COURSE SYLLABUS
PHILOSOPHY 145A: CHINESE PHILOSOPHY
FALL, 2004
GENERAL EDUCATION AREA C

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Course Catalogue Description:
A survey of the major philosophical traditions of China and Japan, focusing on concepts of nature, man, society, freedom, and knowledge. Special attention will be given to the work of Confucius, Lao Tzu, Buddhist writers, and recent philosophical movements. Taught Alternate Semesters with Philosophy 145B. Prerequisite: Passing score on the WPE.

AMIR’S FABLE

There is an old fable which tells that Truth and Falsehood went for A swim together, leaving their clothes on shore. Falsehood Coming out of the water first, puts on Truth’s clothes. Truth, being what it is, absolutely refused to wear Falsehood’s clothes, thus remained naked. Ever since then, Falsehood, appearing As Truth, has been accepted as Truth, while Truth still Awaits to be seen.

CHUANG TZU’S TALE

At the Gorge of Lu, the great waterfall plunges for thousands of feet, its spray visible for miles. In the churning
waters below, no living creature can
be seen. One day, K’ung Fu-Tzu, was
standing at a distance from the pool’s edge,
when he saw an old man being tossed about
in the turbulent water. He called to his disciples,
and together they ran to rescue the victim. But by
the time they reached the water, the old man had come
out onto the bank and was walking along, singing to himself.
K’ung Fu-Tzu hurried up to him. ‘You would have to be a ghost
to survive that,’ he said, ‘but you seem to be a man, instead. What
secret power do you have?’ ‘Nothing special,’ the old man replied. ‘I began
to learn while young, and grew up practicing it. Now I am certain of success. I go
down with the water and come up with the water. I follow it and forget myself. I
survive because I don’t struggle against the water’s superior power. That’s all.’

Course Description:

Through a variety of means and techniques, readings, interrogations, and
discussions you will struggle toward an understanding of the fundamental
characteristics of Chinese Philosophy. My mentor in Chinese Philosophy,
dear friend and colleague, Professor Joseph Wu, focuses on five prime
attributes in “The Paradoxical Situation of Western Philosophy and the
Search of Chinese Wisdom,” Clarification and Enlightenment: Essays in
Comparative Philosophy. (1) “Human Centrality. Chinese Philosophy is
Humanistic in its tolerance. Its accommodation of other types of thought as
of itself, its all-embracing attitude—All that exists is humanity, by humanity,
and of humanity.” (2) “Theory-Practice Unity. From the Chinese
viewpoint the total moral performance of the individual and the totality of
his belief or theories should be in harmonious unity, without gap or
inconsistency. . . . Philosophy for the Chinese thinker is philosophy lived
rather than philosophy constructed by the intellect, and one’s personal
character should be the exemplification on one’s theory.” (3) “Pedagogic
Universality. Chinese society has never evinced aristocracy or professionalism in
philosophy . . . (it) is intended for every educated individual . . . Philosophy in
China has occupied a central place in childrens’ education.” (4) “
Methodological Simplicity. It seems that all Chinese Philosophers have had a
built-in Occam’s Razor which warn us: Do not complicate an issue with elaborate
arguments which are not necessary.” Two of the most influential books in Chinese
History exemplify this simplicity. Confucius’ Analects “consists only of short
aphorisms and brief dialogues.” Lao Tse’s Dao Deh Ching “is only a small
pamphlet of no more than six thousand words.” (5) “Dynamic Harmony . . . The Chinese concept of harmony is modeled after the dynamic process of life. One of the Five Classics, the I Ching, is built on the concepts of change and interaction.” You will be asked to read Professor Wu’s essay from which these statements of the characteristics of Chinese Philosophy come.

Course Objectives:

This course is intended to help you find within yourself the attentivity, the sensitivity, the skillful means, and the heart necessary to comprehend and incorporate useful elements from the major philosophical traditions of China and Japan.

This course endeavors also to open you eyes and mind to the profound Comparative Philosophical process without which you cannot understand Chinese Philosophy.

Since Chinese culture and philosophy place a premium on learning how to learn as well as learning itself, a further objective of this course is to create an environment in which both levels of learning become simultaneously possible for you. Your sanity (mental concentration and even-mindedness) depends on the cultivation of learning how to learn as well as learning itself.

Assignments:

You will be expected to read each of the four books assigned for the course. One take-home essay assignment will be given for each book. Each essay must be minimum of 1500 words. You will be expected to undertake an in-depth, critical analysis of the major philosophical themes in each Book with a special emphasis on how the work responds to the three most fundamental philosophical questions: (1) What is there? (2) How do we know it? (3) How do we fit in?

Texts:

Roger Ames  Analects: A Philosophical Translation
Ursula K. LeGuin  Lao Tzu: Tao Te Ching
Paul Reps  Zen Flesh, Zen Bones
Richard Wilhelm/
Cary Baynes  I Ching: Or Book of Changes

Recommended:
Sarah Rossbach, Feng Shui: The Chinese Art of
Placement
Master Lam Kam Chuen, The Personal Feng Shui Manual
Fung Yu Lan, A Short History of Chinese
Philosophy
Joel Kupperman Classic Asian Philosophy

Attendance:
You are allowed a maximum of three absences. For each absence over three your
final grade will be reduced by 5 points (5%). You are late if you come to class
after I take roll. If you are late you must tell me on that day or it will be counted as
an absence. Three times late is equal to one absence. Special arrangements are
possible for students who encounter extreme circumstances, e.g., death in the
family, long-term illness, etc. However, it is the student’s responsibility to notify
me of these circumstances immediately. No after-the-fact explanations of serial
absences will be accepted under any circumstances.

Preparation:
You must keep up with the reading. Chinese Philosophy can be very demanding of
your time and attention. Most students find they need to read the material several
times before they have understood it. After the first week there will be daily
interrogations of randomly selected students on the reading material to determine
currency in preparation. Failure to be prepared will result in point deductions of 2
points per incident.

Collaboration Policy:
You are free to work together on questions and essays outside of class. Be
advised, that if multiple students’ (past and present) work exhibit striking
similarities, they will be failed in the course. Use each other as a source of ideas,
but do your writing by yourself.
Form of Submitted Work:

Each essay must be typed, double-spaced in 14-point type with one inch margins. Essays may be submitted by E-Mail only when there is a request to do so attended by a good reason. Please submit to the singprof@foothill.net e-mail address. E-Mail submissions must also be in 14-point type.

Due Dates and Late Policy:

Essays will be due on announced due date. Essays will be downgraded 10% for every day late.

Grading:

Essays will be graded on the basis of two criteria: Form and Content. Matters of form include grammar, spelling, punctuation, clarity, and organization. Matters of content include: Textual accuracy, thoroughness and overall quality of thought. Each essay will be worth 25 points. Four essays for a total of 100 points. Your final grade will be determined by the essay scores. Final letter grades are assigned on a standard scale: 92 and above = A, 90-91 = A-, 88-89 = B+, 82-87 = B, 80-81 = B-, etc.

Writing Component:

This is an Advanced Study Course. Hence, your writing will be evaluated and graded. Up to 5 points collectively will be deducted for writing errors in each essay. Fractional points will be used where appropriate. I will note errors as they occur in the text of the essay. Students whose essays contain numerous or serious errors will be asked to revise and resubmit the essays. The revisions will not result in a change of grade.

Weekly Course Outline:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 1</th>
<th>The Analects, pp. 9-55.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>The Analects, Books I-VI.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 3</td>
<td>The Analects, Books VII-XIII.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 4</td>
<td>The Analects, Books XIV-XX.</td>
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First essay due on The Analects due October 4.
Week 5       Lao Tzu
Week 6       Lao Tzu
Week 7       Hsin Hsin Ming
Week 8       Hsin Hsin Ming

Second essay on Tao Speaks/Hsin Hsin Ming due on October 28.

Week 9       Zen Flesh, Zen Bones
Week 10      Zen Flesh, Zen Bones
Week 11      Zen Flesh, Zen Bones
Week 12      Zen Flesh, Zen Bones

Third essay on Zen Speaks due on November 25.

Week 13      Nov. 24-28       The I Ching, pp. xiii-lxii (13-62).
Week 14      Dec. 2-5         The I Ching, Part I.
Week 15      Dec. 8-12        The I Ching, Part II.

Fourth essay on The I Ching is due by date and time scheduled for the final.

This syllabus is subject to change at the instructor’s discretion.

EXERCISES IN DISCERNMENT OR SEEING IS FORGETTING THE NAME OF THE THING SEEN

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