EALC 130gp Introduction to East Asian Ethical Thought
Fall 2018

Lectures: Tuesday and Thursday 12.30 - 1.50 p.m.
Taper Hall of Humanities (THH) 114

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Office Hours: THH 356E, Tuesday and Thursday 2 – 4 p.m.

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Scope of the Course:
This course introduces the foundations of East Asian ethical and philosophical thought. Examining human ethics from different, sometimes mutually opposing perspectives, we will read and discuss key thinkers of the Confucian, Daoist, Mohist, Legalist and Neo-Confucian traditions. In addition, we will also learn about Shintō, Japan’s native tradition; Zen (Chan) Buddhism; and Bushidō, the way of the Japanese samurai. We will read primary sources of classical texts from China, Japan and Korea as well as secondary scholarship that will help us to understand these primary texts. In addition, we will critically evaluate key philosophical-moral ideas with respect to our own lives and concerns of our contemporary world, such as government, education, the environment and human rights. Comparisons to Western thought are encouraged, as are discussions of current events and students’ own values and approaches to life.

In this course you will:
1) Learn about Chinese, Japanese and Korean philosophical and moral ideas, surviving from ancient to modern times, and assess their relevance and value today.

2) Trace the evolution over time, and interrelationships across cultural spheres, of ethical ideas and concepts in the East Asian world.

3) Critically examine how East Asian ethical thought can be important and relevant to our own lives as well as to contemporary practices in government, education, the environment, human rights and other fields.
Requirements and Grades:
1) Attendance, Participation and Discussion Board Posts – 15%
2) Team Presentation – 5%
3) Midterm Exam on Tuesday, October 16 – 25%
4) Analytical Paper (7-8 pages, double-spaced) due on Tuesday, December 4 – 30%
5) Final Exam on Tuesday, December 11 – 25%

Required Texts
All of the texts below are available for purchase at the USC Bookstore. Electronic readings will be uploaded for lectures after the Midterm Exam. All books and films listed on this syllabus are available on course reserve at Leavey Library for one-day checkout.


Attendance and Participation (15%)
You are required to attend lectures and to come prepared having done the readings assigned for that day. We highly encourage you to participate actively, respond to the instructor’s questions and share your reflections about the topic at hand. Both attendance and participation will count toward your course contribution grade. You may be absent two times from Professor Fiss’ lecture without negatively impacting your participation grade. However, keep in mind that when you are not present, you clearly cannot gain positive participation points.

Discussion Sessions
The purpose of discussion sessions is to give each student an opportunity to engage closely with the texts, issues and ideas presented during lecture. In addition, these weekly meetings also provide you an opportunity to hone your critical thinking, public speaking and formal presentation skills. There are three requirements that you must fulfill to do well in your discussion session:

1. Attendance and Participation: You must attend every session and come prepared having done all assigned readings carefully. You will be required to speak up and to contribute actively and thoughtfully to the class discussion. Your Teaching Assistant will grade the level and quality of your participation.
2. Discussion Board Posts: Each student is required to compose and upload two in-depth, analytical and thought-provoking discussion posts (of about 500 words per post) to the discussion session Blackboard web site at least twice during the semester. You are required to upload your post prior to your weekly class meeting and discuss your two questions and thoughtful responses in class.
3. Team Presentation and Discussion Facilitation (see below)
Team Presentation and Discussion Facilitation (5%)
As part of your participation grade, you will be asked to choose and focus on one of the key figures, texts or philosophical/moral concepts introduced in this course. You will then form a team with one or two classmates who wish to investigate the same topic, text or person. Together, you will prepare a well-organized in-class presentation of about 15 minutes and facilitate class discussion during your discussion session for about 5 minutes. The purpose here is to encourage you to use the materials posted to the Blackboard web site for each lecture as well as other sources to deepen your knowledge about your chosen topic and then share what you have learned. You are welcome (but are not required) to integrate PowerPoint slides, film clips and other media into your presentation to make it interesting, engaging and enriching for your audience.

Communication: Blackboard
For this course we will use the Blackboard course website to post required readings, suggested films, recommended readings and important information about assignments and exams. The PowerPoint slides, a list of important concepts to know and a list of discussion questions will be uploaded after each lecture. In addition, supplementary readings and materials may be uploaded to Blackboard on a regular basis. Though some of these readings are optional and not required, you may find them very useful in order to gain more in-depth understanding, which will be helpful for your team presentations, the writing of your analytical papers and the exams. You will receive notifications when these additional resources are available but it is your responsibility to check the course web site on a regular basis. Students are also welcome to post comments, questions and ideas on the discussion thread for each topic. Please make sure that your e-mail address is up to date on Blackboard.

Class Notes Policy
Notes or recordings made by students based on a university class or lecture may only be made for purposes of individual or group study. Class materials such as lectures, course syllabi and related materials, including summaries, PowerPoint slides and all supplementary course materials available to students enrolled in this course, whether posted on Blackboard or otherwise, may not be reproduced, redistributed, copied or disseminated in any media or in any form including, but not limited to, all course note-sharing websites.

Academic Conduct and Plagiarism Policy
Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with USC’s plagiarism policy in SCampus in Section 11, Behavior Violating University Standards: https://policy.usc.edu/student/scampus/
Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct: http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct/
Discrimination, sexual assault and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the Office of Equity and Diversity http://equity.usc.edu/ or to the Department of Public Safety http://dps.usc.edu/online-forms/contact-us
This is important for the safety of the whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the
report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. The Engemann Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention and Services (RSVP) https://engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp/ provides 24/7 offers confidential support and the Sexual Assault Resource Center web page https://sarc.usc.edu/ describes reporting options and other resources.

Support Systems
A number of USC’s schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the American Language Institute http://ali.usc.edu/ which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international students. The Office of Disability Services and Program https://dsp.usc.edu/ provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus not feasible, USC Emergency Information http://emergency.usc.edu/ will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued.

Topics and Readings:

Tuesday, August 21: Introduction to the Course: What Can Chinese Philosophers Teach Us About the Good Life?

I. Myth, Early History and the Period of the Philosophers

Thursday, August 23: The Historical Context

II. The Confucians: Confucius, Mencius and Xunzi

Tuesday, August 28: Happiness in the Everyday World: Five Themes of Confucianism
Chapter 2 “Kongzi and Confucianism” in Introduction to Classical Chinese Philosophy, 17-32.
Chapter 1 “The Analects” in Readings in Classical Chinese Philosophy, 1-16 (up to Book Six).
Thursday, August 30: Confucius and Virtue Ethics
Chapter 3 “Kongzi and Virtue Ethics” in Introduction to Classical Chinese Philosophy, 33-47.
Chapter 1 “The Analects” in Readings in Classical Chinese Philosophy, 16-33 (up to Book Twelve).

Tuesday, September 4: Confucius and As-if Rituals

Thursday, September 6: Mencius and Human Nature
Chapter 6 “Mengzi and Human Nature” in Introduction to Classical Chinese Philosophy, 83-100.
Chapter 3 “Mengzi” in Readings in Classical Chinese Philosophy, 114-134 (up to 3B9).

Tuesday, September 11: Mencius and the Capricious World
Chapter 4 “Mencius and the Capricious World” in The Path, 55-85.
Chapter 3 “Mengzi” in Readings in Classical Chinese Philosophy, 134-159.

Thursday, September 13: Xunzi’s Confucian Naturalism
Chapter 10 “Xunzi’s Confucian Naturalism” in Introduction to Classical Chinese Philosophy, 163-183.
Chapter 6, “Xunzi” in Readings in Classical Chinese Philosophy, 254-269 (up to Chapter Seventeen: Discourse on Heaven).

Optional Film: Hero by Zhang Yimou (2002). (Several copies available for viewing on course reserve at Leavey Library).

Tuesday, September 18: Xunzi and Putting Pattern on the World
Chapter 6, “Xunzi” in Readings in Classical Chinese Philosophy, 269-309.
Michael Schuman, “Confucius the Teacher” in Confucius and the World He Created. 129-142.

III. Critics of Confucianism: Mohism (Mozi) and Legalism (Han Feizi)

Thursday, September 20: Mozi’s Doctrines and Mohist Consequentialism
Chapter 4 “Mohist Consequentialism” in Introduction to Classical Chinese Philosophy, 49-68.
Optional Film: Jacob Cheung, *A Battle of Wits* (2006, 133). (Several copies available for viewing on course reserve at Leavey Library).

Tuesday, September 25: Han Feizi: Legalism, the Way of the Ruler and the Power of Position
Chapter 11 “Han Feizi” in *Introduction to Classical Chinese Philosophy*, 185-199.

IV. Daoism: The Teachings of Laozi

Thursday, September 27: The *Daodejing*: The Teaching that Is Without Words
Chapter 8 “The *Daodejing* and Mysticism” in *Introduction to Classical Chinese Philosophy*, 121-139
Chapter 4 “Laozi” in *Readings in Classical Chinese Philosophy*, 160-178 (up to Chapter Thirty-Two).

Optional Fun Reading: *The Tao of Pooh* by Benjamin Hoff (1982). (Available on e-book and on Leavey Library course reserve.)

Tuesday, October 2: Laozi and the Way
Chapter 4 “Laozi” in *Readings in Classical Chinese Philosophy*, 178-205.

Thursday, October 4: Daoism and Environmental Sustainability

V. The Mystical Way of Zhuangzi

Tuesday, October 9: Zhuangzi’s Skepticism and Relativism
Chapter 9 “Zhuangzi’s Therapeutic Skepticism and Relativism” in *Introduction to Classical Chinese Philosophy*, 141-162.
Chapter 5 “Zhuangzi” in *Readings in Classical Chinese Philosophy*, 206-224 (up to Chapter Three: The Key to Nourishing Life).


Thursday, October 11: Zhuangzi and a World of Transformation
Chapter 7 “On Spontaneity: Zhuangzi and a World of Transformation” in *The Path*, 141-162.

*** Tuesday, October 16: Midterm Exam on Sections I – V ***
VI. The Yin Yang School and Daoist Confucianism

Thursday, October 18: The Yin Yang School and Han Dynasty Daoist Confucianism: Zou Yan (Tsou Yen) and Dong Zhongshu (Tung Chung-shu)
Chapter 11 “The Yin Yang School” in *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, 244-250. All Readings on Blackboard.

Tuesday, October 23: Neo Daoism, Negative Daoism and “Learning of the Mysterious”
Chapter 6 “On Vitality: The Inward Training and Being Like a Spirit” in *The Path*, 119-140.

VII. Shintō and Chan (Zen) Buddhism

Thursday, October 25: Shintō, the Ideal of Harmony and the Beginnings of Japan (All Readings on Blackboard)
Chapter 3 “Prince Shōtoku and His Seventeen Article Constitution” in *Sources of Japanese Tradition*, 40-62.

Optional Film: *Princess Mononoke* by Hayao Miyazaki (1997, 134 minutes).
(Several copies available for viewing on course reserve at Leavey Library).

Tuesday, October 30: Chan (Zen): The Meditation School
Chapter 26 “The Zen (Ch’an) School of Sudden Enlightenment” in *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, 425-449. All Readings on Blackboard.
“Impermanence,” “Breath,” “Heart-to-Heart: Sitting,” “Relaxation” and “Connecting to the World” in *Essential Chan Buddhism* (1, 9-19).

Optional Film: *The Zen Mind* (Film available for viewing on Blackboard).

VIII. Neo-Confucian Ethics and Metaphysics

Thursday, November 1: Neo-Confucian Ethics: The Origins of Neo-Confucianism and Cheng Hao’s Idealistic Thought
Tuesday, November 6: Neo-Confucian Ethics: Cheng Yi’s Rationalism

Thursday, November 8: Neo-Confucian Ethics: The Great Synthesis of Zhu Xi

Tuesday, November 13: Neo-Confucian Ethics: The Dynamic Idealism of Wang Yangming

IX. Korean Neo-Confucianism and Religious Philosophy

Thursday, November 15: Yi Toegye and Yi Yulgok: The Concept of Single-Mindedness

Tuesday, November 20: Yi Yulgok: The Fusion of the Metaphysical and the Physical

Optional Film: *The Spirit of Korea: Yi Toegye and Yi Yulgok* (Available via e-link on Blackboard)

*** November 21-25: Happy Thanksgiving! ***

X. Bushidō: The Way of the Warrior

Tuesday, November 27: Bushidō: The Way of the Samurai
Historical Overview and Book One in *Bushido: The Way of the Samurai*, xiii-42.

Optional Film: *Ghost Dog* by Jim Jarmusch (1999, 116 minutes). (Several copies available for viewing on course reserve at Leavey Library).

Thursday, November 29: Bushidō: Confucian, Zen and Shinto Values in The Way of the Samurai
Book Two to Book Eleven, 42-95.

*** Analytical Paper: Due via Turn-it-in on Tuesday, December 4 ***

*** Final Exam: Tuesday, December 11, 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. in THH 114 ***