

CAS PH247 A1: Chinese Philosophy

Instructor: Guy Schuh

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Time and Location: T/Th 9:30-10:45am in CAS 201

Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11:00-12:00pm in STH 502A

Course Description

Is human nature fundamentally good or fundamentally bad? How can we best achieve an enduring social order? What is the shape of a life well lived? This class examines such questions in the context of the classical period in Chinese philosophy, focusing on (1) Kongzi (Confucius), (2) Mozi, (3) Mengzi (Mencius), (4) Laozi, (5) Zhuangzi, (6) Xunzi, and (7) Han Feizi. A primary goal of the course is to expose students to the richness, vitality, and plurality of the philosophical scene in ancient China. Topics discussed include moral virtue, music, education, and the ethics of war.

Required Texts

Analects, translated by Edward Slingerland, Hackett, ISBN: 978-0-87220-635-9

Introduction to Classical Chinese Philosophy, Bryan W. Van Norden, Hackett, ISBN 978-1-60384-468-0

Readings in Classical Chinese Philosophy, 2nd edition, Bryan W. Van Norden and P. J. Ivanhoe, Hackett, ISBN 978-0872207806

All books are available at the BU bookstore. Feel free to get them elsewhere, just make sure you have the editions that are listed. All other required texts will be made available on blackboard.

Assignments

Reading quizzes (25%): a short-answer quiz on the day's reading due at the beginning of class; *students may consult hand-written notes during the quiz*. Students have **2 bonus quizzes**; that is, the number of *required* quizzes is all of the assigned quizzes -2. For each one of the 2 extra quizzes that students complete, I will swap that grade with a lower grade from another quiz. The point of the reading quizzes is to motivate you to do the reading for each class. The point of having you do the reading is to provide you the opportunity to form your own judgement about the texts and issues we'll be discussing. The point of this is to prevent class from becoming an indoctrination session. As Confucius says, "Yan Hui is of no help to me—he is pleased with everything that I say." (11.4). *Only students with excused absences may make up a reading quiz. No absences will be excused without proper documentation.*

Lesson-Plan Collaboration (15%): each group has the responsibility of collaborating with me on a day's lesson plan; this will provide you considerable opportunity to shape the day's discussion. You will also have the responsibility of presenting part of the content for that day. Groups must (1) complete the reading in advance; (2) meet with me in advance to discuss the lesson plan; (3) complete an in-class presentation with an accompanying handout. The point of

this assignment is to give you the opportunity to discuss topics in the readings that you find interesting or compelling.

Short Papers (15% each, 60% total): There will be four two-page papers, each on an assigned topic. Drafts of these papers are due on the days indicated. On the day a draft is due, each group will provide its members feedback on their papers. Final versions of these papers will then be due the following week. For the final version of the paper, students must include a cover-letter describing how they revised their paper in light of their groups' feedback. ***Failure to turn a paper draft in on time or to include a cover-letter (or both) will result in the paper grade being lowered by one letter grade, i.e., an A will become a B.*** The point of this exercise is to (a) improve the quality of your papers and (b) train you in the practice of revising your writing. Any serious example of writing involves multiple stages of revision (just ask any of your professors).

Policies

Electronics: Unless given explicit permission by me, cell phone and laptop/tablet use is not permitted in class. Bring paper and a pen or pencil for note-taking as well as a physical copy of the day's reading.

Plagiarism: Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. All cases of plagiarism will be reported to the administration for disciplinary action **without exception**. It's your responsibility to understand, and abide by, the college's plagiarism guidelines. For more information, see the Boston University Code of Conduct: <http://www.bu.edu/academics/policies/academic-conduct-code/> and Plagiarism FAQ: <https://www.bu.edu/cgsnow/academics/plagiarism-academic-misconduct/>

Schedule (subject to change with due notice)

Introduction = *Introduction to Classical Chinese Philosophy*, Bryan W. Van Norden

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

"Podcast" = "The History of Chinese Philosophy Podcast,"
<https://www.teacup.media/2018/05/17/the-history-of-chinese-philosophy/>

1/22: Introduction

1/24: *Introduction* Chapter 1; *Analects*, xvi-xx "Pre-Confucian Background"; Podcast Part 1; Sunzi, *The Art of War*, chapters 1-3, 7-11, 13

Confucius

1/29: Podcast, part 2; *Introduction*; Chapter 2; *Analects*, xx-xxv "The Age of Confucius"; *Analects*, selections

1/31: *Analects*, selections

2/5: *Introduction*, Chapter 3; *Analects*, selections

2/7: *Analects*, selections

Mozi

- 2/12: **First Paper Draft Due; Group Peer Review**
2/14: Podcast Part 4 0:00-10:30: chinachannel.org/2017/11/23/hundred-schools-thought/; *Introduction*, Chapter 4; “On the Necessity of Standards,” *Readings*, pgs. 59-78
- 2/19: Monday Schedule; **First Paper Due**
2/21: *Readings*, pgs. 78-111; “Anti-Confucianism;” “Anti-Fatalism III”

Yang Shu and Egoism

- 2/26: Mengzi, *Mengzi*, 3b9; Podcast,” Part 4 10:30-18:30
chinachannel.org/2017/11/23/hundred-schools-thought/; *Introduction*, Chapter 5;
“Robber Zhi;” “Kings Who Have Wished to Resign the Throne”
2/28: “Delight in the Sword Fight;” “The Old Fisherman;” selections from *Analects*

Mengzi and Developments in Confucianism

- 3/5: “The Great Learning;” “The Doctrine of the Mean;” Podcast Part 4 18:30-31:32;
Introduction, Chapter 6; *Readings*, pgs. 115-125
3/7: **Second Paper Draft Due; Group Peer Review**
- 3/12: Spring Break
3/14: Spring Break
- 3/19: *Readings*, pgs. 125-157 with supplements from the *Mengzi*; **Second Paper Due**

School of Names

- 3/21: *Introduciton*, Chapter 7; “On The White Horse”; selection from Mohist Canon.

Daodejing

- 3/26: Podcast, Part 6 0-23:25; *Introduction*, Chapter 8; *Analects* 13.4, 14.39, 18.6-7; *Mengzi* 3A4; *Readings*, 163-180
3/28: *Readings*, 181-203

Zhuangzi

- 4/2: Podcast Podcast, Part 6 23:25-end; *Introduction*, Chapter 9; *Readings*, 207-231
4/4: *Readings*, 231-250

Xunzi

- 4/9: **Third Paper Draft Due; Group Peer Review**
4/11: Podcast Part 4 18:30-31:32; *Introduction*, Chapter 10; *Readings*, pgs. 255-286

4/16: *Readings*, pgs. 286-307, “On Honor and Disgrace;” “Contra Twelve Philosophers;” “The Teachings of the Ru;” **Third Paper Due**

Legalism and Han Feizi

4/18: *Introduction*, Chapter 11; Podcast, Part 5; *The Book of Lord Shang*, Chapter 1, paragraph 1; chapter 2, paragraph 5; chapter 3, paragraphs 8,9,14; chapter 4, paragraphs 17, 18; chapter 5, paragraphs 25-6;

4/23: *Readings*, pgs. 311-339

4/25: *Readings*, pgs. 339-359

4/30: “Ten Villainies,” “Eight Faults,” “On the Difficulties of Speaking;” “Absurd Encouragements;” “The Difficulty of Pien Ho”

5/2: **Fourth Paper Drafts Due; Group Peer Review**