PHIL 1300: Introduction to Philosophies of Asia

Meeting Location: TBD

Meeting Time: TBD

Instructor: Colin J. Lewis (clewis5@uccs.edu)

Office: COH 4055

Office Hours: TBD

Course Description:

Students will study the philosophies of classical (and to a lesser extent modern) philosophical thought in select regions of Asia (most notably China and India), examining questions concerning such topics as the nature of existence, causality, knowledge and knowing, theism, and ethics. Additionally, we will discuss overlaps between Asian and so-called “western” philosophy. Ultimately, students will be asked to synthesize all of the knowledge acquired over the course of the semester and present a mature, defensible argument supporting a thesis addressing an issue pertinent to a topic in Asian Philosophy.

Course Objectives:

In this course, we aim to (1) broaden one’s knowledge of the history of philosophy in Asia; (2) derive and critically evaluate the metaphysical, epistemological, and ethical effects of the variety of philosophical positions originating in Asia; (3) write arguments either challenging or supporting the claims we consider in the course; (4) broaden a general knowledge base of contemporary applications of Asian Philosophies.

By the end of the course, students will …

-improve their ability to think clearly and logically.

-improve their ability to write clearly and persuasively.

-improve their ability to recognize and evaluate arguments.

-understand a wide range of basic philosophical concepts.

-be exposed to a wide range of philosophical writings on the course topics.
**Compass Curriculum:** This course is part of the Compass Curriculum. The Compass Curriculum is the signature undergraduate education program at UCCS for all majors and all colleges. This program endeavors to provide you with the tools for professional and personal success that you will need when you graduate. The program includes skills that employers say that they want students to have from their education (critical thinking, oral and written communication, ethics, innovation, problem-solving, understanding inclusiveness, and sustainability).

**Writing Intensive**

Writing Intensive courses help you learn how to:

- Approach writing as a process.
- Revise your written work based on feedback.
- Provide useful feedback to your classmates about their written work.
- Refine your critical and analytical writing skills.

**Essential Learning Outcomes:**

- Gather, critically analyze and evaluate quantitative and qualitative information within relevant disciplinary contexts.
- Apply and integrate knowledge from a range of disciplines, including interdisciplinary or cross-disciplinary research.
- Communicate information effectively through writing
- Demonstrate the core ethical principles and responsible methods of your discipline.

**Inclusiveness**

Inclusiveness courses help you learn about:

- The dynamics and systemic and historical aspects of inclusion and exclusion (e.g., meritocratic hierarchy in Confucianism, universal caring in Mohism, and the caste systems of the Indian tradition)
- Ways that inclusivity (and exclusivity) are generated at local, national, and global levels (e.g., conception of unity or "oneness" in Vedanta, existential dependence in Buddhism)

**Essential Learning Outcomes:**

- Articulate origins, influences, and impacts of inclusion and exclusion within societies.
- Gather, critically analyze and evaluate quantitative information within relevant disciplinary contexts.
- Gather, critically analyze and evaluate qualitative information within relevant disciplinary contexts.
- Apply and integrate knowledge from a range of disciplines, including interdisciplinary or cross-disciplinary research.
- Demonstrate the core ethical principles and responsible methods of your discipline.
Required Texts


*Additional readings will be provided by the instructor*

Course Requirements / Grade Breakdown

*Attendance (20%), Participation (20%), Journals (20%), Short Papers (30%), Final Paper (10%)*

The structure of this course is arranged around six topics (see the Course Schedule for details). For each topic, students are expected to make substantive contributions both in-class and via assignments submitted online.

*Attendance (20%):*

In addition to assigned readings, students will also learn from in-class lecture and discussion (see ‘in-class contributions’ for additional details). Accordingly, students are expected to attend all scheduled class meetings. Absences are excused only in cases of emergency, illness (with medical documentation), or in circumstances deemed reasonable by the instructor.

*Participation (20%):*

Philosophy is traditionally a practice that involves a great deal of discourse. Our class should be no different: students are expected to participate in discussion and be capable of answering questions when asked. Toward this end, portions of some classes will be set aside specifically for small- and large-group discussion periods. During these times, students will be expected to collaborate and contribute in conversations regarding core arguments and concepts presented in readings and lectures. All discussion and class interactions must be respectful in nature.

Since we have limited time in class to exchange ideas, students may sometimes find that class meetings alone do not provide enough time to go over all of the course material and ask/discuss questions of interest. To that end, this course includes a *discussion board* that is intended allow you to reflect and post on the writings and topics that we cover in this course. Most importantly, the boards allow you to exchange ideas with your classmates and raise questions in an open forum. Boards also provide students with another means of earning participation points, so if you want to raise ideas for the class but are unable to get your ideas in during a class meeting, this can provide a surrogate.

Having said this, please maintain forum etiquette. The first time someone violates etiquette, they will receive a warning and their score docked accordingly. If someone violates forum etiquette more than once, they receive a zero for the participation component.
Journals (20%):

Good philosophy often requires reflection, exploration, and creativity. Accordingly, in addition to more formal writing assignments, participation in this course also requires the completion of weekly (one-page-ish) journals. You might think of this as the more "laid back" form of writing that we will do in this course, as it allows you to get your ideas out into the open in an informal setting. While in short and long papers you are expected to perform critical analysis, the journals are more akin to a play space or drawing board, where you engage freely with the weekly material and express ideas about what you find interesting, why, and what kinds of questions you might want to engage with on the discussion board or in the formal papers.

When you write in your journal, try to start yourself off by asking a deep question about the material, or perhaps by bringing up an issue that you do not quite understand. After you do this, keep pushing the matter: Why is this thing interesting or confusing to you? What do you think could be done to engage or resolve the question more thoroughly?

Again, the journals need not be formal scholarship, but they should be taken seriously as another avenue for working with the material. Accordingly, journals will be scored roughly 50% on completion, and 50% on level of engagement demonstrated.

Short papers (30%):

One way in which students will be held accountable for the readings, and also contribute to the development of class discussions, will be by a series of short writing assignments. Each unit will require students to submit a two-to-three-page reading response that addresses an argument or concept from reading and/or lecture that the student finds particularly interesting. Students may utilize pre-fabricated prompts or write on prompts of their own design.

These assignments are designed to require you to engage closely with a single issue, but do not require extended treatment. They are less formal in nature than the term papers and do not necessarily need to conclusively resolve an argument so long as a substantive and original issue is raised in the response. They should, however, utilize a traditional essay structure in miniature: introduction, exposition, and analysis.

Remember to use assigned readings and to list the relevant page numbers with your engagements so that I may follow your topic and argument (and, of course, to avoid plagiarism). Feel free to compare different positions you have engaged with over the semester. Following the deadline for submission, each paper will be evaluated by the instructor and feedback will be provided for the purpose of revision. Students may then resubmit revised versions of the assignments for an improved score and for the purpose of promoting skill mastery. You may contact me ahead of time if you want to ask questions about a topic.
Final paper (10%):

There will be one final paper (5-6 pages) due at the end of exam week. The length requirements listed are guidelines about the minimum and maximum length of the paper, but you should aim for this ballpark range. It must be turned in via Canvas according to the submission guidelines in this document. It will be graded according to the same general standards employed for the short paper assessments. It is recommended to send a draft of your paper (or at least an abstract or outline) no less than a week before the deadline so the instructor can provide comments for improvement. It is also recommended that you use one of your prior short papers as the basis for your final paper, revising and expanding throughout based on prior feedback.

Submission Guidelines / Warnings for ALL WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS:

(1) Anything that you submit online must be in .doc, .docx, or .pdf format. I do not accept .wps or other file formats. If for any reason file attachments do not work, you may copy/paste the body of the text of your assignment into the empty text box on the submission page for each assignment.
(2) I do not accept e-mailed assignments unless otherwise specified. Please submit through the relevant assignment listed on the Canvas page.
(3) Save your files as, “LastName_FirstName_AssignmentName/#” so that I can identify your assignments if I need to download them from Canvas.
(4) 12-point font, standard typeface, double-spaced, and 1-inch margins.
(5) Uploaded to the ‘Files’ tab is a document entitled ‘Writing Manual.’ Please read this document, as it provides detailed guidelines for how to write an effective paper in this course.
(6) All submitted written work will be scrutinized for plagiarism by the Turnitin software, as well as by the instructor. Any work found to have been plagiarized will be subject to penalization. See the section entitled “Plagiarism” for more details.

Grading Scale

A 100-93 / A- 92-90 / B+ 89-87 / B 86-83 / B- 82-80 / C+ 79-77 / C 76-73 / C- 72-70 / D+ 69-67 / D 66-63 / D- 62-60 / Fail <60

Philosophy and Personal Beliefs

This is a philosophy course, which means (in part) that we will examine various arguments concerning moral education in particular and morality in general. Some of these arguments may directly contradict your personal beliefs about these issues. In fact, I expect this to happen. Nevertheless, I expect you to think about and assess claims from various perspectives that may be different from your own. One method you may find helpful to adopt is to “try on” arguments that directly contradict your first intuitions. By this method, you will find the most compelling arguments in support of the claims with which you disagree – when you dismantle them, you will have a strong argument to support your own view. One of my fundamental goals in this class is for you to enhance your understanding of different perspectives and your ability to critically analyze those viewpoints. Your grade will be based on your understanding of the readings, the philosophical concepts and tools they employ, and your analysis. It will not be based on personal conclusions.
Schedule (Sample Dates from Fall 2019)

Introduction

26 AUG
Overview of course
- General background
- Syllabus
- Course expectations
- Reading: Writing Manual

Unit 1: Confucianism

28 AUG, 4 SEP: Kongzi/Confucius
- Selections from the Analects (Books 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 9, 12, 13, 15, 17)
  - Video of the Autumnal Sacrifice

9, 11 SEP: Mengzi/Mencius
- Selections from the Mengzi

16, 18 SEP: Xunzi
- Selections from the Xunzi

23, 25 SEP: Confucianism in Contemporary Philosophy
- "Human Nature and Moral Education in Mencius, Xunzi, Hobbes, and Rousseau," (Schwitzgebel)
- Paper workshop
Unit 2: Daoism

30 SEP, 2 OCT: Dao De Jing

-Selections from the *Dao De Jing* (Chapters 1-12, 17-25, 28-38, 43-46, 49-52, 55-61, 66, 70, 75-81)

7, 9 OCT: Zhuangzi

-Selections from the *Zhuangzi* (Sections 1.1, 5; 2.1, 3-15, 20; 3.1, 2, 5, A-3; 4.1, 4-7; 5 (all); 6.1-2, 4, 6, 8)

14, 16 OCT: Daoism in Contemporary Philosophy

-"Wuwei and Flow: Comparative Reflections on Spirituality, Transcendence, and Skill in the Zhuangzi," (Barrett)

-Paper workshop

Unit 3: Mohism and Legalism

21, 23 OCT: Mozi

-Selections from the *Mozi*

28, 30 OCT: Han Feizi

-Selections from the *Han Feizi*

4 NOV

-Paper workshop
Unit 4: Astika Philosophy

6 NOV: Early Indian Thought
-Selections from the *Source Book on Indian Philosophy*
  --Vedas: 3-5, 8, 16-17, 19-21, 23, 25, 27, 31, 34
  --Upanishads: 37-39, 77-89

11, 13 NOV: Yoga and Vedanta
-Selections from the *Source Book on Indian Philosophy*
  --Yoga: 453-485
  --Vedanta: Intro.

18, 20 NOV: Astika Philosophy and The Gita
-Selections from the *Source Book on Indian Philosophy*
  --Samkhya: 424-434, 438-442, 446-452
  --Nyaya: 356-358, 361-365
  --Vaisesika: 386-387, 389-391, 402-403, 412, 421-422
  *Bhagavad Gita for Busy People*

Unit 5: Buddhism

2, 4 DEC: Buddhism
*Buddhism* (SBIP): 272-288, 328-337, 340-345

9 DEC: Zen Buddhism study (TBD)

11 DEC
- Paper workshop

19 DEC: Final Paper Due
**Late Policy**

No late work will be accepted. This is course policy. If you have a personal crisis, (e.g., you, your spouse, your child are in the hospital or imprisoned), provide documentation and we will work around it.

**Note:**

Though it is not expected that the course will change after this syllabus is posted, extenuating circumstances do occur. Changes made to the course will occur at the instructor's discretion. As much advance notice will be provided as possible.

**Resources for Students**

**Students with Disabilities:**

If you are a student with a disability and believe you will need accommodations for this class, it is your responsibility to contact and register with the Disability Services Office, and provide them with documentation of your disability, so they can determine what accommodations are appropriate for your situation. To avoid any delay in the receipt of accommodations, you should contact the Disability Services Office as soon as possible. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive, and that disability accommodations cannot provided until an accommodation letter has been given to me. Please contact Disability Services for more information about receiving accommodations at Main Hall room 105, 719-255-3354 or dservice@uccs.edu. Ida Dilwood, Director.

**Academic Honesty and Plagiarism:**

Plagiarism is a serious academic offense and will be grounds for failing a student from the course, as well as additional academic sanctions as defined in the Academic Honor Code. Plagiarism, the “use of distinctive ideas or words belonging to another person, without adequately acknowledging that person’s contribution” ranges from the improper use of such sources as internet materials to improper use of classmates’ notes. It is the students’ responsibility to become familiar with the various definitions and penalties for plagiarism. The webpage of the Department of History at UCCS includes detailed information on what constitutes and how to avoid plagiarism: [http://web.uccs.edu/history/toolbox/plagiarism.htm](http://web.uccs.edu/history/toolbox/plagiarism.htm)

The Administrative Policy Statement for the University of Colorado System can be accessed online at [http://www.cusys.edu/~policies/Academic/misconduct.html](http://www.cusys.edu/~policies/Academic/misconduct.html).
Military Deployment and Military Service:

In order to assist students who are called to active duty the Campus has compiled a set of guidelines that include information on withdrawing from courses. General information can be accessed at: [http://www.uccs.edu/~deploy](http://www.uccs.edu/~deploy)

In part, that information states that “in order to withdraw from the course, students called to active military duty will need to obtain the proper withdrawal form from the Admissions and Records office, their academic dean’s office or the Student Success Help Center. Information about withdrawing and refund deadlines can be found in the schedule of courses. Completed forms need to be returned to the Admissions and Records office. If students are receiving veterans’ benefits or financial aid, each of those offices will need to approve the form. In addition, the form needs to be approved by the Bursar’s Office located in Main Hall on the second floor. Students will be provided a copy of the drop form to retain for their records. The date the form is receipted by Admissions and Records will determine the amount of any refund.”

Disruptive Students

For information on the Student Code of Conduct or the Disruptive Behavior Policy go to the Office of Judicial Affairs Website: [http://www.uccs.edu/~oja/](http://www.uccs.edu/~oja/)

Campus Emergency Response Team

**UCCS Chief of Police:** Jim Spice, phone: 255-3111, e-mail: jspice@uccs.edu

**Director of University Counseling Center:** Benek Altayli, phone: 255-3265, email: zaltayli@uccs.edu (regarding harm to self or others)

**Director of Judicial Affairs:** Steve Linhart, phone: 255-4443, e-mail: slinhart@uccs.edu

Writing Center

UCCS offers free writing support at **The Writing Center** at Columbine Hall, room 316. Students of all skill levels can benefit from working with peer writing consultants at any stage of the writing process be it brainstorming, drafting, or final editing. The Writing Center is open for 50 minute face-to-face or online appointments from 9am to 8pm Monday through Thursday and 9am to 2pm on Friday and Saturday. Appointments can be made by visiting [http://www.uccs.edu/writingcenter/](http://www.uccs.edu/writingcenter/). Call 719-255-4336 with questions about our programming and policies.