

# History of Religions in China

## Syllabus

**Term: Fall 2010**

**Instructor Contact Information:**

Instructor: Yang Huiling

Office hour: by appointment

E-Mail: [hopeyang777@gmail.com](mailto:hopeyang777@gmail.com)

**Course Description:**

This course is a survey of religions and their history in China. Through the course, students will read into religious and cultural Canons, acquire knowledge of both native religions such as primal religious practices, Confucianism and Taoism, as well as “foreign” religions in China, including Buddhism, Islam, Christianity, by inquiring into how they spread into China and permeated with each other in history.

Religions in China are such a complex being, evolved through history and peculiar cultural background. The course consists of two stages. The first stage focuses on Chinese Canons and the second on History of Religions in China. During the first stage, students must read original Chinese Canons assigned, understand the core value, analyze key religious and cultural concepts from the root of Chinese culture. It won't be easy for students to understand original Chinese Canons by translations, it's equally challenging for a Chinese instructor to represent them in English to students from a different cultural background with a little knowledge of language and cultural. The best and might also be the worst experiences about the course is that the Chinese voice and opinions, which are based on China cultural, historical, and religious context. The second stage requires more critical reading and reflections by reviewing historical processes of enculturation and integration of religions in Chinese culture and society. In this way, the students can gain insights to the core Chinese values, culture and religions.

The course will not address religions of different ethnic groups, nor will deal with popular folk religions, but lay more emphasis on five major religions, their religious teachings, evolution and practice. This is a more philosophical, historical and cultural approach rather than sociological and anthropological approach.

With students' participation throughout the course, the course is a real cross-cultural dialogue, and hopefully mutual inspiring.

**Course Outcomes:**

Knowledge Area:

By taking this course, students will be able to demonstrate knowledge, with attention to

historical development, of the central texts, beliefs, ethical understandings, and practices of Chinese Religions. By way of example, students who take this course should be able to: (1) name and discuss some of the most important cultural and religious Canons in China; (2) Articulate a broad outline of the historical evolution of the following religious traditions: Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism, Islam and Christianity; (3) Define and discuss key concepts, terms, values, and religious characteristics of these religions.

Skills:

The course will require students to do the following:

(1) To comprehend, paraphrase, summarize, and contextualize the meaning of translated Chinese Canons such as *Analects* and *Laozi*.

In class discussions and term papers, students will demonstrate the ability to comprehend, paraphrase, summarize, and/or contextualize a variety of religious texts, histories, and values.

(2) To develop strategies for seeking and synthesizing information to support an argument, make a decision, or resolve a problem.

In class presentations, discussions and term papers, students will be encouraged to articulate reasoned arguments about materials used in the course, contribute their own critical insights into the arguments to which they are exposed in the class.

(3) To monitor students' own "individual thinking or behavior" in relationship to Chinese religions "in order to question, confirm, validate, or correct" their presuppositions and prejudgments.

Class discussions provide chances for students to reflect on their presuppositions. Through discussions by appealing to data and reasoned argumentations, conflicting ideas and new challenges will come to light, and we will seek a better understanding of the controversies while accepting existing differences.

**Course Requirements and Form of Assessment:**

During the course, there will be one mid-term paper (on one particular Canon, no less than 5 pages), and one longer final paper (no less than 10 pages). The mid-term paper will count for 30% of the final grade. The final paper will count for 50% of the final grade. The course also requires each student to prepare one oral presentation. Class participation including one oral report (5%), one book review (10%), and attendance (5%) together will count for 20% of the grade. A late paper will result in a full grade reduction for the course.

**Attendance Policy:**

Attendance is compulsory. One unexcused absence is allowed in this class. Students are

allowed 2 excused absences. Any further absences will be reported to the Dean at the TBC administration offices, and will cause a reduction of 5% per absence on the final grade.

**Academic Honesty Statement:**

Please see the following link, and read the text carefully:  
[http://www.luc.edu/cas/pdfs/CAS Academic Integrity Statement December 07.pdf](http://www.luc.edu/cas/pdfs/CAS_Academic_Integrity_Statement_December_07.pdf)

**Grading Scale**

The computed grades is based on a point system. These will be totaled up at the end of the semester and a number grade out of 100 points will be the result. This will be converted to the final letter grade according to the scale below. Assignments will lose a point for every day they are late.

A	92-100	C	70-73.5
A-	88-91.5	C-	67-69.5
B+	85-87.5	D+	64-66.5
B	82-85	D	60-63.5
B-	78-81.5	F	below 60
C+	74-77.5		

**Required Texts:**

Ching, Julia. *Chinese Religions*. USA and Canada: Orbis Books. 1993.

by Yang Bojun annotated, D. C. Lao translation. *Analects*. China Beijing: Zhong Hua Shu Ju , 2008  
(杨伯峻 今译, 刘殿爵 英译, 论语, 中华书局, 2008 )

Pr. Gu Zhangkun translated and annotated. *The Book of Dao and Teh*. China Beijing: Publication Press. 2007. (道德经, 老子著, 辜正坤译, 中国对外翻译出版公司, 2007)

Note: The book by Julia Ching should be purchased in States while the other two are easy to get in China.

**Readings Recommended:**

Andrew Rippin (ed): *The Blackwell Companion to The Qur'an*, Wiley-blackwell, 2009.

Fung, Yu-lan: *Selected Philosophical Writings*, Beijing : Foreign Languages Press, 1991.

John King Fairbank: *American and China*, Harvard University Press, 1983.

Kenneth K.S. CH'EN: *Buddhism in China*, Princeton University Press, 1972.

Kenneth Scott Latourette: *A History of Christian Missions in China*, reprint in 1966.

Kristofer Schipper and Franciscus Verellen (ed.): *The Taoist Canon, a historical companion to the Daozang*, The University of Chicago Press, 2004.

Liam Matthew Brockey: *Journey to the East, The Jesuit Mission to*

*China, 1579-1724*, The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007.

Nicolas Standaert (ed): *Handbook of Christianity in China*. Volume One: 635-1800. Leiden: Brill, 2001.

Paul A. Cohen: *Discovering history in China: American historical writing on the recent Chinese past*, Columbia University Press, 1984.

Philip, J. Ivanhoe (trans.): *Readings from the Lu-Wang School of Neo-Confucianism*, Hackett Publishing Company, 2009.

Suzanne Wilson Barnett and John King Fairbank (eds.): *Christianity in China: early Protestant missionary writings*, Harvard University Press, 1985.

Zhou Chuanbin and Ma Xuefeng: *Beijing's Hui Muslim Community*, Silkworm Books, 2009.

Selected Hand-out materials from the instructor.

## **Class Schedule:**

### **WK1 Sep. 10**

#### **Chinese Religions: Introduction into concepts and focus**

Part I: Introductions, Policies and course focus

Part II: Introduction into Religions in China

### **WK2 Sep.17**

#### **Chinese Archaic Religions: A historical and archeological review**

Part I: China's Primitive Religions (Introduction and Canon comprehension)

Part II: early worldview and religious practices from *Shi Jing* (oral presentation and discussion)

### **WK3 Sep. 24**

#### **Confucius: his life, teachings and legacy**

Part I: Confucius as a person and his teachings (Introduction and presentation)

Part II: Confucius Philosophy and Confucianism (Canon comprehension of *Analects*)

### **National holiday week (assumed)**

### **WK 4 Oct. 8**

#### **Confucianism**

Part I: Evolvement of Confucianism and Neo-Confucianism (history)

Part II: Can Confucianism be heritage of the 21<sup>st</sup> century? (discussion)

### **WK 5 Oct. 15**

#### **Laozi or Dao De Jing**

Part I: Introduction to Laozi and *Laozi* (Canon comprehension of *Lao Zi*)

Part II: Dao from *Laozi* (discussion)

**WK 6 Oct. 22**

**Daoism as a religion**

Part I: Daoism as a religion

Part II: Guest speaker

**WK7 Oct.29**

**Buddhism**

Part I: History of Buddhism in China

Part II: Guest speaker

**Mid-term Paper Due by Oct.29**

(on any particular Canons of Confucianism or Taoism)

**Guilin trip from Oct.30- Nov.6**

**WK 8 Nov. 12**

**Islam in China**

Part I: History of Islam in China

Part II: Guest speaker

**WK 9 Nov.19**

**Christianity from 1500-1800**

Part I: Christianity in China: its beginning, prosper and fall

Part II: Rites Controversy , cultural exchanges between Europe and China

**WK 10 Nov.26**

**Protestantism in China in early 19th century**

Part I: From Heaven to Hell: a review of 19<sup>th</sup> century (Protestantism in a drastic changing China, multiple roles and anti-Christianity in China)

Part II: Protestantism's presence in China in early 19<sup>th</sup> century (foundation of Protestantism in China)

**WK 11 Dec. 3**

**China and Europe: Encounter and Influence**

Part I: Positive view of Christianity in China (certain research patterns and angles)

Part II: Rites Controversy and Conflicts against Confucianism and Buddhism (opposite stands)

**Religions in modern China**

**WK 12 Dec.10**

**Make-up Class (Flexible, or likely to be soon after Oct.22 )**

Field trip to the Confucius temple and a Dao temple in Beijing.

**FINAL PAPER DUE by Dec 17**