

RELIGION 367: Taoist Philosophy

Fall 2010
Instructor: Dr. Tao Jiang
Email: tjiang@rci.rutgers.edu

Office: Loree 140
Office Hours: Tu 9 -10:30 am or by appt.
Office Phone: (732) 932-9641

Course Description:

Taoism (more recently transliterated as Daoism), one of the three major Chinese intellectual traditions along with Confucianism and Chinese Buddhism, is celebrated for its ideals of spontaneity and naturalness in human actions. These ideals are an attempt to capture the optimal ease and efficacy in our human action, especially in certain cultivated and achieved forms, i.e., in artistic performances, ethical behaviors and even in political and military actions. This course focuses on two foundational texts of classical Taoist philosophy, the *Tao Te Ching* (*Dao De Jing*) and the *Chuang Tzu* (*Zhuangzi*). We will examine the two texts closely, and study their various interpretations, both traditional and contemporary. At the end, we will briefly look into the history of Taoism and its influence in China.

Course Requirements:

Two Exams	40%
* Ten Weekly Papers	50%
# One Presentation:	10%

* To facilitate class preparation and discussion, starting with the second week, you are required to write a one-page and single-spaced response paper in a two-paragraph format: the first paragraph summarizes what you regard as the most important and/or interesting point in the reading assignment and the second paragraph raises some relevant questions that can be useful in the class discussion. The paper must be written in (or converted to) word or pdf format and submitted online (sakai.rutgers.edu) the night before the class, **by midnight**. I do not accept email attachment, so please make sure that you submit it online, on time. You must also print out a copy and bring it to class, for class discussion purpose. There will be no paper due if there is an exam scheduled.

Everyone is required to do one 15-minute presentation in the course of the semester. The presentation should be on the reading assignment of the week. You should summarize the reading and analyze its central arguments. You must write up the presentation and it should be about 5-page long and submit it in the place of the regular assignment (you will not need to submit your regular paper for that week). If there are two presenters in a given week, you are strongly encouraged to collaborate and coordinate for your presentations.

Course Policies:

- Attendance will be taken randomly. Every two sessions missed will result in a 5% reduction of the final grade unless a medical proof or a written proof of an emergency is provided through the dean's office.
- You are expected to attend all classes fully prepared: complete the reading assignment for each class with weekly paper, written notes, and be ready to raise specific questions and discuss points about the assigned reading.

- The class strictly follows the university policy on academic integrity. It is available at <http://TeachX.rutgers.edu/integrity/index.html>

Required Texts:

- (1) Jullien, François. *A Treatise on Efficacy: Between Western and Chinese Thinking*. Hawai'i.
- (2) Lau, D.C., trans. *Tao Te Ching*. Penguin.
- (3) Graham, A.C. *Chuang Tzu: The Inner Chapters*. Hackett.
- (4) Kirkland, Russell. *Taoism: The Enduring Tradition*. Routledge.

Important Dates:

1st exam: Oct. 28

2nd exam: Dec. 2

Tentative Schedule:

The following schedule is tentative and subject to change. The format of the course would be a combination of lectures and class discussions. Since some materials in the lecture are not necessarily covered in the required texts, it is highly recommended that you take notes during the lecture. Of course, questions are always welcome.

Sept. 2	Introduction to classical Chinese thoughts and Taoism
Sept. 9	<i>A Treatise on Efficacy</i> : Chapters 1-4
Sept. 16	<i>A Treatise on Efficacy</i> : Chapters 5-8
Sept. 23	<i>A Treatise on Efficacy</i> : Chapters 9-12
Sept. 30	<i>Tao Te Ching</i> : Chapters I-XX
Oct. 7	<i>Tao Te Ching</i> : Chapters XXI-XXXVII
Oct. 14	<i>Tao Te Ching</i> : Chapters XXXVIII-LVI
Oct. 21	<i>Tao Te Ching</i> : Chapters LVII-LXXXI
Oct. 28	Exam I (no paper due); <i>Chuang Tzu</i> : Part Two, 1-2
Nov. 4	<i>Chuang Tzu</i> : Part Two, 3-5
Nov. 11	<i>Chuang Tzu</i> : Part Two, 6-8
Nov. 18	<i>Chuang Tzu</i> : Part Three, 1-5
Dec. 2	Exam II (no paper due); <i>Taoism</i> , Chapters 1-3
Dec. 9	<i>Taoism</i> , Chapter 4-Conclusion