

Graduate Seminar PHIL5070 Seminar on Chinese Philosophy

Confucian Political Philosophy: The State of Field in the English Speaking World

Fall, 2017

Confucianism has often been regarded mainly as an ethical theory for individual persons and their behaviors and thus as either lacking a political philosophy proper or containing an inadequate political philosophy, which is merely an extension of its ethics for individuals. In the last decade or so, however, Confucian political philosophy has become a prominent area of research (*xianxue* 顯學) in the English speaking world, covering such topics as democracy, human rights, social justice, equality, public reason, among many others. In this course, we shall select to discuss a dozen or so books.

Course Requirements:

- (1) Each student should attend at each of the weekly sessions and actively participate at the classroom discussion, well prepared, with assigned readings read in advance. Frequent absence and tardiness are not tolerated (30%);
- (2) Each student should choose one book from the list below to prepare a report to be presented at one of the weekly sessions. The report should be comprehensive, covering the main if not all aspects of the book. In addition, at least one week before their presentation, the student should select a couple of chapters (30-60 pages) of the book for other members of the seminars to read (35%);
- (3) Each student should write a critical essay as the term paper. The paper should engage one or two related aspects of the book he/she presented in class in substantive details, the aspect(s) he/she thinks is (are) significant and yet are not adequately treated in the book. The paper should start with a presentation of the view of the book on the issue(s) as charitably as possible; explain why he/she find the view problematic; develop his/her own alternative view; and finally defend such a view (35%).

*A Special Note:* While not required, students taking this course, especially those whose term papers are of high promise, are encouraged, and should be prepared, to spend some extra time, after the semester is over, to revise, possibly for multiple times, their term papers in light of the comments made by the instructor of this course, with an eye toward the eventual publication. To each of those papers that are deemed as publishable, the author of the book under discussion will be invited to write a response. These papers, together with responses from authors of original books, will be arranged for publication in an edited volume, by a decent publisher, tentatively under the title of this course.

List of Books on Confucian Political Philosophy:

Ames, Roger and David Hall 2015 (Kindle Edition). *The Democracy of the Dead: Dewey, Confucius, and the Hope for Democracy in China*

Loubna El Amine 2015. *Classical Confucian Political Thought: A New Interpretation* Princeton University Press.

- Stephen C. Angle 2012. *Contemporary Confucian Political Philosophy*. Polity Press.
- Tongdong Bai 2012. *China - The Political Philosophy of the Middle Kingdom* (World Political Theories). Zed Books/
- Daniel A. Bell 2016. *The China Model: Political Meritocracy and the Limits of Democracy*. Princeton University Press.
- Daniel A. Bell. 2010. *China's New Confucianism: Politics and Everyday Life in a Changing Society*. Princeton University Press.
- Joseph Chan 2015. *Confucian Perfectionism: A Political Philosophy for Modern Times*. Princeton University Press.
- Erin Cline 2012. *Confucius, Rawls, and the Sense of Justice*. Fordham University Press.
- David Elstein 2014. *Democracy in Contemporary Confucian Philosophy*. Routledge.
- Ruiping Fan 2010. *Reconstructionist Confucianism: Rethinking Morality after the West*. Springer.
- Sungmoon Kim. 2016. *Public Reason Confucianism: Democratic Perfectionism and Constitutionalism in East Asia*. Cambridge University Press.
- Sungmoon Kim 2014. *Confucian Democracy in East Asia: Theory And Practice*. Cambridge University Press.
- Chenyang Li 2015. *The Confucian Philosophy of Harmony*. Routledge.
- Henry Rosemont 2016. *Against Individualism: A Confucian Rethinking of the Foundations of Morality, Politics, Family, and Religion* (Philosophy and Cultural Identity). Lexington Books.
- Sor-Hoon Tan 2004. *Confucian Democracy: A Deweyan Reconstruction*. State University of New York Press.