Introduction to Ruism/Confucianism

PHL 394 10 (Fall 2018)

Instructor:

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Meeting Times: T/TH, Daly Hall 108, 10:00 -11:15pm, T/Th

Office Hours:

11:30-1:00, Tue. and Thur., Smith Hall, Room 116. Appointments at online or physical meetings in other time.

Description:

This course introduces the philosophical concepts, sociological foundation, political implementation, and spiritual/religious practices of the Asian Ru (Confucian) tradition. While remaining sensitive to its varying characteristics through different historical periods, the course also presents Ruism’s development across Asian countries such as Korea, Japan, Vietnam and Indonesia, and studies its historical interaction with Western cultures. Students are encouraged to think over and practice Ruist insights in a broader context of philosophical and religious studies, while being able to compare it with other major Asian and Western philosophical and religious traditions.

Work:

1. Twelve weekly reflection papers worth 35% (300-500 words), due on Sunday Afternoon.

Each paper needs to include three major parts: Summary, Presentation and Argument. “Summary” encapsulates the major points of view in the assigned readings. “Presentation” articulates your own view regarding those points. You own view could be agreement, disagreement, comments, your own interpretations, or to propose new perspectives. “Argument” requires you to convincingly argue for your own view. You can also pose questions in your paper and thus, expect their discussions in class. Guidance of the assigned readings will be distributed by the instructor in time.

2. Mid-term oral exam on Oct. 9th worth 10%

Each student chooses one philosophical concept of Ruism to present it in classroom, with 8 minutes for presentation and 2 minute for Q&A. The presentation needs to address your understanding of the concept in its original context, and its relevance to contemporary human life.

1. Classroom participation and online discussion (10%)

Students are encouraged to constantly engage the course either in classroom, during office hours or online (canvas). Students are also expected to sign up for a 15-minute visit of the instructor’s office at the first few weeks of the class.

1. Fifteen Weekly journal entry of self-cultivation and improvement worth 5% (100 words), due on each Friday afternoon.

This is a series of journal entries to document the progress of scholarship and character-building that you think you have made about and through the course. The content of entry can be about any aspect of the course, but your reflections on how you interact with other human fellows (students, teachers, friends, families, etc.) during the course will be particularly welcome!

5. A short bodily demonstration of Ru spirituality in Week 14, weighed 10%, in whatever form students choose within or beyond the traditional methods of Ru self-cultivation: quiet-sitting, meditation, martial arts, calligraphy, dancing, music, walking, running (!), sailing (!!), ritual-performance, archery, prayer, yoga, etc. During the demonstration, students need to explain how the performance relates to their understanding of Ruism, and what are the benefits of the performance to varying aspects of their life. 8 minutes for demonstration and 2 minutes for Q&A.

1. Final term paper. 30% (5-7 pages, about 1500 words)

A research paper concerning any topic related to the Ru tradition on the basis of readings of primary and secondary resources. Students are encouraged to think of the Ru tradition philosophically and creatively, and you need to devise the topic of paper and compile a bibliography (due at 6 pm, Nov. 16th) one month before its final submission (due at 6:00 pm, December 14). The bibliography needs to include at least one primary source, and two secondary sources. Students are recommended to go through the document “Philosophy Department Writing Assessment” to understand the standards of philosophical writing. You are also recommended to visit the Writing Center or find a librarian to seek help on academic writing. Before final submission of the paper, you can send your draft to the instructor for preliminary review.

Learning Objectives:

1. Intelligence. The primary goal of the course lets you *understand* the Asian Ru tradition in its multiple dimensions: philosophical, spiritual, religious, political, ethical, sociological, pedagogical, etc. Students are expected to be able to present their understanding in both oral and written forms. In line with the requirement of modern disciplines of philosophy and religious studies, students’ understandings of the Ru tradition should be utilized to ponder over or resolve shared issues in contemporary human society.

2. Emotion. You will cultivate your emotional qualities (such as sympathy, compassion, patience, respect, trust, tolerance, hope, love, etc.) in a social context to facilitate the realization of the aforementioned intellectual goals. During the process, Ruist teachings on moral self-cultivation and character building should be taken into serious consideration and practice.

3. Will. You will cultivate the grit to persist in rectifying shortcomings and making progress during the course of philosophical and spiritual education.

4, Body. First and foremost, take care of yourself through the course. Otherwise, you would be flunked by your weakness of body. Second, you begin to appreciate and practice methods of Ru spirituality, such as quiet-sitting, ritual performance, *Taiji* martial arts, calligraphy, etc., to find an integrative way of human life to inspire and energize your varying aspects of college life.

Grade:

A+ 97-100

A 94-96 A- 90-93

B+ 87-89 C+ 77-79 D+ 67-69

B 84-86 C 74-76 D 64-66

B- 80-83 C- 70-73 D- 60-63

F 0-59

For work 1, Each of your reflection papers will be given a score scaled 0-100, and their average will be the final score.

For work 4, none of your journal entry will be graded. But one miss of the entry will dock one point. For example, you need to submit 15 entries all together, and one miss of the entry will make your final point as 5-1= 4 points.

Each of the other works will be given a score scaled 0-100, and finally, all these scores are calculated according to the worth of each work.

The resulting final score will be transformed into a letter grade according to the above rule. For example, you have an average of 90 for your reflection paper, 92 for oral exam, 90 for classroom and online discussion, 90 for bodily demonstration, 90 for term paper, and get 5 points for journal entries; your final score will be 90\*35% +92\*10%+ 90\*10% +90\*10%+90\*30%+5 = 90.7 = A-.

A/A- grades are reserved for outstanding work. Although A and A+ makes no difference towards your GPA, your ultra outstanding performance will be reported to the registrar as A+. Unexcused missed exams may average 0% as a failure. Absence or lateness can lower your grade too, see policies.

**Texts:**

All reading texts are distributed digitally before class. Readings not specified as “recommended” are mandatory. For the submission of reflection papers, they are all based upon mandatory readings.

Policies:

1. You are present and on time save illness, dire circumstances, or official exemption. Report long absences, e.g., a week, to the Dean’s office (7202), they inform all your instructors for you.

2. Conduct personal business outside class. Avoid habitual conflicts, frequent exiting class, lengthy travel, or extra-curriculars impinging excessively. If you anticipate having to miss more than a few classes you might rethink taking the course.

3. Three unexcused absences drop your course grade a full letter grade and Four warrant course failure. Track your own status.

4. Chronic lateness may lower your grade, as much as a full grade.

5. Missed exams and papers are serious. If they are unexcused or not promptly resolved they may fall to 0%.

6. Excuses regarding #1-5 are timely; not retroactive. You may get one warning for absences or lateness, but do not expect repeated ones. Assume the policies hold through the last week.

7. Class cancellation moves anything to next class. Wait 10 minutes if I am not present and there is no note.

8. Students may not use phones, texting, etc. in class save for rare and usually official exemption.

9. Students are welcome to bring computers in classrooms to take notes or peruse online materials, but the use of them must be strictly restrained to course purposes.

These policies help preserve the integrity of the course for everyone. Do not assume them negotiable or not in use.

Special Announcements:

1, Students are expected to abide by the Honor Code and to include a signed honor pledge on all work submitted. (<https://www.washcoll.edu/campuslife/honor-code/> )

2, Students with documented learning differences should consult with the instructor about their special needs and arrangements for accommodations to which they are entitled.

Part I: The Meaning of Ru 儒

Week 1:

August 28, Introduction

Reading the First Three Passages of the *Greater Learning* 大學and the First Passage of the *Staying Centered in the Everyday World*中庸 together in Classroom.

August 30, The Origin and Meaning of Ru (儒)

Recommended Reading: Tony Swain, “On Confucianism and Religion”, *in Confucianism in China: an Introduction*, Bloomsbury, 2017, pp. 1-22.

First journal entry of self-cultivation and improvement due at 6:00 pm on August 31st (Friday).

First reflection paper on the reading of Sep. 6th Due at 6:00 pm on Sep. 2nd (Sunday).

Week 2

Sep. 4: The First Ru Exemplar: the Duke of Zhou (1)

Recommended Reading: “The Story of the Duke of Zhou”

Sep. 6: The First Ru Examplar: the Duke of Zhou (2)

Reading: “Announcement to Kang 康誥”

Second journal entry due at 6:00 pm on Sep. 7th (Friday).

Second reflection paper on the reading of Sep. 13th Due at 6:00 pm on Sep. 9nd. (Sunday)

Week 3

Sep. 11: The First Ru Teacher Kong Zi (Confucius) (1) : His Person and His Role

Reading: “Life of Confucius,” “Confucianism before and after Confucius,” and “Formation of the Analects” in Peimin Ni, *Understanding the Analects of Confucius: A New Translation of Lunyu with Annotations*, SUNY, 2017. Read the first two sections carefully, and skim the last.

Sep. 13: The First Ru Teacher Kong Zi (Confucius) (2) : Selected Readings of the Analects on “Humaneness” (仁) and “Ritual-Propriety” (禮)

Reading: Selected Readings from the *Analects*: on Ren and Ritual-propriety.

Third journal entry due at 6:00 pm on Sep. 14th (Friday).

Third reflection paper on either reading of Week 4 due at 6:00 pm on Sep. 16th. (Sunday)

Week 4:

Sep. 18: What Means to be a Ru in Late Warring States.

Reading: Xunzi, “Achievement of Ru”, in Eric L. Hutton, Ed., *Xunzi: the Complete Text*, Princeton University Press 2014: Parts I, II, III, IV, VI, VIII and IX.

Sep. 20: The Highest Ideal of the Ru Way of Life: Harmonization (和)

Reading: Handouts plus Angle, Stephen C. “No Supreme Principle: Confucianism’s Harmonization of Multiple Values.” *Dao: A Journal of Comparative Philosophy*, no. 7, 2008, pp. 35-40. (Among the pages, 36-37 are the most important)

Fourth journal entry due at 6:00 pm on Sep. 21st (Friday).

Fourth reflection paper on either reading of Week 5 due at 6:00 pm on Sep. 23rd. (Sunday)

Part II: Philosophical Debate Inside and Outside Ruism

Week 5: Mencius and Xunzi on Human Nature

Sep. 25, Mencius on Human Nature

Reading: Bryan W. Van Norden, trans., “Mengzi: with Selections from Traditional Commentaries,” Camridge: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc. (2008), pp. 46-47 (2A6.3-7.0), pp. 143-145 (6A 1.1-3.3), pp. 149-152 (6A 6.1-8.4).

Sep. 27, Xunzi on Human Nature

Reading: Xunzi, “Human Nature is Bad”, in Eric L. Hutton, Ed., *Xunzi: the Complete Text*, Princeton University Press 2014: pp. 248-257.

Fifth journal entry due at 6:00 pm on Sep. 28st (Friday).

Fifth reflection paper on either reading of Week 6 due at 6:00 pm on Sep. 30th (Sunday)

Week 6: Mohism and Legalism

Oct. 2, Mohist Consequentialism and its Criticisms towards Ru

Reading: Bryan W. Van Norden, “Mohist Consequentialism (I-IV),” in *Introduction to Classical Chinese Philosophy*, Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, 2011. pp. 49-60.

Oct. 4, Legalism and its Criticisms towards Ru

Reading: Bryan W. Van Norden, “Han Feizi,” in *Introduction to Classical Chinese Philosophy*, Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, 2011. pp.185-199.

Sixth journal entry due at 6:00 pm on Oct. 5th (Friday).

Week 7: Midterm

Oct 9: Oral Presentations of Key Ruist Concepts.

Oct. 11, no class.

Seventh journal entry due at 6:00 pm on Oct. 12 (Friday).

Sixth reflection paper on either reading of Week 8 due at 6:00 pm on Oct. 14 (Sunday)

Week 8: Disparate Anthropo-Cosmologies: Daoism and Ruism

Oct. 16, Lao Zi

Reading: materials distributed in class.

Oct 18, Appended Texts of the Classic of Change

Reading: materials distributed in class.

Eighth journal entry due at 6:00 pm on Oct. 19 (Friday).

Seventh reflection paper on the reading of Oct. 23 due at 6:00 pm on Oct. 21 (Sunday)

Week 9: Dong Zhongshu: a Synthesizer.

Oct. 23: Ruism Became National Ideology

Reading: Dong Zhongshu’s three responses to the Emperor Wu’s three rescripts, in “Appendix B: the Biography of Dong Zhongshu”, in John Majar, Sarah Queen, trans., “Luxuriant Gems of the Spring and Autumn”, Columbia University Press, 2015: pp. 619-644.

Oct. 25: A System of Ruist Virtue Ethics.

Recommended Reading: “A Chart of Ruist Virtues”, in Bin Song, <https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/a-catechism-of-ruism-conf_4_b_11607540.html>.

Ninth journal entry due at 6:00 pm on Oct. 26 (Friday).

Eighth reflection paper on either reading of Week 10 due at 6:00 pm on Oct. 28 (Sunday)

Part III: Social Realities of Ruism

Week 10: Civil Examination

Oct. 30: History and Philosophy of Chinese Civil Examination

Reading: Chapter Ten “An Evaluation of the Examination System,” in Ichisada Miyazaki, *China’s Examination Hell: The Civil Service Examinations of Imperial China*, Trans. by Conrad Schirokauer, Yale University Press, 1981.

Nov. 1: The Influence of Chinese Civil Examination to the West

Reading: Ssu-yu Teng, “Chinese Influence on the Western Examination System,” Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies, Vol. 7th, No. 4 (Sep. 1943), pp. 267-312. Please read its Part II, “Western Sources Describing or Referring to the Chinese Examination System,” (p. 275-292), Part IV “Conclusion” (p. 301-305) and “Appendix 1” (p. 306-308).

Tenth journal entry due at 6:00 pm on Nov. 2 (Friday).

Ninth reflection paper on either reading of Week 11 due at 6:00 pm on Nov. 4 (Sunday)

Week 11: Academy of Literati

Nov. 6: The emergence, evolution and role of shuyuan

Recommended reading: “Makeup and Activities of the Early Ming Academy”, in Meskill, *Academies in Ming China*, pp. 41-65.

Nov. 8: Ru Academies Envisioned by Ru Thinkers.

Reading:

For Zhan Ruoshui, please refer to pp. 102-107 of Meskill, 1982.

For Wang Yangming, materials will be distributed online. (14 pages including original Chinese)

Eleventh journal entry due at 6:00 pm on Nov. 9 (Friday).

Tenth reflection paper on either reading of Week 12 due at 6:00 pm on Nov. 11 (Sunday)

Part IV: Neo-Confucianism, or Song and Ming Ruism

Week 12

Nov. 13 Zhu Xi’s Synthesis, “A Treatise on Ren”.

Reading: new translations and chart distributed in classroom.

Nov. 15 Ru Spiritual Formation: Quiet-Sitting (1) Mengzi and Zhu Xi

Reading: For Mengzi, material will be distributed.

For Zhu Xi, New translations and chart distributed in classroom.

Term paper topic and bibliography due at 6:00 pm on Nov. 16 (Friday)

Week 13

Nov. 20 Ru Spiritual Formation: Quiet-sitting (2) Gao Panlong

Mandatory Reading: Bin Song, trans., “Ru Meditation: Gao Panlong (1562-1626 C.E)” (2018).

Everyone reads Chapter One. Stell: Chapter Two, Bethy: Chapter Three, Patrick: Chapter Four, Jenny: Chapter Five, Cuculi: Chapter Six.

Nov. 22: no class

Week 14: The School of Mind-Heart

Nov. 27: Wang Yangming on the *Greater Learning*.

Reading: Wang Yangming, “Inquiry on the *Greater Learning*”, in Wing-tsit Chan, *Instructions for Practical Living and Other neo-Confucian Writings by Wang Yang-ming*, Columbia University Press, 1963, p.269-280.

Nov. 29: Wang Longxi on Conscientious Knowing and Quiet-sitting.

Reading: New translations distributed in classroom.

Twelfth journal entry due at 6:00 pm on Nov. 30 (Friday).

Finding a common time and space during Week 14 for bodily demonstration of Ru spirituality.

Part V: Global Ruism

Week 15

December 4: Ruism in East and South Asia;

Recommended reading: Chapters on Korea and Japan in Jeffrey L. Richey, *Confucius in East Asia: Confucianism’s History in China, Korea, Japan, and Vietnam* (Ann Arbor, MI: Association for Asian Studies, 2013).

December 6: Ruism in Europe and America;

Recommended Reading: Dave Wang, “Confucius in the America Founding: the Founders’ Efforts to Use Confucian Moral Philosophy in Their Endeavor to Create New Virtue for the New Nation,” *Virginia Review of Asian Studies* Vol. 16 (2014): 11-26.

Thirteen journal entry due at 6:00 pm on Dec. 7th (Friday).

Final term paper due at 6 pm on Dec. 14 (Friday)