

[ANS 372 / RS 352 / CTI 375](#)

World of the Confucians

Spring 2013

Course unique nos: 31755 (ANS) & 43910 (RS) & 34150 (CTI)

Meetings: Tue & Thu, 12:30-2 pm in [MEZ 2.122](#)

Course website: <http://webspace.utexas.edu/~dms2244/courses/ans372-confucians/>

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

Instructor

[David Sena](#)

Assistant Professor, [Department of Asian Studies](#)

E-mail: dsena@utexas.edu

Tel: (512) 471-7965

Mailbox: [WCH 4.120](#)

Office: [WCH 5.104C](#)

Office hours: Tue & Thu, 2:30-4pm

Course Description

In this course we examine the philosophy and historical context of classical Confucianism. Focusing on the translated writings of Confucius, Mencius, and Xunzi, as well as on recently discovered texts found in ancient tombs, this course examines the systems of thought in early Confucian writings. In addition to discussing the history of ideas, we will also pay close attention to the cultural background of the period and to the social context in which these texts were written by considering such issues as literacy and the transmission of specialized knowledge in ancient China. The focus of the course will be on the classical period (sixth through third centuries B.C.E.), but we will also consider the legacy of Confucian thought and institutions in the early empire and beyond.

Course Goals

The primary goal of this course is to help you develop your ability to read closely and understand seminal texts from the classical period of Chinese literature. A fundamental principle in this course is that we cannot fully understand classical Confucian texts without considering the social, intellectual, and cultural milieu within which these texts were generated. Therefore the second goal will be to learn how to use social and cultural history as a method for enhancing one's understanding of texts. Third, in focusing on Confucian thinkers and texts, we aim to understand the philosophical content of this important tradition, to demonstrate how these ideas fit within the larger social and intellectual context of ancient China, and to assess their historical legacy in the region as well as their relevance to our own lives.

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.

This course carries a [University Global Cultures Flag](#). The goal of this flag is to challenge students to explore the beliefs and practices of non-U.S. cultural communities in relation to their own cultural experiences so that they engage in an active process of self-reflection.

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 discussion 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 assigned readings and material introduced during class meetings. 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 **February 14**.

Midterm exam: A take-home midterm examination consisting of short essay questions will be distributed on **February 28** and is due at the beginning of class on **March 5**.

Final paper: A final paper of 8-10 pages is due at the beginning of class on **May 2**. Paper topics are open within the general purview of the course, but students are strongly encouraged to develop their paper topics in consultation with the instructor during office hours. The final paper project includes the following interim assignments, each of which will be counted as an informal writing assignment:

- *Paper proposal:* A one-page proposal that introduces your paper topic, thesis, and potential line of argumentation is due at the beginning of class on **March 28**.
- *First draft:* A complete first draft of the paper is due at the beginning of class on **April 18**.
- *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. The review is due at the beginning of class on **April 25**.

Unless otherwise instructed, all written assignments must be submitted both electronically via e-mail to the instructor and in hardcopy *at the beginning of class*. Late work 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: 15%
- short paper: 20%
- midterm exam: 20%
- final paper: 25%

Textbooks

The following books are required and available at the University Co-op Bookstore:

- *The Analects of Confucius: A Philosophical Translation*. Trans. Roger T. Ames and Henry Rosemont, Jr. New York: Ballantine, 1998 [[PL 2478 L328](#)].
- *The Essential Mengzi: Selected Passages with Traditional Commentary*. Trans. Bryan W. Van Norden. Indianapolis: Hackett, 2009.
- *Hsun Tzu: Basic Writings*. Trans. Burton Watson. New York: Columbia University Press, 1963 [[B 128 H66 E55](#)].

Online Course Material

Additional required readings for the class will be distributed electronically via the [course website](#). Students are responsible for downloading and printing (if necessary) this material. Access to copyrighted items is restricted to students who are enrolled in the course. In order to acquire this material, it is necessary for you to have access to [WebSpace](#), UT's online file storage and sharing system. If you have not done so already, please [sign up for WebSpace](#) as soon as possible and then [verify](#) that you are able to access these readings via the links on the [course schedule](#). Use your regular utetid and password to authenticate when prompted. Contact the instructor immediately should you have any difficulty accessing the course documents.

Course Website

A website for this course has been established at <http://webspace.utexas.edu/~dms2244/courses/ans372-confucians/>. 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 on [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](#) (tel. 471-6259 [voice] or 1-866-329-3986 [Video Phone], e-mail ssd@austin.utexas.edu) 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 <http://webspace.utexas.edu/~dms2244/courses/ans372-confucians/>.

Week	Meetings	Topic	Assignments
1	Jan 15 & 17	Introduction and Historical Background	
2	Jan 22 & 24	Confucius: Before and After	
3	Jan 29 & 31	The Way of Confucius	
4	Feb 5 & 7	Ritual Masters	
5	Feb 12 & 14	Transmitting the Way	short paper due Feb 14
6	Feb 19 & 21	From Confucius to Mencius	
7	Feb 26 & 28	The Mencian Defense of the Confucian Way	midterm distributed Feb 28
8	Mar 5 & 7	Human Nature and Cultivation of the Self	midterm due Mar 5
9	Mar 12 & 14	<i>Spring Break: no class meetings</i>	
10	Mar 19 & 21	Tombs and Texts: Studying Confucianism in the Age of Archaeology	
11	Mar 26 & 28	The Way that Can't Be Spoken of	paper proposal due Mar 28
12	Apr 2 & 4	Heaven and Man in the <i>Xunzi</i>	
13	Apr 9 & 11	Ritual and the Way of Self Cultivation in the <i>Xunzi</i>	
14	Apr 16 & 18	The Challenges of a Modernizing World	first draft due Apr 18
15	Apr 23 & 25	Confucianism in the Early Empire and Beyond	peer review due Apr 25
16	Apr 30 & May 2	Confucianism Beyond China	final paper due May 2