

## Chinese Philosophy and Religion

HRS 173 • Fall 2019

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### Required Texts

You will have free online access to all three of the required texts through the University library; links will be available online. The first two can be purchased inexpensively, if you prefer a physical copy, and are available at the campus bookstore. The Wiley-Blackwell Companion is a much more expensive text and has not been ordered for sale at the bookstore. Although you are free to buy a copy if you wish, I expect students to use the free online version.

Readings in Classical Chinese Philosophy  
by Philip J. Ivanhoe (Editor), Bryan W. Van Norden (Editor)  
ISBN-13: 978-0872207806  
REQUIRED

Readings in Later Chinese Philosophy: Han to the 20th Century  
by Justin Tiwald (Editor), Bryan W. Van Norden (Editor)  
ISBN-13: 978-1624661907  
REQUIRED

**The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Chinese Religion**  
Ed. Randall L. Nadeau  
First published: 14 March 2012  
Print ISBN: 9781405190312 | Online ISBN: 9781444361995

### Optional Text

Introduction to Classical Chinese Philosophy  
by Bryan W. Van Norden (Author)  
ISBN-13: 978-1603844680

Additional readings will be available online.

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Catalog Description: Study of Chinese philosophic and religious ideas through representative works in English. The traditional Chinese views on human nature, society, politics, morality, and spirituality are examined. The Chinese transformation of Buddhism will also be discussed. The inner dynamics of traditional Chinese thought and its contemporary implications are explored.

This course satisfies Area C2 (Humanities), which prescribes that students be able to:

- A. Demonstrate knowledge of the conventions and methods of the study of the humanities.
- B. Investigate, describe, and analyze the roles and effects of human culture and understanding in the development of human societies.
- C. Compare and analyze various conceptions of humankind.
- D. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the historical development of cultures and civilizations, including their animating ideas and values.

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Compare and contrast the major schools of Chinese philosophy, focusing on the major contributors and the major tenets of each school
2. Analyze each school's concept of humanity, and the human condition
3. Compare and analyze the various conceptions of humanity that can be found in the major philosophical traditions of China.
4. Articulate the ethics and worldview of the main philosophical traditions of China, and how each of these traditions relates to Chinese culture and the development of Chinese society.
5. Demonstrate familiarity with the religious dimensions of the major religions of China: Their ritual and other practices; their narratives, symbols, and myths; and their expression in material form as represented in Chinese art and architecture.
6. Apply their knowledge of the methods and conventions appropriate to the study of the humanities.
7. Demonstrate their ability to reason logically and write clearly in prose.

## **Course Delivery**

All course content will be delivered on [Canvas](#). You will find video lectures there, as well as links and dropboxes for all assignments.

## **Course Grade**

A basic requirement for passing this course is that the student make an evident attempt to complete all the assignments listed below. Canvas will automatically calculate your percentages for each assignment. Assignments will be weighted as follows:

Quizzes:	35%
Discussion Posts:	30%
Exams:	35%

The maximum scores for each letter grade are as follows. “Maximum score” means e.g. that if you score 80%, you are *guaranteed* at least a B- in the course, though you may do better; these cutoffs may be lowered, i.e. changed in your favor, at the end of the semester.

A-	88%
B-	80%
C-	70%
D-	60%

### Description of Requirements

**Quizzes:** Students will be expected to complete a short quiz on each lecture video. Each quiz will consist of about 10 questions, depending on the length of the video. You will be allowed two attempts at each quiz. If you make a second attempt at a quiz, you will keep the second score, even if it is lower than the first. (If you kept the higher of the two scores, there would be no incentive to review the material before making a second attempt. I strongly recommend that you review the material before taking any quiz for the second time.)

**Discussion Posts:** Normally, two discussion posts will be due each week. The first should be an original post of 180 words, and the format is open: The most obvious thing to do would be to give a very concise description of some philosophical position that you encountered in the current material, and then make a comment on that material, or pose a question. I may also post questions to the forum that you may answer/discuss.

The second post should be a 40-word comment on someone else’s post. Please comment on a post that no other student has commented on, if one is available. (Instructor comments do not count.) Your comment may be a response to something they said, an answer to their question, or a reasoned agreement/disagreement; again, the format is open, but this is important: *Please remember to be courteous and respectful at all times.*

The total value for each set of two posts will be 22 discussion points maximum: 18 points for the original post, and 4 points for the comment. Assuming that the content of the post is focused on the recent course material, and the requirement of courtesy has been met, scores will be based on effort, as measured by the length of the post in words. A rubric for scoring will be provided separately, but generally, scores will be awarded at the rate of 1 point for each 10 words, up to the maximum for each post.

You will also be asked to introduce yourself in a discussion forum, and to comment on someone else’s introduction.

**Midterm and Final:** Each of these will consist of two essays, written in response to questions that will be published in advance. The recommended length for each exam is 1000 words; that

would be about 2 pages for each of the two questions, or four pages total for each exam. Your exams will be submitted through the Turnitin.com module on Canvas and checked for originality.

**IMPORTANT:** In order to pass the class, you must make a serious attempt to complete both exams. This means that if you do not submit a final exam, you will receive a grade of F in the course, even if your course total would otherwise qualify you for a higher grade.

Each of the four essays you will write for the course will be scored on a scale of 0-100 exam points. If your essay is plagiarized, or shows no familiarity with the lecture videos, you will receive a score of 0. The exams are a test of your mastery of the course material, not of your ability to use Google.

It is your responsibility to ensure that your exams are properly submitted. It is a requirement of this course that you be able to show a receipt for all work submitted, and that you check to be sure you have received credit for each assignment before the next one is due. Negligence in this regard can mean failing the course even though you have done all of the work. You cannot get credit for your work if you do not succeed in submitting it.

**Communication:** A fully online course like this one requires you to stay in close communication with the instructor. Please check online for course updates at least twice each week. I will try very hard to minimize the amount of email I send you, but there may be time-sensitive announcements that need to go out over email; please be sure you check your Saclink email regularly while the course is in progress- I recommend that you check it at least twice each week.

**Outside Assistance:** If you feel you need help with the course material, your first recourse should be to contact me, rather than seeking outside assistance from a source of undemonstrated competence who may even charge a fee for this service. Due to concerns about the reliability of the assistance you may receive, you are specifically forbidden from seeking assistance from an outside source- for example, an online service- without my approval.

**Help with Writing:** On the other hand, you are encouraged to seek help with your writing skills. An excellent resource is our campus [Reading and Writing Center](#).

**Crisis Support:** There are resources on campus to assist students who are in crisis, or who face unique challenges. [Contact CARES](#), Crisis Assistance and Resource Education Support.

**Instructor Plan:** I usually respond to emails and questions posted to the "About the Course" discussion forum within 24 hours. Weekends may be an exception, particularly if I am away from home. I normally check my CSUS email between the hours of 11:00 am and 4:00 pm.

Exams are graded in the order received, so in some cases you will receive grades and comments in a matter of hours. I am usually able to return all work two week, but exams that are submitted late may take longer.

Discussion forum posts will normally be scored within 5 days after the forum closes.

**Technical Support:** If you have trouble with Canvas, you can go to AIRC, 2nd Floor, Room 2005, email the help desk at [servicedesk@csus.edu](mailto:servicedesk@csus.edu), or call them at 916-278-7337.

**Disability Accommodation:** If you have a disability and require accommodations, you need to provide disability documentation to [Services to Students with Disabilities](#), Lassen Hall 1008, (916) 278-6955. Please discuss your accommodation needs with me after class or during my

office hours early in the semester. You will find the University's accessibility policy at <http://csus.edu/irt/accessibility/>

**Instructor Drops:** Students who do not complete at least half of the work assigned for credit during the first two weeks of the semester will be considered to have abandoned the course and may be administratively dropped by the instructor. Thus e.g. if there are eight assignments due for course credit during the first two weeks, you will be expected to complete at least four of them. Re-enrollment will not be permitted. Do not, however, rely on me to drop you. If you do not plan to complete the course, you are responsible for your own drop/withdrawal.

**Withdrawal from the course:** Please be mindful of drop deadlines. After the end of the online drop period, you will be asked to justify any request to withdraw, and if your explanation is not satisfactory your petition to drop will be denied. (The criteria are on the back of [this form.](#)) In the large majority of cases, if a student does not withdraw during the online drop period, she is committed to finishing the class.

**Academic Dishonesty:** This usually involves using unauthorized notes during an exam or plagiarism, which is presenting the work of someone else—whether copied or paraphrased—as one's own. When material is copied without use of quotation marks, plagiarism is presumed. Please understand that it is not enough simply to reword material you find online to avoid the charge of plagiarism. You are responsible for what you turn in; check to be sure all appropriate citations are included in your work. For face-to-face classes: If unauthorized notes are found to be accessible to you during an exam, you will be presumed to be using them. Those who permit others to cheat are considered accomplices and are guilty of cheating as well.

Please review the [University's policies regarding academic dishonesty](#). The library also maintains [a very useful page on plagiarism](#).

Anyone caught cheating will lose credit for the assignment on which they cheated, with no possibility of make-up. The minimum penalty will be 15% of the course total, which is likely to drop the offender at least one letter grade in the course. Egregious cases (e.g. multiple infractions, failure to cooperate with an investigation into academic dishonesty) may result in a student's failing the course. Please be aware that I am required to report all cases of cheating to the University's Office of Student Conduct, which may take further action.