

SYLLABUS

Phil 385: History of Philosophy: China (major)
Instructor: Professor Mary I. Bockover
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This upper division course (for the Philosophy Major) will examine the Chinese philosophies of Taoism, Confucianism, and Buddhism. We start, however, by studying the classic *I Ching*, a book of divination and of wisdom. The main goal is to provide students with an understanding of the significance of these philosophies in their own right, as well as a comparative understanding of them. This comparison will involve an analysis of the similarities and differences between the Chinese philosophies themselves, and an analysis of how they stand in relation to some traditional Western views. We begin with another comparison first, for all of these philosophies are also traditional religions in China. So we must distinguish philosophy from religion and religious studies to understand the *principles* of perspectives that may be vastly different from one's own. Paradoxically, achieving this goal can lead to an even fuller understanding of what it means to be a human being, in spite of our differences. The method for accomplishing this goal is *philosophical* – achieved through the rational analysis of the main principles of these philosophies (a) in themselves, (b) in contrast with each other, and (c) in contrast with some mainstream Western philosophical and religious traditions.

Text

A Sourcebook in Chinese Philosophy translated and compiled by Wing-tsit Chan

Requirements

- 1) Read relevant material *prior* to class.
- 2) Two philosophy papers, approximately 5-7 pages, double-spaced and typed (each worth half of your grade). Each paper must be re-written at least 3 times before it is handed in. Rough drafts are not considered essays.
- 3) Class attendance and participation.

Readings

The following readings, mainly from the *Sourcebook**, are resources for learning and discussion. Other references will be given electronically and can be found in the library.

Weeks 1 through 3: Material on the *I Ching* available online (selected material)

Material from Chinese Philosophy Internet Resources link on the *I Ching*
Xeroxed material also available from the Wilhelm translation of the *I Ching* if necessary
Ch. 13. The Philosophy of Change in the Sourcebook (pages 262-270; 8 total)*

Weeks 4 through 6: Material on Taoism

Ch. 8. The Mystical Way of Chuang Tzu (pages 177-210; 33 total)*
Ch. 19. Neo-Taoism (pages 314-336; 22 total)*

Weeks 7 through 9: Material on Confucianism

Ch. 3. Idealistic Confucianism: Mencius (pages 49-83; 34 total)*
Ch. 4. Moral and Social Programs: The *Great Learning* (pages 84-94; 10 total)*

Ch. 5. Spiritual Dimensions: The *Doctrine of the Mean* (pages 95-114; 19 total)*

Week 10: Material on Buddhism: The Heart Sutra

Weeks 11 & 12: No classes due to Furlough and China Conference

Week 13: Material on Buddhism: Lotus Sutra

Material from Chinese Philosophy Internet Resources link

Xeroxed material on Heart and Lotus Sutras also available if necessary

Week 14: Thanksgiving Break

Week 15: Material on Buddhism: Platform Sutra

Week 16: Contemporary Material

Material by Fingarette & Rosemont (forthcoming)

Week 17: No Final Examination