

ANS 372 / R S 352 / CTI 375

Self Cultivation in Traditional China

Spring 2011

Syllabus

Course unique numbers: 31925 (ANS) & 44257 (R S) & 34212 (CTI)

TTH, 2-3:30 in WEL 3.402

Course website at

http://webspace.utexas.edu/~dms2244/courses/ans372_selfcultivation/

For the updated version of this syllabus, consult the course website.

Instructor

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Course Description

How does one transform oneself into a better person? This question lies at the heart of so many philosophical and religious traditions throughout the world. This was especially so in pre-modern China, where concern with self cultivation is fundamental to many intellectual and religious discourses, including Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism. In this course we will examine ideas and practices in Chinese culture related to self cultivation as they are represented in writings drawn from a wide selection of philosophical, religious, and occult traditions. Far from providing a uniform understanding of this issue, these texts provide diverse examples of motivations, beliefs and techniques related to self cultivation. Whether the goal was to attain moral perfection, sagehood, immortality, buddhahood, or just tranquility, these beliefs and practices of self cultivation demonstrate a concern for human refinement that is deeply embedded within the culture of traditional China.

This course carries a University Writing Flag. Writing Flag courses are designed to give students experience with writing in an academic discipline. In this class, you can expect to write regularly during the semester, complete a substantial writing project, and receive feedback from your instructor and your classmates to help you improve your writing.

Requirements

- **Reading assignments:** Students will be expected to have completed the required reading assignment for each class before the class meeting. Completion of the reading assignment involves not only reading the required pages but also thinking critically about what you have read, relating it to other readings and topics in the course, and formulating questions.
- **Participation:** This course demands consistent, punctual, and active participation. All students are expected to contribute actively to class meetings by posing questions and by responding to the questions and comments of other students based on the material in lectures and readings. Students who attend class regularly but do not contribute actively can expect a grade of "C" for their class participation (20% of one's overall grade).

Absence policy: Students are expected to attend all class meetings and to sign in on an attendance sheet to be distributed during each class. It is each student's responsibility to sign this sheet before leaving the classroom. More than three absences will negatively affect one's grade for class participation.

- **Informal writing:** Short written assignments consisting of about one page each are assigned on a weekly basis, as detailed in the [course schedule](#). Assignments vary in nature, including response pieces on particular passages in the primary readings as well as analytical summaries of scholarly articles. Students are required to submit these assignments via e-mail to the instructor in advance of the relevant class meeting and should be prepared to discuss the assignment in class. Informal writing assignments will be evaluated on a check +, check, check - basis. Assignments that are complete, submitted on time, and thoughtfully composed will receive a mark of check. Incomplete, late, or cursory submissions will receive a mark of check -. Only those assignments that are exceptional in quality (not quantity!) will receive a mark of check +.
- **Short paper:** A paper of 4-5 pages, topics to be announced, is due *at the beginning of class* on Tuesday **2/22**.
- **Midterm exam:** A take-home midterm examination consisting of short essay questions will be distributed on Thursday 3/3 and due *at the beginning of class* on Tuesday **3/8**.

- **Final paper project:** Written work during the second half of the semester will be oriented toward a final paper of 8-10 pages, due at the beginning of class on Thursday **5/5**. Paper topics are open, but students are strongly encouraged to develop their paper topics in consultation with the instructor during office hours or via e-mail. The final paper project includes the following interim assignments, all of which will be counted as part of your informal writing:
 - *Paper proposal:* A single paragraph that explicitly states the topic, question, or thesis to be addressed in your paper as well as the potential line of argumentation to be used. Due Tuesday **3/29**.
 - *Draft bibliography:* A list of potential sources, primary and secondary, in proper bibliographic format. Due Tuesday **4/5**.
 - *Paragraph outline:* A brief outline that includes a single topic sentence for each paragraph of the final paper (as currently envisioned). Due Thursday **4/14**.
 - *First draft:* Complete, first draft of paper. Due Thursday **4/21**.
 - *Peer review:* Each student will formally review the first draft of one classmate's paper. The review will consist of mark-up and marginal comments directly on the draft as well as a one-page written critique that addresses both the content and style of the paper. Specific recommendations for improving the paper should be included within the commentary and marginal notations. Due Thursday **4/28**.

Late assignment policy: Late papers and exams will be penalized 1/3 of a full letter grade for each full day or portion thereof beyond the scheduled due date.

Grading

Final grades will be calculated according to the criteria below. Grades of plus/minus will be assigned as appropriate.

- class participation: 20%
- informal writing: 20%
- short paper: 15%
- midterm exam: 20%
- final paper: 25%

Textbooks and Readings

The following items are required and available at the [University Co-op Bookstore](#):

- Philip J. Ivanhoe, [Confucian Moral Self Cultivation](#), 2nd ed. (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2000), ISBN: 0-87220-508-8.
- Philip J. Ivanhoe and Bryan W. Van Norden, [Readings in Classical Chinese Philosophy](#), (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2006), ISBN: 0-87220-780-3.

Additional required readings for the class will be placed on electronic reserve. Students are responsible for downloading and printing (if necessary) these materials from the [course page](#) on the ERes website (<http://reserves.lib.utexas.edu/eres>). Please verify as soon as possible that you are able to access the ERes collection for this course. For copyright reasons, the ERes collection for this course is password protected. If you are enrolled in the class and don't have the password, please e-mail the instructor.

Course Website

A website for this course has been established at the following url:

http://webpace.utexas.edu/~dms2244/courses/ans372_selfcultivation/

It is essential that you establish some means of accessing the site because the updated syllabus, course schedule, assignments, handouts, and important announcements will all be distributed through the website. Student grades will be posted in [Blackboard](#). If you have any trouble accessing these tools, please consult the instructor.

Undergraduate Writing Center (UWC)

Students are strongly encouraged to make use of the [Undergraduate Writing Center](#), which offers free, individualized, expert help with writing for any UT undergraduate. UWC consultants help students develop strategies to improve their writing in ways that foster independence and preserve the integrity of student work. Assistance is available by appointment (tel. 471-6222) or on a drop-in basis at [FAC 211](#).

Policy on Scholastic Dishonesty

Students who violate University rules on [scholastic dishonesty](#) are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information please visit the [Student Judicial Services](#) website: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs>.

Students with Disabilities

Any student with a documented disability who requires academic accommodations should contact [Services for Students with Disabilities](#) at 471-6259 (voice) or 1-866-329-3986 (Video Phone) as soon as possible to request an official letter outlining authorized accommodations.

Schedule of Class Meetings

For reading assignments please consult the course website at https://webspace.utexas.edu/~dms2244/courses/ans372_selfcultivation/.

Week	Meeting	Date	Day	Topic
1	1	1/18	Tue	Course Introduction and Historical Background
	2	1/20	Thu	Ancestor Worship and Divination
2	3	1/25	Tue	Mandate of Heaven
	4	1/27	Thu	Confucius
3	5	2/1	Tue	Confucian Moral Self Cultivation
	6	2/3	Thu	Mencius' Defense of the Confucian Way
4	7	2/8	Tue	Early Chinese Mysticism
	8	2/10	Thu	The Way that Can't Be Spoken of
5	9	2/15	Tue	Notions of Self in the Zhuangzi
	10	2/17	Thu	Xunzi and the Debate over Human Nature
6	11	2/22	Tue	Correlative cosmology
	12	2/24	Thu	Divination and self-cultivation
7	13	3/1	Tue	Body, Health, and Illness
	14	3/3	Thu	Physical and sexual practices
8	15	3/8	Tue	The Cult of Immortality
	16	3/10	Thu	<i>Individual paper consultations, no class meeting</i>
		3/15	Tue	<i>Spring Break, no class meeting</i>
		3/17	Thu	<i>Spring Break, no class meeting</i>
9	17	3/22	Tue	Origins of Religious Daoism
	18	3/24	Thu	Daoist Techniques of Self Cultivation
10	19	3/29	Tue	Introduction and Development of Buddhism in China
	20	3/31	Thu	Buddhist Practices of Self Cultivation
11	21	4/5	Tue	Daoist Alchemy in Medieval China
	22	4/7	Thu	Daoism as a High Religion
12	23	4/12	Tue	Meditation School (Zen)
	24	4/14	Thu	Salvation for the Masses
13	25	4/19	Tue	Confucian Revival
	26	4/21	Thu	Zhu Xi's Neo-Confucian Synthesis
14	27	4/26	Tue	Education in Late Imperial China
	28	4/28	Thu	Wang Yangming and the School of the Mind
15	29	5/3	Tue	Legacies of Traditional China
	30	5/5	Thu	Conclusions