Philosophy 5150/6150-001—Topics in Classical Chinese Philosophy

Basic Course Information—Spring 2020

Core Course Information
(This is not a syllabus. The official syllabus will be made available by the first day of class.)

Class Time and Location: Mon, Wed, Fri 12:55–1:45pm, CTIHB 459

Instructor: Eric Hutton
Office: CTIHB 425
Office Hours: Wed 2:00–3:00pm, or by appointment
E-mail: eric.hutton@utah.edu (preferred contact method)
Phone: 801-581-7320

Course Description: Confucianism is a tradition stretching back over 2500 years, but it is far from being a monolithic system of thought. Over time and in response to philosophical challenges and changing socio-political circumstances, Confucian thinkers developed a variety of different views on numerous topics, including human nature, virtue, and moral education. This course will trace the development of Confucianism from earliest times through the 18th century by looking at several key figures in the tradition, with a special emphasis on Confucian thinkers from after the 10th century CE.

Pre-requisite: None, but prior courses in philosophy are highly recommended.

Course Objectives:

1. Give students familiarity with the basic figures and terminology in Confucianism.
2. Help students develop the philosophical skills of understanding and constructing arguments.

Required textbooks:


Other readings will be available through Marriott Library and/or Canvas.

Course Requirements:

A) All students are expected to finish each assigned reading before the class meeting on that assignment. Students are also expected to bring copies of the assigned reading with them to class.
B) Participation: all students are expected to participate in discussion in class. For in-class discussion, raising thoughtful questions, responding insightfully to remarks by other students, answering questions from the instructor, and reading aloud (when asked by the instructor) will all count towards fulfilling this requirement.

C) Quizzes: For undergraduates, toward the beginning of the semester there will be three simple quizzes to test students’ familiarity with the assigned reading. The quizzes will be given at the beginning of class on 1/13, 1/24, and 1/31. No makeup quizzes will be given to students who miss a quiz, unless they provide written documentation demonstrating an emergency or other incapacity to take the quiz.

D) Short Papers: For undergraduates, there will be two brief written assignments of 350–600 words (approx. 1–2 typed, double-spaced pages), due by 5:00pm on 2/13 and 3/26. Topics will be handed out in advance. Further details on manner of submission, penalties for lateness, extensions, drafts, etc. will be given with paper topics. Students will be required to submit the assignments to a plagiarism-checking website designated by the instructor.

E) Long Papers

a. For Undergraduates: two papers of 1800–2400 words (approx. 6–8 typed, double-spaced pages), due by 5:00pm on 3/5 and 4/29. Topics will be handed out in advance. Further details on manner of submission, penalties for lateness, extensions, drafts, etc. will be given with paper topics. Students will be required to submit the assignments to a plagiarism-checking website designated by the instructor.

b. For Graduate Students: two papers of 3600–4500 words (approx. 12–15 typed, double-spaced pages), due by 5:00pm on 3/5 and 4/29. Topics will be arranged in advance with the instructor.

Grading:

For undergraduates: Participation in discussions, 20%; Quizzes, 10%; Short Paper #1, 10%; Short Paper #2, 10%; Long Paper #1, 25%; Long Paper #2, 25%.

For graduate students: Participation in discussions, 20%; Long Paper #1, 40%; Long Paper #2, 40%.