

RELIGION 394 (01)

Dr. T. Selover

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TTh 3:55-5:15 RAB-110B

Fall Term 2010

The Confucian Way: Learning to be Human

Course Description: This course critically explores the significance and changing role of Confucian traditions: their ancient roots in China, historical elaboration and expansion, and relevance for personal and social vision today. Centered in China and also significant in Korea and Japan, Confucianism has provided “threads of continuity” in East Asian civilization. We will trace some of these threads, including the cycles of Heaven, family and ancestors, morality and politics, and the quest for authentic humanity.

Textbooks:

Xinzhong Yao, *An Introduction to Confucianism*

Herbert Fingarette, *Confucius: The Secular as Sacred*

Daniel Gardner, *The Four Books: The Basic Teachings of the Later Confucian Tradition*

Recommended: Tu Weiming and Mary Evelyn Tucker, *Confucian Spirituality*, Vols. 1 & 2

Course Objectives:

1. To be able to discuss major ideas and practices in the Confucian traditions of China and Korea.
2. To be able to recognize key terms in Chinese thought, including about twenty Chinese characters, and to discuss their historical and religious significance.
3. To be able to demonstrate well-developed reflective responses to significant interpretations of Confucian thought and practice.

Course Requirements:

1. Attend classes and participate actively in discussions
2. Required Readings and Assignments
3. Midterm Test (**Oct 19**)
4. Reading-Reflection Paper (**7-9 pages, due Nov 18**)
5. Final Exam (**Take Home, due Dec 23**)

Evaluation:

Participation	10%
Midterm	30%
Paper	30%
Final Exam	<u>30%</u>
	100%



Course Outline

Week 1 (9/2): Orientation and Introduction

- Learning to be Human
- The Way, Learning, and Politics

Readings: Yao 1-15

Week 2 (9/7, 9/9): Confucius as Teacher

- Beginning from Confucius?
- Who were the Ru?
- Master of the tradition

Readings: Yao 16-47; Fingarette vii-xi

Week 3 (9/14, 9/16): Early Chinese Religion & Culture

- Ancestors, Spirits and Oracle Bones
- The Heavenly Mandate
- High Antiquity and the Formation of "Our Culture"

Readings: Yao 47-67; Selected Readings (Handout)

Week 4 (9/21, 9/23): Retro on the Classics

- The Five Classics
- Yin/Yang Cosmology and the 5 Phases
- Profound Learning

Readings: Gardner xiii-xxx; Selected Readings (Handout)

Week 5 (9/28, 9/30): The Relevance of Ritual

- Human Community as Holy Rite
- Jen (Humanity) and Li (Ritual, Propriety)
- The Five Relations

Readings: Yao 190-223; Fingarette 1-17; Gardner 11-49

Week 6 (10/5, 10/7): The Warring States and the 100 Schools

- Mencius in Context
- Human Nature and the "Sprouts" of Goodness
- Love and Distinctions

Readings: Yao 68-76; Gardner 53-103

Week 7 (10/12, 10/14): Imperial Confucianism

- Xunzi and Imperial Confucianism
- Han Confucian Systems
- Profound Learning

Readings: Yao 76-96; Fingarette 18-36

Week 8 (10/19, 10/21): Examination System

- **Midterm Exam**
- Tu Wei-ming - "A Confucian Life in America"

Week 9 (10/26, 10/28): Neo-Confucian Reformation

- Tang-Song transitions
- Cheng brothers
- Zhu Xi

Readings: Yao 96-108, 139-155; “Forming One Body: The Cheng Brothers and Their Circle”

Week 10 (11/2, 11/4): The Four Books

- Understanding “The Great Learning”
- “Doctrine of the Mean”—Maintaining Perfect Balance

Readings: Yao 155-189; Gardner 3-8, 107-129; “An Essay on Confucian Religiousness”

Week 11 (11/9, 11/11): Developments of Confucianism in Korea

- Korean Confucianism
- Diagrams on Sagely Learning
- Four/Seven Debate

Readings: Yao 115-125; Selected Readings (Handout)

Week 12 (11/16, 11/18): Learning of the Heart & Mind

- The Legacy of Wang Yangming
- Focus on the Heart-and-Mind

Readings: Yao 109-115; Wang Yangming’s “Inquiry on the *Great Learning*”

Reading-Reflection PAPER DUE on Thursday, Nov 18

Week 13 (11/23): Confucianism and "Other Religions"

- Buddhist Thought and Practice
- Confucians and Christians

Readings: Yao 223-244

Week 14 (11/30, 12/2): Crisis of Confucian Confidence

- Western Learning as Function
- The May 4th Challenge

Readings: Yao 245-255; Selected Readings (Handout)

Week 15 (12/7, 12/9): Contemporary Mandates

- The “New Confucians”
- Reconstruction of Tradition (after June 4th)
- Peace-making in Korea
- Confucian Ecology

Readings: Yao 255-286; Selection: *Reinventing Confucianism* 11-34

FINAL EXAM (Take Home), due Thurs Dec 23 (12-3pm, RAB 110B)