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## **Outline of Chinese Culture (UGEA2100F)**

**2013/14 second term**

Lecture Hours : Friday 1:30 pm - 3:15 pm  
Classroom : MMW 710  
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### **A FEW PRELIMINARY REMARKS**

1. Students must read this outline carefully before registering to take this course so as to consider if it suits you, as well as during the course so as to get a clear direction of study.
2. Registered students must visit *Blackboard* regularly for updated information and announcements of the course.
3. Most importantly, the medium of instruction for this course is English, that is, lectures and examinations are conducted in English whilst the reading material are all in English. Students whose English proficiency is below average should think twice before registering.

### **COURSE OVERVIEW**

This course aims to provide a general understanding of traditional Chinese culture and covers the following major topics: a) characteristics of Chinese culture, b) its religions, c) philosophies, d) politics, society and economic life. Whilst an outline of culture will emphasize its essential elements like key concepts, principles and their relations, also with a look at the relevant contexts.

### **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

By attending this course, students are expected

1. to identify the main characteristics of traditional Chinese Culture; in particular, to identify the basic elements chiefly in the fields of religions, philosophy, politics, society and economics, as well as to explain the relations between these basic elements;
2. to appraise traditional Chinese culture; in particular, to compare and contrast the background of various basic elements and their theoretical characteristics in religions, philosophy, politics, etc.;

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3. to reflect on the role of Chinese culture in the contemporary world.

**LEARNING ACTIVITIES** include mainly lectures, video clips, in-class discussions and exams.

### **GENERAL REFERENCES**

The following works are useful references throughout the course and specific chapter length readings will be assigned in the following topic-by-topic reference list.

1. Fung, Yu-lan (1948) *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy*, N.Y.: Free Press.
2. Mote, Frederick W. (1989) *Intellectual Foundations of China*, second edition, N.Y.: McGraw Hill. First edition published in 1971.
3. Schwartz, Benjamin I. (1985) *The World of Thought in Ancient China*, Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.

### **TOPIC-BY-TOPIC REFERENCE LIST**

#### **A. Introduction**

course syllabus and course requirement—the basics of Chinese culture

1. Mote, Frederick W. (1989) Chapters 1 “The Historical beginnings,” and 2 “The Beginnings of a World View,” in his *Intellectual Foundations of China*, second edition, pp. 1-8 and pp. 9-25 respectively.
2. Fung, Yu-lan (1948) Chapters 1 “The Spirit of Chinese Philosophy,” and 2 “The Background of Chinese Philosophy,” in his *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy*, pp. 1-15 and pp. 16-29 respectively.

#### **B. Religions and Chinese culture**

the three Chinese religions—religious elements and functions of ancient Confucianism—the non-religious view, and replies

Buddha the enlightened one—how to achieve enlightenment (the Three “Studies”), some foundational doctrines (the Four Truths of the Noble Ones, the Three Seals)—karma and transmigration

Daoism, the indigenous and miscellaneous religion in China

##### **1. required reading**

Yao, Xinzhong (2000) “Ritual and religious practice,” in his *An Introduction to Confuciansim*, Ch. 4. pp. 190-244.

NOTE: pp. 190-209 will be assigned as one of the articles for the tests and exam. It will be uploaded to *Blackboard*. A few more required readings will be assigned throughout the

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course and available at *Blackboard*. Labels like “For Test,” or “For Exam” will be added after those articles’ filenames. See more in section on assessment explanation.

2. Ching, Julia and Küng Hans (1993) “Confucianism: Ethical Humanism as Religion? Part 1: Chinese Perspectives,” in their *Christianity and Chinese Religion*, Ch. II, part 1, N.Y.: Doubleday, pp. 59-91.
3. Chen, Kenneth K. S. (1973) *The Chinese Transformation of Buddhism*, Chapter 1 “Introduction,” Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, pp. 3-13. Interested students are recommended to read also chapter 2 “Ethical Life” pp. 14-64.
4. Ching, Julia and Küng Hans (1993) “Taoist naturalism: Philosophy and Religion, Part 1: Chinese Perspectives,” in their *Christianity and Chinese Religion*, Ch. III, part 1, N.Y.: Doubleday, pp. 129-158.

### **C. Philosophy and Chinese culture**

role of rite and character cultivation——can a *junzi* ignore rites?——other key foundational concepts of ancient Confucian tradition like Heaven, virtues, etc.

to learn from the Daoist *dao* (way)——body-valuing, nature, non-action——“The way never acts yet nothing is left undone.” (Chapter 37) (sophistry or dialectics?)

1. Fung, Yu-lan (1948) “Confucius, the First Teacher,” in his *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy*, Ch. 4, pp. 38-48.
2. Fingarette, Herbert (1972) *Confucius—The Secular as Sacred*, Chapter 1 “Human Community as Holy Rite,” N.Y.: Harper & Row, pp. 1-17.
3. Mote, Frederick W. (1989) “Early Taoism,” in his *Intellectual Foundations of China*, second edition, Ch. 4, pp. 59-76.
4. Graham, A. C. (1989) “Lao-tzu’s Taoism: The Art of Ruling by Spontaneity” in his *Disputers of the Tao*, Ch. III, 1, pp. 213-234.

### **D. Politics, Society and Chinese culture**

the Confucian “complex” on socio-political hierarchy——morality, utility and public policy  
the Daoist “ideal” of the latent rulership——the implications of appreciating the recluse  
Legalist *fa* (laws?)——comparison between *fa* and Confucian *li* (rites)——“explicitly Confucian and implicitly Legalist” (the hybrid structure of ancient Chinese politics)

1. Schwartz, Benjamin. (1985) “Confucius: The vision of the *Analects*,” in his *The World of Thought in Ancient China*, Ch. 3, pp. 56-134. In case you find the reading a bit heavy, I would recommend the following sections in the chapter: “The Realm of Li” pp. 67-75,

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“The Family” pp. 99-102 and “On Government” pp. 102-117.

This one is about the Confucian perspective of Chinese politics and society.

2. Ames, Roger (1994) “*Fa* in the Legalist tradition” in *The Art of Rulership: A Study of Ancient Chinese Political Thought*, NY: State University of New York, pp. 125-132.

This one is about the Legalist perspective of Chinese politics and society.

3. Fung, Yu-lan (1948) Chapters 16 “World Politics and World Philosophy,” in his *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy*, pp. 166-177.

This chapter is about the unification of China under Qin Empire and the eclectic tendencies in ancient Chinese culture. Fung also compares issues of that period with the confrontation of China and Western civilisations in modern time.

NOTE: The above reading list consists of part of the reference material. More specific readings will be assigned during the lectures. Moreover, you are most welcome to have a word with me anytime if you want to explore further than what I have suggested. And you could contact me via email (see above) or in person (preferably with an appointment first).

#### **COURSE SCHEDULE**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic/Activities</b>
Jan 10	Introduction basics of Chinese culture
Jan 17	Chinese religions I (Confucianism)
Jan 24	Chinese religions II (Buddhism)
Jan 31	Lunar New Year Holiday (no class)
Feb 7	Chinese religions review (Confucianism & Buddhism)
Feb 14	Chinese religions III (Daoism)
Feb 21	Chinese philosophy and personal cultivation I (man of nature)
Feb 28	Chinese philosophy and personal cultivation II (man of rite)

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March 7	First Test (see assessment below for details) with lecture after the test
March 14	to be confirmed to be announced in Blackboard
March 21	Chinese politics, society and economy I
March 28	Chinese politics, society and economy II
April 4	Chinese politics, society and economy III
April 11	Second Test (see assessment below for details) with conclusion of the course after the test

**ASSESSMENT METHODS AND EXPLANATION:**

Type of assessment	max. score
First Test	20 points (to be held on March 7 in class, starts by 1:30 pm)
Second Test	20 points (to be held on April 11 in class, starts by 1:30 pm)
Final Examination	60 points (centralized examination)
Total	100 points

1. There will be no make-up test or exam for students who are late or miss any of these assessments.
2. If the day of the first test is affected by bad weather or accidents, this test will be **POSTPONED** to the following week, that is March 14.
3. If the second test is affected by bad weather or accidents, it will be **CANCELLED** and the overall results will be based on just the first test and the final examination (maximum total score becomes 80 points).

**SOME EXPLANATION ON THE ASSESSMENT METHODS:**

- The tests and final exam are all closed-books and the questions are essay-type questions ONLY. In each test, a student needs to answer one compulsory question. In the final exam, a student needs to answer one compulsory question and one elective question (a total of two questions). But each question will be divided into several parts so students need only to answer them step by step in order to complete the essay.
- Exam/test syllabus includes what is taught in the class as well as specific readings designated for examination (not the whole reading list, some designated readings will be

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assigned later and announced through *Blackboard*). Such designated readings will be uploaded to *Blackboard* in due time, with a clear label “For Test (or Exam)” after their filenames. Usually the number of readings designated for tests and examination will be fewer than five. The test syllabuses of the two tests do not overlap. The final exam syllabus includes what is taught in the whole term as well as all those designated readings.

- Questions in the tests and final exams are designed to assess a) students’ grasp of the content of key concepts and principles as well as b) students’ capability to apply the concepts, principles and other facts (textual, historical, etc.) to argue for their chosen stance on a specific question. Requirements in part a) refer roughly to Learning Outcome 1 and those in part b) refer roughly to Outcomes 2 and 3.
- Hence, the exam grading takes the following two critical factors into consideration: a) whether relevant concepts or principles are explained fully and correctly, and b) whether concepts, principles, text, historical information, etc. are chosen correctly and then related logically to support a certain stance.
- Roll call may be carried out (usually at least 20 minutes after the class starts) and absence in lectures (or tests) may get marks deducted: five marks each time and a maximum of 20 marks may be accumulated.  
Pop quizzes (or class exercise), although not part of the formal assessment, may be used as a form of roll call in which absentees will get marks deducted.

#### **ACADEMIC HONESTY AND PLAGIARISM**

Although formal assessments of the course are limited to tests and final exam, I would still like to draw your attention to the University policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and to the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations. Details may be found at <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/>