

PHIL 2301 Guided Studies in Chinese Philosophical Classics: *Zhuangzi*
Term 2, 2016
Course Outline

Time: Monday 13:30-16:15

Location: LSK210

Course Overview

This is a reader course of the *Zhuangzi*. It will cover the major themes of Dao, death, language, and self-cultivation, and lesser-known ones such as, non-being, time, corruption of self, and the art of being useless. What you will take away from this course is a new appreciation of Zhuangzi's vision of the world, his calling attention to the weaknesses of human nature and that, despite its long history, the *Zhuangzi* remains as relevant today as ever.

Learning Outcomes

1. Identify the main themes of the *Zhuangzi*.
2. Assess the significance of Zhuangzi's philosophical style and argumentation.
3. Be able to defend the *Zhuangzi* from attack by other schools of early Chinese philosophy (e.g., Confucianism, Legalism, Mohism).
4. Reflect on the value of Zhuangzi's philosophy to contemporary society.

Topics

See lecture schedule below

Learning Activities

1. Read and give thought to the assigned readings.
2. Develop the skills mentioned above in the Learning Outcomes.
3. Improve your research skills through various writing assignments.
4. Attend lectures and engage your fellow classmates in discussion on the material presented.

Assessment Scheme

Task	Description	Weight
Class Participation	-	15%
Reflection Papers	5 paper @ 2 pp each, 5 marks each	25%
Research Essay 1	5 pp, due week 8	30%
Research Essay 2	5 pp, due week 15	30%

Reflection Papers

You are to write **5** reflection papers on **5 separate** lectures over the duration of the course. In which weeks you choose to do so is up to you. **Late papers will not be accepted after 24 hours.** The reflection papers

cover the lectures from weeks 3 through 15 (weeks 2 and 15 are excluded). These are not research papers; they are your own reflections on the text and class discussion. Try to relate the material to your own life experience and explore how Zhuangzi's philosophy is helpful, if at all. **Do not use long quotations**; one or two lines is enough. The format should be: 1-inch margins, double-line spacing, 12 pt. font. I will deduct marks for larger margins or font size. The length of each paper is to 2 pages. You can write more if you like but anything less than **2 full pages** and I will deduct marks. Each paper is worth 5 marks and will be assigned based on the detail and originality of your discussion; if you simply summarize the text, I will deduct marks.

Research Papers

You are to write **2** research essays, in English, on a topic of your choice about the *Zhuangzi*. If you are unsure of a topic, ask for my help. **Comparative studies are not allowed**. I will post a comprehensive bibliography on Blackboard for you to download. Only **journal articles** included in this file are allowed (search for them on the library website). If you have trouble locating an article, ask for my help. **No online or Chinese materials are allowed**. The first essay is due in week 8; the second is due in week 15. **Late papers will not be accepted after 24 hours**. The format should be: 1-inch margins, double-line spacing, 12 pt. font. Marks will be deducted for larger margins or font size. Include a cover page with the paper's title, your name and student number, the course code, and date of submission. The length of each essay is 5 pages, not including the bibliography (use a separate page at the end). You can write more if you like but anything less than **5 full pages** and I will deduct marks. You must use proper citations throughout your paper (in-text or footnote). If you are not sure how to do this, use any of the articles you have downloaded as a guide. Each paper is worth 30 marks and I will assign these based on how well you organize your arguments, how clearly they are written (having a well-defined thesis is vital), and your ability to use the work of scholars to strengthen your own writing.

Course Materials

There is one required text for this course, Burton Watson's complete translation of the *Zhuangzi* (Columbia University Press, 2013). You must obtain a copy yourself. If you wish to consult the original Chinese, you can find it here: <http://ctext.org/zhuangzi>.

Course Schedule

Week	Lecture Topic & Guiding Questions	Pages from Watson to Read	Remarks
1 (Jan 2)	Public Holiday; <i>No Class</i>		
2 (Jan 9)	Course Introduction, Background to the <i>Zhuangzi</i>	Coutinho's <i>Introduction</i> (see Blackboard)	
3 (Jan 16)	Dao, non-Being, the One What is Dao? What is the function of non-being? How does the One operate? Is oneness related to Dao? Are these three entities important for everyday human life?	7-15, 22-28, 45-47, 49-52, 57-59, 77-79, 84-85, 87-89, 90-93, 113-115, 118, 119-121, 132, 157, 162-163, 166-167, 169-171, 176-179, 184-185, 191-198, 204-205, 208, 213-214, 223-226, 248, 250-251, 261-262, 278, 287-296	

<p>4 (Jan 23)</p>	<p>Time and Temporality Is time real? Does Dao exist in or out of time? Is human time different from that of Nature and Dao? If so, are we able to experience it?</p>	<p>2, 11-12, 12-13, 21, 47-48, 62, 74-76, 88-90, 93-94, 101-102, 112-113, 116-118, 132, 141-142, 143-144, 152, 164, 180-181, 186, 195, 226, 258</p>	
<p>5 (Jan 30)</p>	<p>Chinese New Year; <i>No Class</i></p>		
<p>6 (Feb 6)</p>	<p>Death and Transformation What does death mean for Zhuangzi? Is it permanent or a transition to something else? How can we overcome our fear of death? What is the bond between death and Dao?</p>	<p>1-2, 9-10, 16-17, 17-18, 20-21, 38-39, 44, 47-48, 59, 89, 141-142, 145-146, 149-150, 159-160, 162-163, 168-170, 177-178, 181-182, 185-186, 195-196, 226, 233, 236-237, 257-258, 286</p>	
<p>7 (Feb 13)</p>	<p>Virtue Is being virtuous good or bad? How does the virtue of Dao compare to that of humanity? What is needed to improve one's virtue?</p>	<p>14-15, 22-23, 27, 29-33, 35-39, 55, 60-64, 65-67, 71-72, 74-83, 84-86, 88-94, 98-103, 108-109, 115-116, 122-125, 170, 177, 197, 254-255, 281, 284-285</p>	
<p>8 (Feb 20)</p>	<p>Sage Who is a sage? How do we recognize them? Can anyone become a sage? What role does the sage have in the world? Do sages really have the power to change the world?</p>	<p>3-4, 15-17, 31-33, 36-40, 42-45, 50, 55, 56-59, 82-83, 88-94, 105-106, 115-116, 119-121, 129-130, 153-154, 166-167, 169-171, 177-179, 188-193, 208, 211-212, 215-217, 233, 276-277, 281-282, 283</p>	<p>Research Essay #1 due</p>
<p>9 (Feb 27)</p>	<p>Governance What makes a good ruler? Where does the ruler's power come from? How do we measure a ruler's failure? Is there a higher authority than the ruler?</p>	<p>3-4, 35, 55-56, 65-67, 74-76, 88, 90-91, 93, 98-103, 118, 122-125, 201-203, 210-211, 239-251, 256-258, 282-284, 287-293</p>	
<p>10 (Mar 6)</p>	<p>Wuwei (non-action) and Uselessness What does it mean to practice non-action? Why does Zhuangzi value uselessness? Aren't non-action and being useless the same? Is there a connection between these and the level of one's virtue?</p>	<p>6, 33, 28, 50, 56, 73, 75, 76, 81, 83, 84-85, 87-88, 93, 98-101, 110, 111, 114, 120, 123, 130, 140, 145-146, 182, 185, 197, 198, 215-217, 223-226, 231, 295,</p>	
<p>11 (Mar 13)</p>	<p>Language and Reality Why is Zhuangzi skeptical of language? How do words lead to confusion in the world? If we want to understand Dao, can we do so using language? What are non-words?</p>	<p>8, 9-15, 17, 28, 37, 39-41, 43-45, 59, 72-73, 75, 96, 101-103, 106-107, 112-113, 115, 117-118, 126-133, 135-137, 140, 143, 146-148, 152-153, 165-166, 176-183, 186-187, 193-195, 208, 223-226, 233-237, 241-242, 247, 254, 271-272, 281-282, 289-291, 297-298, 302, 303-304, 356, 374-377</p>	

12 (Mar 20)	Self-Corruption Zhuangzi blames Confucius for corrupting the self, why? How can we avoid doing this? If our self is already corrupt, how can we restore it?	14-15, 22-23, 29, 32, 38-39, 40, 59, 60-62, 63-64, 65-67, 68-73, 76-77, 109, 139-140, 161, 203-204, 273-275, 287	
13 (Mar 27)	Self-Cultivation Why do we cultivate ourselves? Is it related to non-action? The sage has perfect virtue, what about the rest of us? Will the world be a better place if everyone practices self-cultivation?	6, 7-12, 18, 19-20, 24-25, 30-31, 40-41, 52-53, 59, 60-64, 74-76, 78-81, 89-90, 118, 120-121, 122-125, 145-146, 152-153, 165, 168-171, 178-179, 188-198, 231-233, 234-236, 281	
14 (Apr 3)	Selflessness What does selflessness mean? Many problems are due to people being selfish; is selflessness the answer? Are there any drawbacks to it? Is a selfless world even possible?	28, 45-46, 80, 82-83, 84-86, 87-88, 90-91, 98-100, 105-106, 114-116, 119-121, 139, 145-146, 153, 185, 197, 198, 207, 216-217, 223	
15 (Apr 10)	Freedom How many kinds of freedom are there? What price would you pay to be free? Can you be free in the sense meant by Zhuangzi? What are the steps needed to achieve Daoist freedom?	7, 18, 20-21, 34-35, 39, 46-47, 48-50, 52-53, 56-57, 57-59, 87-88, 98-100, 146-147, 153-154, 181-182, 194, 195-196, 197, 231-233, 234-236, 281-282	Research Essay #2 due
16 (Apr 17)	Easter Holiday; No Class		

* This schedule is tentative and subject to change.

Details of Course Website

Relevant announcements and course documents will be posted on Blackboard.

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Attention is drawn to 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/>

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