenius Hall, Rm. 204  
Office Hrs: M,T,TR 12:30-1:30 p.m.  
W,F 4:00-4:30 p.m.

**Course Description.** An exploration of the major ethico-religious and philosophical traditions of China and Japan based on a study of important core Confucian, Taoist/Daoist and Buddhist texts.

**Format.** Lecture/Discussion

**Goals.** The student will demonstrate a basic understanding of the teachings of Confucianism, Taoism/Daoism and Zen (Chan) Buddhism. The student will develop an ability to: 1) use exegetical tools in order to arrive at an appropriate understanding of each text within its original social-historical context and 2) appreciate the more universal relevance of the text both within its own and in relation to other traditions. The student will also demonstrate the ability to recognize and critically reflect on their own and their culture's assumptions regarding the "ultimate" moral, religious and philosophical questions raised and addressed by these texts and traditions.

**Course Requirements.** Read the assigned text for each class; compose the appropriate writing-to-learn assignment; attend and participate in all classes and complete the three exams.

**Evaluation.**

(1) **Exams:** Writing to Demonstrate Understanding. There will be three essay exams of equal weight. The essays will be the major means of assessing the degree to which a student has achieved the goals (above) of a course. In writing an essay, students should be prepared to: generalize from the particulars learned, demonstrate how abstract ideas or theories are/can be applied to concrete situations, and compare what has been learned to things already known.

(2) **The Writing-to-Learn Assignments.** These assignments are meant to help the student understand new and challenging material and to prepare for in-class discussions. They may take the form of a question to answer or texts to analyze. Sometimes the assignment is written "at home," and sometimes at the beginning of the class. The assignment must be completed by each student on his or her own. Assignments will be marked either "S"(Satisfactory), or "U" (Unsatisfactory).

If, at the end of the semester, 80% or more of the graded papers are "S," then the final grade will be raised one notch (e.g. B to B+). If 51%-79% are "S," the final grade will remain the same. If 50% or fewer are "S" the final grade will be dropped one notch (e.g. B to B-). Only with a legitimate excuse may a student "make-up" a writing assignment.

(3) **Participation.** Everyone is expected to attend class and enter into classroom discussions. Participation or lack of it can influence a final grade, especially if one is on the borderline. In addition, absenteeism could affect the grade in terms of missed writing assignments.

(4) **Plagiarism** on an **exam** will result in an "F" for the course. Plagiarism on a **writing-to-learn assignment** will result in a "U" for that particular assignment as well as a lowering of the student's final grade by one notch (B to B-). A second instance of plagiarism on a writing assignment will result in a "F" (failure) for the course and notification of the office of Academic Affairs. Please consult your Student Handbook for clarification of what counts as plagiarism--ignorance is no excuse.

(5) Please **turn off cell phones** and other electronic devices. Focus on the class, respect your professor and classmates.

**Note:** Students who wish to request accommodations in this class for a disability should contact Mr. Joe Kempfer, Assistant Director of Learning Services for Disability Support, 1307 Main Street (extension 1510). Accommodations cannot be provided until authorization is received from the office of Learning Services.

#### **REQUIRED TEXTS:**

*A Short History of Chinese Philosophy*, by Fung Yu-lan. Free Press  
*A Sourcebook in Chinese Philosophy*, by Wing-Tsit Chan. Princeton University Press.  
*A Study Guide to the Tao te Ching*, by Donald P. St. John. (Ms.)  
*The Way of Chuang Tzu*, by Thomas Merton. New Directions, 1965.  
*Gateless Barrier: Zen Comments on the Mumonkan*, by Zenkei Shibayama. Shambala Publications, 2000.

#### **COURSE OUTLINE**

Sep. 01      Introduction to the Course.

Sep. 03 Confucius (Kongzi: 551-479 B.C.E.) as Educator  
Read: Yu-lan, Ch. 4; Chan, pp. 14-17

## I. EARLY CONFUCIANISM

Sep. 08 **A. Confucius: The *Analects* (*Lunyu*)**  
Humanity and Relationality  
Read: Yu-lan, Ch. 4; Chan, Ch. 2 (Selections)

Sep. 10 Outer Correctness and Inner Benevolence  
Read: Chan, Ch. 2 (Selections)

**B. *The Mengzi*: Mencius (371-289 B.C.E.)**  
Sep. 15 Nature, Nurture and Moral Cultivation  
Read: Yu-lan, Ch. 7; Chan, pp. 51-66;  
Sep. 17 Government and the Shih Idealists  
Read: Chan, pp. 67ff

## II. PHILOSOPHIES OF SOCIAL CONTROL

Sep. 22 **A. *The Hsun Tzu* (*Xunzi*)** by Xunzi: 298-238? B.C.E.  
Legalistic and Institutional Confucianism  
Read: Yu-lan, Ch. 13; Chan, pp. 116-124; 128-135

Sep. 24 **B. *The Han Fei Tzu* (*Han Feizi*)** by Han Feizi, d.233 B.C.E.  
State Authoritarianism  
Read: Yu-lan, 14; Chan, 12 (Selections)  
**(Take-home Exam #1 Due Friday, Oct. 1, 4:00p.m.)**

## III. TAOISM

**A. *Tao Te Ching* (*Daodejing*)** by Lao Tzu (Laozi)  
Sep. 29, Oct. 01, Oct. 06, 08, 13,  
(09/29) Introduction to Taoism & Laozi  
Read: Yu-lan, 9; St. John, Study Guide 1-10  
(10/01-13) Textual Study and Reflective Reading  
Chan, Ch. 7 (Selections); St. John, Study Guide/Worksheets

**B. *The Chuang Tzu* (*Zhuangzi*)** by Zhuangzi (370-300?? B.C.E.)  
Oct. 15, 20, 22, 27,  
Tales, Themes and Crazy Wisdom  
Read: Merton, "Intro" to *The Way of Chuang Tzu* (also, see sheets)

Oct. 29 **IV. Foundations of Neo-Confucianism**  
**The Great Learning *Ta Hsueh* (*Da Xue*)**  
Read: Chan, Ch. 4  
**10/29 EXAM #2 Take Home**  
**(Exam #2 Due Back: Tues, Nov. 2 by 4:00p.m.)**

Nov. 03      **The Doctrine of the Mean, *Chung Yung (Zhong Yong)***  
Self-Cultivation and Metaphysics  
Read: Fung Yu-lan, Ch. 15 & Chan, Ch. 8 (selections)

Nov. 05      Interlude: Chinese Poetry  
Read: Handouts

#### **IV. BUDDHISM**

Nov. 10      Shinto: Japan's Indigenous Tradition  
Read: Assignment

Nov. 12      Buddhism: An Introduction  
Read: T.B.D.

Nov. 17      Chan/Zen Buddhism: An Overview  
Read: Assignment

Nov. 19      Text: The *Mumonkan* with Commentary  
Zen Buddhism: The Koan Tradition  
Read: Shibayama (Selections)

**Nov. 24 & 26 No Class...Thanksgiving**

Dec. 01-08    Read: Shibayama (Selections)  
**Final Take-Home Due: Mon. Dec. 13, 1:30 p.m.**