

# PHI 200 M103: CHINESE PHILOSOPHY

## Spring 2018

Time and Location: Tu/Th 2:00-3:20pm, 205 Schafer

Instructor: **Paul W. Prescott**  
Office Hours: Tu/Th 4:00-4:45pm  
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### REQUIRED TEXTS

- Philip J. Ivanhoe & Bryan W. Van Norden (eds.), *Readings in Classical Chinese Philosophy*, second edition (Hackett, 2005). ISBN: 0872207803
- Richard E. Nesbitt, *The Geography of Thought: How Asians and Westerners Think Differently ... and Why* (Free Press, 2003). ISBN: 0743255356
- Michael Puett & Christine Gross-Loh, *The Path: What Chinese Philosophy Can Teach Us About the Good Life* (Simon & Schuster, 2017). ISBN: 1476777845
- Bryan W. Van Norden, *Introduction to Classical Chinese Philosophy* (Hackett, 2011). ISBN: 1603844686

The required texts are available for purchase at the University Bookstore in the Schine Student Center. Initial readings will be made available for download on Blackboard.

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

*Chinese Philosophy* is an introduction to the major philosophers of the classical period in China (ca. 600—221 BCE). Topics include Kongzi (Confucius), Mozi, Yang Zhu, Mengzi (Mencius), the *Daodejing*, Zhuangzi, Xunzi, and Han Feizi. The course also attends to issues in East-West comparative thought, and to the relevance of Chinese philosophy for the contemporary world.

### COURSE REQUIREMENTS

There will be four exams. Regular attendance and participation are expected.

**Exams** [first, second, third, and final]: The exams will consist of fill-in-the-blank and short answer questions. The first three exams will be take-home. The final exam will be in class during the final exam period, and will be cumulative.

**Participation:** *Regular reading, preparation and participation are expected.* Students are expected to read prior to class, and to participate in discussions throughout the semester.

## GRADING INFORMATION

Your final grade will be calculated as follows: First Exam: 20%  
Second Exam: 20%  
Third Exam: 20%  
Final Exam: 30%  
Attendance: 10%

I use a standard grading scale:

|             |             |             |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| A = 94-100% | B = 84-87%  | C = 74-77%  |
| A- = 90-94% | B- = 80-84% | C- = 70-74% |
| B+ = 87-90% | C+ = 77-80% | D = 60-70%  |

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

**Digital Technology:** Barring special accommodations, the use of laptops, tablets, cellphones, and other digital devices is prohibited while class is in session.

**Make-up Exams:** Illnesses, family emergencies, and legitimate academic conflicts are the only excuses for missed exams. To receive a make-up exam, you must provide documentation.

**Blackboard:** Course information and course materials will be available on Blackboard, SU's online learning system. To access the Blackboard website, go to <http://blackboard.syr.edu> and use your Syracuse NetID username and password to log in.

**Academic Integrity:** The Syracuse University Academic Integrity Policy will be enforced. The Syracuse policy holds students accountable for the integrity of the work they submit. Students should be familiar with the Policy and know that it is their responsibility to learn about instructor and general academic expectations with regard to proper citation of sources in written work. The policy also governs the integrity of work submitted in exams and assignments as well as the veracity of signatures on attendance sheets and other verifications of participation in class activities. Serious sanctions can result from academic dishonesty of any sort. For more information and the complete University policy, see <http://academicintegrity.syr.edu>

**Special Accommodations:** If you believe that you need accommodations for a disability, please contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), <http://disabilityservices.syr.edu>, located at 804 University Avenue, room 309, or call 315-443-4498 for an appointment to discuss your needs and the process for requesting accommodations. ODS is responsible for coordinating disability-related accommodations and will issue "Accommodation Authorization Letters" to students with documented disabilities as appropriate. Since accommodations may require early planning and generally are not provided retroactively, please contact ODS as soon as possible.

## COURSE SCHEDULE

**Week 1:**      **Course Introduction**

Reading:      Syllabus  
                  Nesbitt: Introduction, 1. The Syllogism and the Dao

**Week 2:**      **Cognitive Variation in Humans**

Reading:      Nesbitt: 3, 6, 7, 8, Epilogue

**Week 3:**      **The Origins of Chinese Philosophy**

Reading:      Van Norden: 1. The Historical Context  
                  Van Norden: 2. Kongzi and Confucianism

**Week 4:**      **Kongzi (Confucius)**

Reading:      Van Norden: 3. Kongzi and Virtue Ethics  
                  Ivanhoe & Van Norden: 1. The Analects

### FIRST EXAM

**Week 5:**      **Mozi**

Reading:      Van Norden: 4. Mohist Consequentialism  
                  Ivanhoe & Van Norden: 2. Mozi

**Week 6:**      **Yang Zhu**

Reading:      Van Norden: 5. Yang Zhu and Egoism  
                  Ivanhoe & Van Norden: Supplemental Text, “Robber Zhi”

**Week 7:**      **Mengzi (Mencius)**

Reading:      Van Norden: 6. Mengzi and Human Nature  
                  Ivanhoe & Van Norden: 3. Mengzi

### SECOND EXAM

**Week 8:**      **The Daodejing**

Reading:      Van Norden: 8. The *Daodejing* and Mysticism  
                  Ivanhoe & Van Norden: 4. The Laozi (*Daodejing*)

Week 9:      SPRING BREAK

**Week 10: Zhuangzi**

Reading: Van Norden: 9. Zhuangzi's Therapeutic Skepticism and Relativism  
Ivanhoe & Van Norden: 5. Zhuangzi

**Week 11: Xunzi**

Reading: Van Norden: 10. Xunzi's Confucian Naturalism  
Ivanhoe & Van Norden: 6. Xunzi

**Week 12: Han Feizi**

Reading: Van Norden: 11. Han Feizi  
Ivanhoe & Van Norden: 7. Han Feizi

THIRD EXAM

**Week 13: Lessons for the Contemporary World**

Reading: Puett & Gross Loh: 1—5

**Week 14: Lessons for the Contemporary World**

Reading: Puett & Gross Loh: 6—9

Week 15: FINAL EXAM

**SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING**

- Steve Coutinho, *An Introduction to Daoist Philosophies* (Columbia, 2014).
- Herbert Fingarette, *Confucius: The Secular as Sacred* (Harper & Row, 1972).
- A. C. Graham, *Disputers of the Tao: Philosophical Argument in Ancient China* (Open Court, 1989).
- Philip J. Ivanhoe, *Confucian Reflections: Ancient Wisdom for Modern Times* (Routledge, 2013).
- Joel J. Kupperman, *Learning from Asian Philosophy* (Oxford, 1999).
- Benjamin I. Schwartz, *The World of Thought in Ancient China* (Belknap Harvard, 1985).
- Bryan W. Van Norden, *Virtue Ethics and Consequentialism in Early Chinese Philosophy* (Cambridge, 2007).