

Chinese Philosophy (CHPH) CTY Course Syllabus

1. **COURSE DESCRIPTION:** Chinese Philosophy was part of the 2007 CTY Summer Residential Program held in Nanjing, China. The course met for three weeks, four hours per day, five days per week, and students attended a two-hour homework session five nights per week, supervised by the instructor or teaching assistant. There were at least 90 contact hours with the discipline. Students also received one hour of Mandarin instruction per day.

This course in intellectual history involved a close reading of classical primary texts pivotal in the philosophical traditions of the three major traditions of ancient Chinese philosophy: Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism. Mohism and Legalism were also briefly considered. This course investigated the philosophical principles of each of these traditions, issues surrounding the reading of classical Chinese philosophical texts, and the conceptual tools needed for working with philosophical issues.

Emphasis was placed on the development of critical thinking abilities that would be applicable not only to the study of classical Chinese philosophy but valuable for critical thinking in any discipline. This was accomplished through dialectical format writing, which promoted the ability to argue from different perspectives and resolve critical conceptual dilemmas. A final project implemented inquiry based learning with the dialectical format, to provide students with an opportunity to synthesize course materials, critical thinking skills, and philosophical issues of personal interest.

2. **STUDENT OBJECTIVES:** Students should be able to: (a) identify major classical Chinese philosophical traditions and their continuing importance in the daily conduct and self-understanding of the peoples of China; (b) discuss the central philosophical concepts of major Asian philosophical traditions; (c) appreciate both the differences between Chinese and western traditions, and areas of fundamental human unity across traditions; (d) understand the importance for these traditions of the lived historical and social contexts in which those traditions flourished and their sociological, political, and historical impact; and (e) explore the dynamic interactions of these traditions with the West.

3. **REQUIRED TEXTS:**

Sources of Chinese Tradition, Volume One: From Earliest Times to 1600. Compiled by Wm. Theodore de Bary and Irene Bloom. Second Edition. New York: Columbia University Press. 1999

4. **CLASSROOM POLICIES:**

Academic Integrity and Student Conduct: Students are expected to act in accordance with the Honor Code of Johns Hopkins University and the CTY Summer Program. This includes academic honesty and personal conduct.

Classroom Policies: This course will require engaging in analysis and constructive criticism of our own ideas as well as the ideas of others. As a course in philosophy, the ideas of our peers deserve the same respect and consideration we hope to receive for our own ideas. According to Plato we must rely on our friends in our search for knowledge, for they are the ones who will help us refine and test our ideas, moving us closer to the Good. In particular, be considerate during discussion so that all students may have the appropriate chances to bring their ideas forward into the conversation.

Day	Time	Topic	Reading/Activities
Day 1	Morning		
	Afternoon	Class Introductions and Walking Tour	Walking Tour
	Evening	Further Introductions and Study Hall: Confucianism	41-44, 41-63, 41-63:
Day 2	Morning	1. The Analects: Social Context 2. The Analects: Harmony and Ritual 3. The Analects: The Sage and Excellence	Introductory lectures, group presentations, group discussion
	Afternoon	1. The Analects: Tradition and Creativity 2. The Analects: Deference and Equality	Group Discussion, Creative writing
	Evening	Study Hall: Reading and follow-up to class discussion	64-72, 72-76
Day 3	Morning	1. Analects: Summary and Review 2. Mozi: Utility and Uniformity 3. Mozi: Universal Love, Criticism of Confucianism	Group presentations, group discussions
	Afternoon	Course Paper Lab: Introduction to Writing Position Papers, Practice prompts. Other activities.	Handout, Group Activity
	Evening	Study Hall: Reading and “Warring States” game.	114-116 (selections), discussion.
Day 4	Morning	1. Mencius: Comparative Topics Lecture 2. Mencius: Mencius Essay (introduction) 2. Mencius: Mencius Essay (writing)	Review lecture, group presentations
	Afternoon	1. Mencius: Mencius Essay (writing) 2. Mencius: Philosophical Essay #1 (presentation)	Group activity, class discussion
	Evening	Study Hall: Polishing essays and reading for Xunzi	159-170, 174-183
Day 5	Morning	1. Xunzi: Answering Reading Questions 2. Xunzi: Contemporary Application Exercise (introduction) 3. Xunzi: Contemporary Application Exercise (presentations)	Group presentation, class discussions, group activity.
	Afternoon	Comparative Essay #1	In-class writing
Sunday	Evening	Study Session	Reading 77-94
Day 6	Morning	1. Movie Discussion: Eat Drink Man Woman 2. Daoism: Introduction to Discourse 3. Daoism: Reading	Lecture
	Afternoon	1. Daoism: Reading and Passage Discussion 2. Library: Continued research for final project	Journal Entries, Class Discussion
	Evening	Study Hall: Reading and follow-up to class discussion.	Reading 95-111

Day	Time	Topic	Reading/Activities
Day 7	Morning	1. Dao De Jing: What is natural exercise 2. Dao De Jing: Discussion 3. Dao De Jing: Ideal Daoist	Discussion, class activity
	Afternoon	1. Zhuangzi: Discussion of Key Passages 2. Zhuangzi: Creating Writing Assignment	Discussion, creative writing
	Evening	Study Hall: Reading and follow-up to class discussion.	Study hall
Day 8	Morning	Field Trip: Confucius Temple and Educational Testing Facility	Field trip!
	Afternoon	1. Presentation by Max: Confucian Testing 2. Group Projects: Education Reform in United States and China	Presentation, Group Projects
	Evening	Study Hall: Continue reading Zhuangzi and work on final project	Study hall
Day 9	Morning	1. Zhuangzi: Free and Easy Wandering (Perspectivalism versus Relativism or Foundationalism) 2. Zhuangzi: Language, Nature and Uselessness 3. Zhuangzi: The Confrontation with Death	Lecture, class discussion
	Afternoon	1. Max Gladstone on BaoDing, Language and Consciousness 1. Creative Writing Exercise	Lecture Creative Writing
Sunday	Evening	Study Session: Reading for Buddhism	Read 415-432
Day 11	Morning	1. Lecture: Origins of Buddhism – Brahmanism and the Bhagavad-Gita 2. Lecture: Siddhartha, Theravada and Mahayana 3. Dialectic Writing Exercises	Lecture, dialectic writing
	Afternoon	1. Final Project In-Class Writing	In class writing
	Evening	Study Session: Reading for Buddhism (If students finish early they can read extra material on Tiantai meditation on 462-467)	Reading 432-455
Day 12	Morning	1. Buddhism: Nagarjuna and Vasubandu 2. Buddhism: The Lotus School 3. Buddhism: Dialectical Writing Exercises	Lecture , Discussion
	Afternoon	1. Finish discussion or work from the morning 2. Final Project In-Class Writing	Lecture, in-class writing
	Evening	Study Hall: Reading and follow-up to class discussion.	Reading 491-517

Day	Time	Topic	Reading/Activities
Day 13	Morning	1. Chan: The Sixth Patriarch 2. Linji YiXuan, Caoshan, and the Blue Cliff Record 3. Group Writing Assignment – Make a Koan!	Lecture, Discussion, Group Presentations
	Afternoon	1. Finish Work from the Morning 2. Finish Work on Final Projects	
	Evening	Study Session: Reading for Buddhism	Reading 517-536
Day 14	Morning	1. Final Project Presentations	Student Presentations
	Afternoon	1. Final Project Presentations	Student Presentations
	Evening	Movie: Ge Li	Movie, Discussion
Day 15	Morning	1. Movie Discussion 2. Create a Mandala	Mandala creation, discussion
	Afternoon	1. Any Unfinished Business 2. Course Evaluations	Movie