

RELS 317: Confucianism – Syllabus for WKU 2012 Spring

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Office hours: MW 12-1 and by appointment
Class times: MW 3.00-4.20 pm in CH 320

Course description:

Confucianism is an East Asian tradition that dates back at least to the time of Confucius, 2,500 years ago. It may be described as “a worldview, a social ethic, a political ideology, a scholarly tradition, and a way of life.” It has profoundly influenced the cultural and religious histories of East and Southeast Asia, and today is enjoying a nascent renaissance in the land of its birth. As China continues to grow larger in Western consciousness, a basic knowledge of this subject will concurrently grow in importance for understanding what many already refer to as “the other superpower.” This course will cover the major figures, texts, and ideas that have occupied Confucians over the centuries, focusing particularly on their answers to the meaning of life.

Goals:

Interdisciplinarity: art, history, literature, philosophy, anthropology, psychology, sociology, folklore, text criticism.
Cultural literacy: civilization has often been organized around a collection of resonant mytho-historical narratives.
Epoché: “suspend disbelief” when facing a stage; “suspend belief” when on it with others (cf. law, business).
Critical thinking: objectively evaluate data, discern what is important, apply your understanding to real problems.
Global awareness: “Map is not territory” (look it up).

Grades:

You are evaluated on your demonstrated commitment and understanding. Your grade will be based on your attendance, your questions on the readings (I will ask for these randomly: if you are not prepared, you will be marked absent... “attendance” means more than physical presence), your reading notes, a fourth-week test, a five-page paper, a 5 to 10 minute digital narrative group project, and a final exam. However, I reserve the right to change this grading rubric at any time. Regardless of whether or not you study together, all work—oral, written, digital—must be completely *original*. It is your responsibility to understand what “plagiarism” means and entails. Reading notes for the upcoming week’s readings are due, via email (please copy and paste it into the body of the email), before the beginning of every class on Monday. They should each be about 500 words in length: about 250 words per reading. (This paragraph is 403 words long.) Late submissions are docked a third of a grade per day. The exams are open-note (*your* notes only, hand-written or printed, but not photocopied; printed notes have a five-page maximum and must be handed in with the exam). The paper should be five double-spaced pages, with one-inch margins, and in 12-pt type and Times New Roman font. Your group presentation must include a credits page for all photos, music, and narrative, and must be accompanied by a complete transcript of the narrative. Each of you must also submit a 500-word paper evaluating the *other* projects and a percentage evaluation of the amount of work done by each member in *your* group. There is no extra credit work available for this course. Contesting a grade must be done in writing, not orally or via email; reconsideration of a grade may result in it going up or down. Illness, with a doctor’s note (with your name, relevant dates, and the doctor’s phone number) for me to keep, is usually the only acceptable excuse for an absence. To help you develop sustained focus, no handheld electronic devices are allowed: please put them away before class begins. For the same reason, if you use a computer, you must sit in the back row. In short, you are graded on your responsible participation in the meetings, your critical analysis of the data, and your creative response to both; three things, not coincidentally, that your future employers will likely expect of you.

tldr: attendance + questions: 10% + test: 10% + reading summaries: 20% + digital narrative: 20% + 5 pg paper: 20% + final exam: 20%

As Confucius said: “I will not open the door for a mind that is not already striving to understand, nor will I provide words to a tongue that is not already struggling to speak. If I hold up one corner of a problem, and the student cannot come back to me with the other three, I will not attempt to instruct him again.” *Analects* 7.8 [子曰不憤不啓不排不發舉一隅不以三隅反則不復也]

Texts:

All readings are on Blackboard except Lisa See, *Snow Flower and the Secret Fan* (2005); many readings are on library reserve.

Readings:

I. The Rejection and Rehabilitation of Confucius in Socialist China

Class 01: Monday 23 Jan: Introduction via recent news

No readings

Class 02: Wednesday 25 Jan: Introduction via timeline

Reading: Chen Duxiu, Liang Qichao, & Liang Shuming via Wing-tsit Chan (trans) in Wm. Theodore de Bary & Richard Lufrano, eds., *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, Vol. 2 (1960; 2000), 351-356, 366-368, 377-381.

II. Zhou (1045-256) Confucianism: Kong Zi and Warring States China

Class 03: Monday 30 Jan: Five Classics: *Shang shu* (Venerable documents) & *Zhou yi* (Zhou changes)

Reading: *Shang shu* "The Speech at Mu" (牧誓) via Du Ruiqing (trans) in *The Book of History* (1993), 114-117 + "Many officers" (多士) via Paul Goldin in Victor Mair, Nancy Steinhardt & Paul Goldin, eds., *Hawaii Reader in Traditional Chinese Culture* (2005), 32-34 + Hellmut Wilhelm "The Two Fundamental Principles" in *Eight Lectures on the I Ching* (1942; trans. by Cary Baynes, 1960), 23-34.

Class 04: Wednesday 01 Feb: Five Classics: *Shi jing* (Odes classic) + How to make a digital narrative:

CLASS MEETS TODAY IN MASS MEDIA ROOM #257

Reading: Burton Watson (trans), Mao 245 in Deborah Sommer, ed., *Chinese Religion: An Anthology of Sources* (1995), 17-19 + Edward Shaughnessy, "How the Poetess Came to Burn the Royal Chamber," in *Before Confucius: Studies in the Creation of the Chinese Classics* (1997), 221-238.

Class 05: Monday 06 Feb: Kong Zi: *Lunyu* (Analects)

Reading: Edward Slingerland (trans) in PJ Ivanhoe & Bryan Van Norden, *Readings in Classical Chinese Philosophy*, (2001), 1-29 [chs.1-10].

Class 06: Wednesday 08 Feb: Kong Zi: *Lunyu* (Analects)

Reading: Robert Louden, "'What Does Heaven Say?': Christian Wolff and Western Interpretations of Confucian Ethics" in Bryan Van Norden, ed., *Confucius and the Analects: New Essays* (2002), 73-93.

Class 07: Monday 13 Feb: Zisi: *Da xue* (Great Learning) & *Zhong yong* (Centralizing the constant)

Reading: Irene Bloom (trans) in Wm. Theodore de Bary & Irene Bloom, eds., *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, Vol. 1 (1960; 1999), 330-339.

Class 08: Wednesday 15 Feb: **In-class test**

No reading

Class 09: Monday 20 Feb: Mo Zi

Reading: PJ Ivanhoe (trans) in Ivanhoe & Van Norden (2001), 55-72, 85-90 [chs.8, 11, 16, 26].

Class 10: Wednesday 22 Feb: Meng Zi & Xun Zi

Reading: Bryan Van Norden (trans) in Ivanhoe & Van Norden (2001), 111-113, 140-146 [*Meng Zi* ch.6] + Eric Hutton (trans) in Ivanhoe & Van Norden (2001), 247-252, 284-291 [*Xun Zi* chs.1, 23].

III. Han (202-220) Confucianism: Syncretism and skepticism

Class 11: Monday 27 Feb: Qu Yuan

Reading: Qu Yuan, "On Encountering Trouble" (離騷), trans. by David Hawkes in John Minford and Joseph Lau, eds., *Chinese Classical Literature Vol.1: From Antiquity to the Tang Dynasty* (2000), 238-253.

Class 12: Wednesday 29 Feb: Dong Zhongshu

Reading: Sarah Queen, "The Way of the Unadorned King: The Classical Confucian Spirituality of Dong Zhongshu," in Tu Weiming and Mary Tucker, eds., *Confucian Spirituality Vol.1* (2003), 304-317.

Class 13: Monday 05 Mar: Spring Break

Class 14: Wednesday 07 Mar: Spring Break

Class 15: Monday 12 Mar: Daoism + 1st digital narrative
Reading: Mario Poceski, *Introducing Chinese Religions* (2009), 60-82.

Class 16: Wednesday 14 Mar: Wang Chong + 2nd digital narrative
Reading: Fung Yu-lan, *A History of Chinese Philosophy*, Vol.2 (1934; 1953), 150-167.

Class 17: Monday 19 Mar: AAS: no class

IV. Wei-Jin (265-581) Confucianism: Pure Conversations (清談) & Dark Learning (玄學)

Class 18: Wednesday 21 Mar: Xuan xue (Dark learning) + 3rd digital narrative
Reading: Ch'en Ch'i-yün, *Hsün Yüeh and the Mind of Late Han China* (1980), 3-5, 179-197.

Class 19: Monday 26 Mar: Buddhism + 4th digital narrative
Reading: Charles Hucker, *China's Imperial Past* (1975), 207-220 + Robert Foster (trans) in Victor Mair, Nancy Steinhardt, & Paul Goldin, eds., *Hawaii Reader in Traditional Chinese Culture* (2005), 295-299.

V. Tang (618-907) Confucianism: Buddhist-Confucian Confrontation

Class 20: Wednesday 28 Mar: Han Yu & Li Ao + 5th digital narrative
Reading: T.H. Barrett, *Li Ao: Buddhist, Taoist, or Neo-Confucian?* (1992), 94-128 [skim the commentary!].

Class 21: Monday 02 Apr: Liu Zongyuan + 6th digital narrative
Reading: Chen Jo-shui, *Liu Tsung-yüan and Intellectual Change in T'ang China, 773-819* (1992), 99-126.

VI. Song (960-1279) Confucianism: "Neo-Confucianism"

Class 22: Wednesday 04 Apr: Zhu Xi + 7th digital narrative
Reading: Wm Theodore de Bary, "Zhu Xi's Neo-Confucian Spirituality," in Tu Weiming and Mary Tucker, eds., *Confucian Spirituality* Vol.2 (2004), 72-98.

Class 23: Monday 09 Apr: Zhu Xi + 8th digital narrative
Reading: Wing-tsit Chan (trans), *Reflections on Things at Hand* (1967), 68-87.

VII. Ming (1368-1644) Confucianism: Idealist Confucianism

Class 24: Wednesday 11 Apr: Wang Yangming + 9th digital narrative
Reading: P.J. Ivanhoe, *Confucian Moral Self Cultivation* (1992; 2000), 59-73.

Class 25: Monday 16 Apr: Ming art + 10th digital narrative
No reading, but everyone must bring something (website, powerpoint, pictures, etc) for show and tell.

VIII. Qing (1644-1911) Confucianism: Practical Confucianism

Class 26: Wednesday 18 Apr: Evidential studies (考據學) + 11th digital narrative
Reading: Lisa See, *Snow Flower and the Secret Fan* (2005), 3-85 [secs 1-8].

Class 27: Monday 23 Apr: Evidential studies (考據學) + 12th digital narrative
Reading: Lisa See, *Snow Flower and the Secret Fan* (2005), 86-168 [secs 9-12].

Class 28: Wednesday 25 Apr: Movie I: "Raise the Red Lantern" (大红灯笼高高挂; 1991)
Reading: Lisa See, *Snow Flower and the Secret Fan* (2005), 169-251 [secs 13-18].

Class 29: Monday 30 Apr: Movie II: "Raise the Red Lantern" (大红灯笼高高挂; 1991) + **PAPERS DUE**
Reading: no readings

IX. Modern Confucianism: New Confucianism

Class 30: Wednesday 02 May: New Confucianism
Reading: Tu Weiming, "The Ecological Turn in New Confucian Humanism" in Tu Weiming and Mary Tucker, eds., *Confucian Spirituality* Vol.2 (2004), 480-508.

Class 31: Friday 11 May: **Final exam** from 1-3pm

Suggested Paper Topics:

Ruist self-cultivation
The *Yi jing* 易經 (Classic of changes)
The Ruist interpretation of the *Shi jing* 詩經 (Odes classic)
Kong Zi's students (choose one)
The balance between culture (*wen* 文) and military (*wu* 武)
Ghosts and spirits
The "stone classics"
Imperial civil service examinations
The "Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove" on Kong Zi
"Women's writing" (*Nu shu* 女書) and Ruism
How did Song Neo-Confucianism build on Meng Zi?
Song Neo-Confucian theories of mind
Korean Ruism
Japanese Ruism
Kong Zi in Kang Youwei
Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1979) and Ruism
Ruism and human rights
Ruism in literature (choose any single author or work)

The concept of "virtue" (*de* 德)
Art of War (*Sun Zi bingfa* 孫子兵法)
Filiality classic (*Xiao jing* 孝經)
Kong Zi as portrayed in the *Zhuang Zi*
The role of music
"Old Text" vs. "New Text"
Ban Zhao 班昭 (45-116)
Recluses (choose one)
Ruism vs. Huang-Lao in the Han
Tang Ruist poetry (choose one author)
Song Neo-Confucian academies
"Zen" meditation in Zhu Xi
The 4-7 Debate in Korea
Vietnamese Ruism
20th century critiques of Ruism
Ruism and religion
Ruism and feminism

Suggested Digital Narrative Topics:

Oracle bones
Divination (not including the *Yi jing*)
Ancient bronze inscriptions
Three Sovereigns (San Huang 三皇)
Qin Shi Huang Di's "burning of the books" (焚書坑儒)
Confucian temples
Modern funerals
Festivals (choose one)
Scholar's studios
Folk art
What evidence of Ruism might Marco Polo (1254-1324) have seen?
How was Empress Cixi (慈禧太后; 1835-1908) a Ruist?
The May 4th movement
Sun Yat-sen (1866-1925)

Ancestor veneration
Ancient tombs
Paleography
Five Thearchs (Wu Di 五帝)
The Wuliang shrine (武梁祠)
Paintings of Confucius through history
Weddings in the *Li ji* 禮記 (Ritual record)
Talismans (choose one)
Scholar's rocks
Ceramics (Why is "china" called that?)

Chinese Exclusion Act
Red Guards (Hong wei bing 紅衛兵)

Student issues:**Student-teacher relations in the Humanities:**

I'm not here to sell you knowledge. You can get that online or in the library. Selling knowledge to a customer may be the paradigm for other academic divisions, but not in the Humanities. History, literature, philosophy, and religion professors are like football coaches: we show you what exercises to do to acquire certain skills, skills like critical thinking, creativity, and communication, but you do the actual work. You are not a passive receptacle of learning, but rather an active practitioner of skill acquirement. Thus we often say of our courses: the more you put into it, the more you get out of it.

Preparation for class:

It is generally accepted in higher academic circles that students must study two to three hours outside of class for every hour spent in class, and this course will certainly demand such commitment. As this course meets 2.5 hours per week, you should expect to spend between five and eight hours per week studying for this course. Students who are unable or unwilling to commit this amount of time to this course should reconsider whether this course is appropriate for them. Try not to fall behind on the reading because it is very difficult to catch up. This is a survey course, and we move along quickly.

Classroom behavior:

I expect you to be not only on time and prepared, but also to demonstrate initiative by asking interesting questions and otherwise engaging the topic at hand. You may have thoughtfully read all of the assignment, but I won't know this unless you give me evidence of this by talking with me about it. A Humanities classroom is also like a corporate boardroom: there is protocol to be followed (e.g., raising your hand for a question), there are other people in the room deserving of your respect (e.g., by not distracting them), and there is the fact that you are being judged on your behavior and participation (that 10% of your grade).

Cell phones (and all other hand-held electronic devices):

We live in a fast-paced world. But the skills you have the opportunity to develop in Humanities courses require mental focus. Staying focused on a task for eighty minutes at a time is a skill, and a marketable one at that. Cell phones are distracting, perhaps delightfully so, but distraction detracts from focus. Therefore, no cell phones, or any other hand-held electric devices, are allowed in the classroom. Please turn them off and stow them in your pocket or bag before class begins. I don't want to see them or hear them. Thanks!

Computers:

Computers can be useful for taking notes, but they can also be a distraction, both to the user as well as to all those who can see the screen. For these reasons, I do allow computers in the classroom, but only if you sit where no one else can see your screen; that is, in the back row. If all the back row seats are already taken by the time you arrive to class, please accept my humblest apologies, but you will have to take hand-written notes instead. If you are using your computer in the back row, and whatever is on your screen distracts those sitting on either side of you, then I will ask you to turn it off. So sorry!

Talking in class:

You should not talk in class. Not out of respect for me, mind you, but out of respect for the other students trying to focus. I see the class period as an opportunity for you. If you do not wish to participate, that is fine with me: you may put your head down and go to sleep, or you can quietly pass notes to one another, or you can lean over and whisper to one another. But if I can hear you talking, that means you are distracting other students. Please don't do that. (Yes, it will affect your grade.)

Studying together:

Studying together can be a good thing or it can be a really bad thing. If you do the work and want to deepen your understanding by discussing it with other students to gain their perspective, that's great. This course is a rare opportunity for you to talk about religion without upsetting someone in the room. But if you do not do the work, meet up with other students, divide the reading, then meet back up to plagiarize each other's notes, that is not a good thing. It's just cheating.

The Library:

I like Google as much as the next guy. Probably more so. But as wonderful as Google is, there are still lots of things the library has that cannot be found with a Google search. Two spring immediately to mind: librarians and books. Librarians know all kinds of things about how to access useful and relevant information, both online and in dead-tree format. Go talk to one! The other thing is books. I know Google Books is making good progress, but there are still a great many texts that are only accessible by browsing the stacks. Browsing the stacks is a key part of the university experience. Don't miss out!

Plagiarism:

Whenever you submit work to me, of any kind and for any assignment, either oral or written, if the words that you use in your work match uncited words anywhere else in the universe (except your own notes, written in your own words): that is plagiarism. This includes any webpage, any monograph in any language anywhere, and even other students' notes, past or present. If you were sick one day and got notes from another student, you must first put them in your own words if you are going to submit them as your own work. I am the judge of what constitutes words that "match." Any work that includes plagiarized words will receive a zero, and may result in failing the class and expulsion from the university. If this concept is unclear to you, please see me or a WKU librarian to explain it further.

Grades:

Your grades for this class derive from an Excel spreadsheet with six columns: one column each for 1) attendance, 2) the test, 3) the on-time reading summaries, 4) the digital narrative, 5) the paper, and 6) the final exam. At the end of the term there will be a number between 0 and 100 in each column. Your attendance score begins at 100 but drops by 1/3 of a grade after the 2nd unexcused absence and is also modified by your answers to in-class reading questions. After averaging the attendance and test scores into one score, I will add all the scores up and divide by 5 and that will be your grade (as usual, below 60 is a failing grade).

How to read in academia:

For the reading each week, first skim the appropriate chapters or pages in order to identify the main points, events, and individuals. Then re-read those chapters or pages in order to determine how examples are used to support those points, events, and individuals. Pay attention to chapter titles and subheadings to help guide you. As you read (just as when you listen in class), do so with pen or marker in hand so you can note or highlight those key points, events, ideas, themes, patterns, and individuals in the margins. Do not underline or highlight everything. Teach yourself to discriminate between important information (including analyses and conclusions) from unimportant information; practice determining why something is important, in the short run, in the long run, in other places, to other people, and for other events. Note causes, effects, and results. Review these notations regularly as you read the assigned pages. Reviewing in this fashion should enable you to see the direction a chapter (or lecture) is taking; it should also help to improve your concentration. With practice you should improve.

Student Disability Services:

Students with disabilities who require academic and/or auxiliary accommodations for this course must contact the Office for Student Disability Services in Downing University Center, A-200. Any request to me for accommodations must be accompanied by a letter of accommodation from the Office for Student Disability Services.

The Learning Center (TLC) (located in the Academic Advising and Retention Center, DUC-A330):

Should you require academic assistance with this course, or any other General Education Course, there are several places that can provide you with help. TLC tutors in most major undergraduate subjects and course levels throughout the week. To make an appointment, or to request a tutor for a specific class, call 745-6254 or stop by DUC A330. Log on to TLC's website at <<http://www.wku.edu/tlc>> to find out more. TLC hours: M-Thur. 8am-9pm, Fri. 8am-4pm, Sat.-Closed, and Sundays 4pm-9pm.

孔子曰：“欲知則問，欲能則學，欲給則豫，欲善則肆。”！

Kong Zi said: "(If you) want knowledge then ask (questions), (if you) want ability then study (for it), (if you) want sufficiency then be prepared, (if you) want excellence then practice (for it). *Shi Zi* 尸子 12.1