Chinese Philosophy

Philosophy 145A • Summer 2016

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Required Texts
All are available in Kindle format. Electronic versions (ePub and pdf) are also available from the publisher.

Readings in Classical Chinese Philosophy
by Philip J. Ivanhoe (Editor), Bryan W. Van Norden (Editor)
REQUIRED

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

Introduction to Classical Chinese Philosophy
by Bryan W. Van Norden (Author)
OPTIONAL: But in some cases you may find it easier to base your critical summaries on Van Norden’s narrative rather than the source texts.

Additional readings will be available online.

Course Description
Catalog Description: 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 Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism, and recent philosophical movements.

This course satisfies Area C4: Further Studies in the Arts and Humanities, and satisfies the intensive writing requirement.

Prerequisites: Passing score on the Writing Proficiency Exam.

The intensive writing requirement specifies that students will complete writing assignments totaling not less than 5000 words. We will meet this goal with a combination of critical summaries (3800 words minimum) and discussion posts (1200 words minimum). The instructor will be working actively with students to assist them in sharpening their analytic skills and improving their writing styles.

Course Objectives
- Familiarize students with the major schools of traditional Chinese philosophy, enabling them to identify the major tenets of Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism, as well as the views of some of the major contributors to each of these traditions, and to be able to describe areas in which these traditions agree and disagree.
- Improve students’ abilities to critically assess complex philosophical argumentation
- Improve students’ abilities to develop a reasoned framework for their own worldview
- Enhance students’ composition skills
- Expose students to highly sophisticated non-western schools of philosophical thought

**COURSE GRADE**
The following cutoff scheme represents a guarantee of the maximum course total required for each letter grade. Target scores for the individual assignments are also provided.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Quizzes (Total)</th>
<th>Blog Posts x 6</th>
<th>Summaries x 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>900</td>
<td>180</td>
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<td>20</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The instructor will be following the Philosophy Department’s grade definitions.

**Description of Requirements**

**Quizzes:** Students will be expected to complete a short quiz on each lecture video. Generally each quiz will consist of 8-10 questions, but this may depend 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.)

Online quiz points will not have the same value as course points. (Each will probably be about \(\frac{1}{2}\) course point in value.) I will convert your quiz points into course points at the end of the term by taking the percentage of total possible quiz points you earned, and multiplying this by 200 points.

**Discussion Posts:** There will be a forum open each week for discussion of that week’s course material. You may post comments on the material, or questions about the material, or comments and questions together. You may also post comments or replies to the posts of others, but please remember to be courteous and respectful at all times.

Another option for your discussion posts: You may post your own multiple choice question on the current material—but if you do, please include 5 possible answers, and indicate which answer is correct, and why, i.e. you should provide a short justification for your choice. Multiple choice questions may be based on the lecture material, or on the reading. If your question concerns the reading, please include, in your justification, the page number where the answer may be found.

Students are expected to post at least 200 words to each of the weekly discussion forums for a minimum of 1200 words (6 x 200). The 200 word requirement may be met by a single post or by multiple posts. A rubric for grading of the discussion posts will be provided separately.

**Critical Summaries:** Students are asked to write five critical summaries. Each of these should be at least 760 words in length, which is 2-3 pages (double spaced) depending on font. Total writing for all summaries will be a minimum of 3800 words (5 x 760). Each summary should accomplish these goals:
1. Give the reader a general sense of the direction of the course material over the week.

2. Focus on some philosophically interesting view that arises in the context of this material.

3. Give a critical discussion of the view in (2) above.

4. Each summary should show detailed acquaintance with the course material. The emphasis is on the reading assignments, but summaries should also show familiarity with the lecture material that is relevant to the summary’s topic. Summaries must make references to the text which have been properly cited. (Parenthetical citations are fine.)

A more detailed description of the assignment (with grading rubric) will be provided separately.

The emphasis of the critical summaries will be on the critical examination of complex philosophical argumentation. Detailed comments will be given on all writing assignments to help students improve their skills in both analytic reasoning and composition on subsequent assignments. For an explanation of what is involved in philosophical writing, please see the Philosophy Department’s writing guidelines.

Critical summaries will be submitted to SacCT through the Blackboard Turnitin module, and will be checked for originality. Summaries will normally be due on Saturday at 11:59 pm. Summaries will be accepted late, but there may be penalties, as indicated on the dropbox at SacCT.

Summaries will be read in the order they are submitted. I will normally be able to guarantee that you receive your summary back, with a score and comments, at least a couple days before your next one is due, but only if it is submitted by Saturday night. The later you turn in your summary, the more you risk not seeing comments on it before your next summary is due.

Students who do not submit at least three summaries satisfying the minimum page length will receive a grade of F in the course. Students who submit only three critical summaries may receive an F as well, and in any case are very unlikely to receive a grade of C- or better.

It is your responsibility to insure that all of your summaries are properly submitted. It is a requirement of this course that (a) you retain a receipt for the successful submission of your summary, and (b) that you check to be sure you have received credit for each summary 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 summaries if you do not succeed in turning them in.

**Makeup Summary:** Students will have the opportunity to submit one critical summary as a makeup at the end of the term. There will be a 30-point penalty on this summary. This summary may be used to replace any lower summary score (except see Academic Dishonesty below).

**Additional Requirements:** 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 every 48 hours. 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 daily while the course is in progress.

As a requirement for passing this course, it is expected that you will view all of the course videos.

**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,
Withdrawal from the course: Please be mindful of drop deadlines. After the initial drop period closes, you will be asked to justify any request to withdraw, and if your explanation is not satisfactory your petition to withdraw will be denied.

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 paper. Those who permit others to cheat are considered accomplices and thus guilty of academic dishonesty themselves.

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

Anyone caught cheating will, at minimum, lose credit for the assignment on which they cheated, with no possibility of make-up. The minimum penalty will be 150 points, which is likely to drop the offender 1-2 letter grades in the course. If the assignment in question is worth less than 150 points, a negative value will be entered for that assignment to insure a 150 point loss. (For example, a plagiarized 130-point assignment will receive a score of -20.) There will be no makeups for assignments that are instances of academic dishonesty. 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 administrative action.

Students guilty of egregious cases of academic dishonesty may fail the course. Egregious cases include, but are not limited to: Multiple instances of academic dishonesty, and facilitating academic dishonesty on the part of others.

Outside Sources: Students sometimes try to use material from outside sources on their course assignments, when they find that their notes are inadequate—perhaps because they were not attentive during lecture, did not understand the lecture and did not ask for help, did not do the required reading, or were simply absent. If you consult outside sources you should indicate the source of your material in your work. You are strongly advised to check these sources with me, as many (e.g. Wikipedia) are unreliable and therefore completely unsatisfactory for scholarly purposes. Students sometimes fail their assignments when they rely on such dubious sources.

I recommend, as a source for background information, the Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy. Articles in the IEP, unlike those in Wikipedia, are reviewed for accuracy by people who know something about the subject matter. Another good source for advanced work is the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, though many of its articles are not written with an undergraduate audience in mind.