

RUTGERS UNIVERSITY
Department of Religion

840:324 CHINESE RELIGIONS

Fall 2011

TTh 5 3:55-5:15 pm

[RAB](#)-110B, D/C

Dr. Thomas Selover

Phone: 932-9641; e-mail: tselover@rci.rutgers.edu

Office Hrs. TuTh 2:00-3:00 or by appt.

Pre-requisites: none; co-requisites: none



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Course Description:

The “Way” has been sought in China through social, ritual, mystical, metaphysical, and magical channels. This course offers an introduction to Chinese religious thought and practice, focusing on the Confucian and Daoist traditions, as well as Buddhist, folk and other religious practices. We will cover religious concepts and classic texts; the relation of religion to society and self in China; role models and paradigms of transformation; alchemy and meditation. The course explores these interrelated dimensions within the history of Chinese culture and as religious manifestations today.

Textbooks:

Adler, Joseph A. *Chinese Religious Traditions*. Prentice Hall (2002)

Kohn, Livia. *Daoism and Chinese Culture*, 2nd ed. Three Pines (2001)

Sommer, Deborah. *Chinese Religion: An Anthology of Sources*. Oxford (1995)

Recommended:

Yao Xinzong, *An Introduction to Confucianism*. Cambridge (2000)

Course Requirements and Evaluations:

This course is designed to meet the requirements for Arts and Humanities (requirements o and p) as well as writing and communications goals (requirements s1, t, u, and v) in the SAS Core Curriculum guideline. There will be three papers for this course, on Confucianism, Daoism and contemporary Chinese religions respectively, to be submitted to sakai.rutgers.edu by the due date (10/6, 11/3, 12/6). Each paper should be 5-7 pages (times new roman font, size 12, double-spaced, in word or pdf format), with proper citations and discussions of primary source materials and secondary literature. Assessment will be based on your performance in the papers and will make use of the Core Curriculum standard assessment form and the standard rubrics for these requirements.

Course Policies:

* Attendance will be taken. Missing class will affect the final grade unless a medical proof or a written proof of an emergency is provided.

* You are expected to attend all classes fully prepared: complete the reading assignment for

each class with written notes, and be ready to raise specific questions and discussion points.

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

Course Schedule:

9/1 Week 1:

1. Orientation and Introduction
- READING; Adler 11-19

9/6 (no class 9/8) Week 2:

1. Early Chinese Religion
- READING; Adler 20-29; CR 3-30

9/13, 15 Week 3:

1. Early Confucianism: Five Classics
 2. Confucius and The Analects
- READING Adler 30-37; CR 41-48

9/20, 22 Week 4:

1. Secular and Sacred
 2. Mencius & Xunzi
- READING Adler 37-42; CR 49-70

9/27, 29 Week 5:

1. Cycles of Renewal
 - a. Yin/Yang Cosmology and the 5 Phases
 2. Imperial Confucianism
- READING Adler 58-67; Kohn, 43-48, 149-152; CR 31-40, 105-112

10/4, 6 Week 6:

1. Neo-Confucian reflections
 2. Learning of the Heart-and-Mind
- READING Adler 90-97; CR 169-173, 183-198, 227-32

First paper on Confucianism due on 10/6

10/11, 13 Week 7:

1. Laozi and the Dao
 2. Non-doing and Undoing
- READING Adler, 42-51; Kohn, 1-26; CR 71-75

10/18, 20 Week 8:

1. Zhuangzi: Free and Easy Wandering
 2. Reason and Spontaneity
- READING Adler 51-57; Kohn, 27-42; CR 77-83

10/25, 27 Week 9:

1. Daoist Religious Movements
2. Daoist Scriptures and traditions

READING Adler 67-73, 97-99; Kohn, 61-99, 100-113, 153-168; CR 199-210

11/1, 3 Week 10:

1. Longevity and Immortality
2. Daoist Physical and Ritual Practices

READING Kohn, 117-149, 153-186; CR 145-151

Second paper on Daoism due on 11/3

11/8, 10 Week 11:

1. Chinese Buddhist movements
2. Pure Land and Chan

READING Adler 74-89, 100-102; CR 119-143, 155-164

11/15, 17 Week 12:

1. Other Religious Traditions in China
2. Gods, Ghosts and Ancestors

READING Adler 102-109; CR 113-116

11/22 Week 13:

Film: A Question of Balance

===== THANKSGIVING BREAK 11/23-11/27 =====

11/29, 12/1 Week 14:

1. Religion in Modern China

READING Adler 110-123; CR 293-307

12/6, 8 Week 15:

1. Religion in China Today

READING Adler 123-125; Kohn, 187-203

Final paper on contemporary Chinese religions due on Dec. 6

12/13 Week 16:

1. Summary & Reflections