

Seminar on Taoist Philosophy

Spring 2013
Instructor: Dr. Tao Jiang
Email: tjiang@rci.rutgers.edu

Office: Loree 140
Office Hours: T 2-4 pm or by appointment
Office Phone: (848) 932-9641

Course Description:

This course focuses on two foundational texts of classical Taoist philosophy, the *Dao De Jing* (*Tao Te Ching*) and the *Zhuangzi* (*Chuang Tzu*). We will examine key Taoist concepts like nature, spontaneity, efficacy, potency, and authenticity, and look into the Taoist critique of the Confucian morality. We will briefly look into the Taoist influence on the West as well as the Western transformation of Taoism.

Course Requirements:

\$Weekly Papers	55%
*One Presentation	15%
#Term Paper	30%
§Extra Credit	5 points

§ To facilitate class preparation and discussion, starting with the second week, you are required to write a one-page 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 submitted online (sakai.rutgers.edu) the night before the class, **by midnight**. You must also print out a copy and bring it to class, for class discussion purpose. There will be no response paper for the last reading assignment.

* 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 online in the place of the regular assignment (you will not need to submit your regular response paper for that week).

Everyone is required to write a 12-page term paper (double-spaced, size 12 font, Times New Roman font), relevant to the subject of the self. You should discuss possible topics with the instructor early in the process. Generally it is a good practice to follow this structure: identify the central thesis of your paper, divide it up into several sub-theses. You are expected to cite some academic books in writing your paper and have a bibliography at the end of the paper. You must submit your paper online (sakai.rutgers.edu) by midnight, May 7, 2013. There will no extension of the due date.

§ There will be an international conference on “Nature and Value in Chinese and Western Philosophies,” on April 4-5, 2013 (specifics will be announced later in the semester and you can also get more information on the Department of Religion website (www.religion.rutgers.edu) under Events. If you attend any panel and write up a 3-page summary of the panel presentation and discussion, you will get up to 5 extra points counted toward your final grade.

Course Policies:

Students are expected to attend all classes; if you must miss one or two classes, please use the University absence reporting website <https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/> to indicate the date and reason for your absence. An email is automatically sent to the instructors. Late assignments will receive lower marks, missed exams can be taken only in the event of certifiable emergencies.

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

Required Texts:

- (1) Jullien, François. 2004. *A Treatise on Efficacy: Between Western and Chinese Thinking*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
- (2) Lau, D.C., trans. *Tao Te Ching*. Penguin.
- (3) Graham, A.C. 2001. *Chuang Tzu: The Inner Chapters*. Hackett.
- (4) Clark, J.J. 2000. *The Tao of the West: Western Transformations of Taoist Thought*. London: Routledge.

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.

Jan. 22	Introduction to classical Chinese thoughts and Taoism
Jan. 29	<i>A Treatise on Efficacy</i> : Chapters 1-4
Feb. 5	<i>A Treatise on Efficacy</i> : Chapters 5-8
Feb. 12	<i>A Treatise on Efficacy</i> : Chapters 9-12
Feb. 19	<i>Tao Te Ching</i> : Chapters 1-25
Feb. 26	<i>Tao Te Ching</i> : Chapters 26-50
Mar. 5	<i>Tao Te Ching</i> : Chapters 51-81
Mar. 12	<i>Chuang Tzu</i> : Part Two 1, 3
Mar. 26	No class
Apr. 2	<i>Chuang Tzu</i> : Part Two 2, 4
Apr. 9	<i>Chuang Tzu</i> : Part Two 5-8
Apr. 16	<i>The Tao of the West</i> : Chapters 1-3
Apr. 23	<i>The Tao of the West</i> : Chapters 4-6
Apr. 30	<i>The Tao of the West</i> : Chapters 7-9