



PHIL 315: Asian Philosophy

Term: 2021 Summer Session Instructor: Staff Language of Instruction: English Classroom: TBA Office Hours: TBA
Class Sessions Per Week: 5 Total Weeks: 5 Total Class Sessions: 25 Class Session Length (minutes): 145 Credit Hours: 4

Course Description:

This course provides students with a brief introduction of the main categories of Asian Philosophy including Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, Legalism, Mohism, and Japanese philosophies. The most important excerpts of these schools will also be introduced to students. Topics covered in this course include the debate of the human nature, different perspectives of looking at the world, and principles of living.

Learning Objectives:

The objectives of the course will be achieved by means of finishing required readings, listening to lectures, participating in the in-class discussions, and finishing assigned homework.

By taking this course, the students are supposed to acquire

- an overall understanding of different schools of Asian philosophies,
- a basic knowledge of the concepts of different schools,
- the ability to identify the most famous philosophers and their beliefs,
- The ability to compare what they've learned in class about Asia philosophies with western practices.

Course Materials:

1. **Required Texts:**

Classic Asian Philosophy: A Guide to the Essential Texts, Joel J. Kupperman, 2nd edition



Readings in Classical Chinese Philosophy, Philip J. Ivanhoe and Bryan W. Van Norden,
2nd edition

2. Other materials:

Students will be provided with supplemented reading material selected by the instructor. During the lecture, in-class handouts and PowerPoint slides will also be provided by the instructor.

Course Format and Requirements:

The format of the course is mainly lecturing, the materials of which will be designed and handed out by the instructor before each class. The contents of the lectures are based on the textbooks, and supplemented reading materials will be given by the instructor. There are also chances for students to make in-class discussions about their personal ideas toward certain topics. In order to get a thorough understanding of the knowledge presented, students are supposed to finish all the assigned readings before the class and write down their own thoughts and questions for in-class discussions.

Grading Scale:

A+: 98%-100%

A: 93%-97%

A-: 90%-92%

B+: 88%-89%

B: 83%-87%

B-: 80%-82%

C+: 78%-79%

C: 73%-77%

C-: 70%-72%

D+: 68%-69%

D: 63%-67%

D-: 60%-62%

F: Below 60%

Course Assignments:

In-class discussion:

Students will be assessed on their participation in class. Elements of grading include students'



frequency of raising related questions to the content of the class, answering teacher's questions, giving their own thoughts about certain topics, and responding to other students' ideas.

Quizzes:

There will be 5 quizzes during the entire course. Students will be informed the time and the content of the quizzes. The grades of the quizzes consist of 20% of students' final score, and each quiz consists of 4%.

Short Paper:

For this course, the students will be required to finish a paper on a given topic by the instructor. The topic is related to what they have learned throughout the semester and the main goal of this final paper is to strengthen their own standing toward the discussion of this course. Students are supposed to discuss about the topic based on the content of the textbook and supplement reading materials. Guidelines about the paper will be handed to the students. Students should present their ability of critical thinking and their familiarity with the content learned in class as well as their language accuracy.

The paper should be from 5 to 7 pages long, double-spaced, using Times New Roman size 12 with 1-inch margins on each side. Once assigned, students will have two weeks to complete their paper.

Exams:

There will be 2 midterm exams and 1 final exam for this course.

The midterm and final exams are both closed-book in-class exams. The forms of the questions include multiple choices, right-or-wrong questions, definitions, open-ended questions and so on. Exams will cover most of the materials used in class, including textbooks, handouts and reading materials. Classes before the midterm exams and the final exam will be left for review and Q&A.

Course Assessment:

In-class discussion	10%
Quizzes	20%
Short Paper	15%
Midterm Exams 1	15%
Midterm Exams 2	15%
Final Exam	25%
Total	100%

Academic Integrity:



Students are encouraged to study together, and to discuss lecture topics with one another, but all other work should be completed independently.

Students are expected to adhere to the standards of academic honesty and integrity that are described in the Shanghai Normal University's Academic Conduct Code. Any work suspected of violating the standards of the Academic Conduct Code will be reported to the Dean's Office.

Penalties for violating the Academic Conduct Code may include dismissal from the program. All students have an individual responsibility to know and understand the provisions of the Academic Conduct Code.

Special Needs or Assistance:

Please contact the Administrative Office immediately if you have a learning disability, a medical issue, or any other type of problem that prevents professors from seeing you have learned the course material. Our goal is to help you learn, not to penalize you for issues which mask your learning.

Course Schedule:

Week	Topics	Activities
Week 1 (Class 1-5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to the course • The Upanishads (Suggested reading: Classic Asian Philosophy, Ch 1) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Authorship ✓ Chronology ✓ Geography - Life and death - "Atman is Brahman" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Brahman vs. <i>Atman</i> ✓ Brahman: the ultimate reality ✓ <i>Atman</i>: individual self (soul) - The world of superficial reality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ <i>Maya</i> vs. <i>Atman</i> ✓ <i>Atman</i>: true knowledge (<i>Vidya</i>) ✓ <i>Maya</i>: illusion • The Dhammapada (Reading: Classic Asian Philosophy, Ch 2) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Famous excerpts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Quiz 1



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Twin verses ✓ Punishment ✓ Self ✓ World ✓ The Buddha ✓ The way ✓ Thirst - Buddha's Compassion - The course of suffering - Desire and suffering - Loss of desire, and the natures of love and altruism The path to enlightenment 	
<p>Week 2 (Class 6-10)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Bhagavad Gita (Reading: Classic Asian Philosophy, Ch 3) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The dilemma - The morality of the Bhagavad Gita - Losing one's self - Options • Kongzi (Confucius) "The Analects" (Reading: Classic Asian Philosophy, Ch 4; Readings in Classical Chinese Philosophy, Ch 1) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Confucius and <i>The Analects</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Social philosophy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ren</i>: "humane", "altruistic", and "benevolent" • <i>Yi</i> • <i>Li</i>: rituals and forms of propriety through which people demonstrate their respects for others and their responsible roles in society ✓ Political philosophy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>De</i> ("Virtue"): moral force that allows those in power to rule and gain loyalty without the need for physical coercion • "Good government consists in the ruler being a ruler, the minister being a minister, the father being a father, and the son being a son." ✓ Education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find balance between formal study and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiz 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Midterm Exam 1



	<p>intuitive self-reflection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal in education: produce ethically well-cultivated men - The Ethical Ideal - Becoming a good person - Law <p>Review for Midterm Exam 1</p>	
<p>Week 3 (Class 11- 15)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mozi (Reading: Readings in Classical Chinese Philosophy, Ch 2) - Mozi and Mohism - Main arguments of Mozi <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Obeying one’s superior ✓ Impartial caring ✓ A condemnation of aggressive war ✓ For moderation in expenditures ✓ For moderation in funerals ✓ Heaven’s will ✓ On ghosts ✓ A condemnation of musical performances ✓ A condemnation of fatalism • Mengzi (Mencius) (Reading: Classic Asian Philosophy, Ch 5; Readings in Classical Chinese Philosophy, Ch 3) - Mengzi and Confucian Philosophy - Defining the claim of innate benevolence - Benevolence as essential to being human - Explaining failures to behave benevolently - Total loss of benevolence - Refinement - Fulfillment <p>Review for Midterm Exam 2</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiz 3 Midterm Exam 2
<p>Week 4 (Class 16-20)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laozi (“The Daodejing”) (Reading: Classic Asian Philosophy, Ch 6; Readings in Classical Chinese Philosophy, Ch 4) - Laozi and Daoism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Book 1 to 2 - Mysticism in the Daodejing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiz 4 • Short Paper



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The argument - Passivity, responsiveness - The Dynamics of social change • Zhuangzi (Reading: Classic Asian Philosophy, Ch 7; Readings in Classical Chinese Philosophy, Ch 5) - Main chapters of Zhuangzi <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ On equalizing things ✓ The key to nourishing life ✓ The human realm ✓ The great ancestral teacher ✓ The proper way of emperors and kings ✓ Heaven and earth ✓ Autumn floods ✓ Perfect happiness ✓ Outside things - Metaphysical anti-realism - Spontaneity - Too much goodness? - Education of the emotions - Life and death - The transformation of things 	
<p>Week 5 (Class 21-25)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Xunzi (Reading: Readings in Classical Chinese Philosophy, Ch 6) - Main chapters of Xunzi <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ An exhortation to learning ✓ Cultivating oneself ✓ The Regulations of a true king ✓ Discourse on heaven, ritual, music ✓ Undoing fixation ✓ Human nature is bad • Han Fei (Readings in Classical Chinese Philosophy, Ch 7) - Han Fei and legalism - Wu-Wei (Doing nothing) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Persuade the ruler to be ruthless to his ministers ✓ Emphasize autocracy and Shu (technique) as a practical principle of political control 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiz 5 ▪ Final Exam



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Wait “empty and still”- Xing-Ming (Performance and title)✓ Emphasize the congruence between words and deeds✓ Consider Xing-Ming an essential element of autocracy• Zen Flesh, Zen Bones (Reading: Classic Asian Philosophy, Ch 8)<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Does Zen amount to a philosophy- Anti-realism- A Matter-of-fact attitude toward the world- Every-minute value- Emotional change- Enlightenment- The Platform Sutra• Classic Asian Philosophies as guides to life (Reading: Classic Asian Philosophy, Ch 9)<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Correcting mistakes in one’s life- The “Is” and the “Ought” <p>Review for the Final Exam</p>	
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