



The Beijing Center

北京中国学中心

Spring 2019

TBC 1110 Introduction to Chinese Medicine

Credit Hours: 3.0

Class Times and Location: TBA

Instructor: Dr. Shelley Ochs

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Course Description

This course will explore how and why “Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM)” has been and continues to be an important part of the political and cultural identity of both people and institutions in China.

The theory and practice of medicine in China has a long and well-documented history. Before the introduction of Western medicine into China, there was no reason to identify this set of ideas and applications as “Chinese.”

However, beginning in the Republican Period (1911-1949), traditional medicine began to be seen as an integral part of “strengthening the nation” and was promoted as part of the cultural heritage of China that could be used to help build a new China.

By looking at the theory and practice of China, we can better comprehend the hopes and realities of China’s development; its current conditions; and its promises and challenges in the coming years. Studying Chinese medicine is a way of studying China.

The core of this specific course is a study of the concepts of health and disease in Chinese medicine. Many of these concepts,--- *qi, yin* and *yang*, the five phases, empty and full, and the unity of the heavens and humans---are part of the fabric of Chinese culture, and are therefore essential to understanding other aspects of Chinese culture, such as painting, martial arts, culinary arts, and literature. We will uncover how these seemingly philosophical notions are applied to complex clinical situations through the modalities of acupuncture, herbal medicine, *qi gong*, and orthopedic manipulations. Case studies from historical sources, modern physicians, and the instructor’s own practice will be discussed, and students will gain an understanding of the thought process behind diagnosis, treatment and evaluation. Scientific research on Chinese medicine and the difficulties in designing and carrying out such research will be explained.

We will also ground our studies with an understanding of the philosophical underpinnings that influenced the views of health and disease in the formative period of Chinese medicine, the Han Dynasty. Comparisons with early Greek medicine will give students a wider perspective on the history and development of medicine and its claims to be scientific or empirical. This perspective is also useful when considering the

various forms of “alternative medicine” popular today and the arguments put forth by their adherents and opponents.

“Chinese medicine” can also be defined as a set of healing techniques employed by physicians and other specialists in hospitals and clinics throughout the world. Acupuncture and Chinese herbal medicine are currently utilized in contexts as diverse as fighting malaria in Africa, increasing positive outcomes for high-tech fertility procedures in North America, and treating people suffering from “Qigong psychosis” in urban China. We will ask: What makes all these practices part of a single tradition of medicine? How has Chinese medicine adapted to unique circumstances in its adopted countries? How are different aspects of Chinese medicine being accepted or rejected in modern times?

The class will close with a consideration of how both continuation and innovation will be part of the future of Chinese medicine, and seek to explore the role of Chinese medicine generally, in China and abroad.

Our classroom studies will be augmented by a visit to a Chinese medicine clinic; a martial art studio; and the medicinal gardens in Beijing. Guest speakers will include a fifth-generation martial arts master, and local physician-researchers working in the fields of Chinese herbal medicine pharmacology, clinical trials on acupuncture, and integrated Chinese-Western medicine.

Learning Outcome

This course is designed to give students a general understanding of the fundamental ideas and practices that constitute traditional medicine in China today. Students will complete this course having an understanding of how philosophical, political, and social frameworks effect the legitimation and transmission of medical knowledge. It is hoped that students will be able to use this as a case example when considering other instances in which “modern” versus “traditional” knowledge is at stake in development policies and discourses. Students will leave the class with a more sophisticated and nuanced view of the differences and similarities between traditional Chinese medicine, biomedicine, and “complementary and alternative medicine”.

Textbook

1. Chinese Medicine and Healing: An illustrated History

Ed. By TJ Hinrichs and Linda L. Barnes, Belknap Press (2013)

2. Integrating East Asian Medicine into Contemporary Healthcare

Edited by Volker Scheid and Hugh MacPherson, Churchill Livingstone (2012)

Course Requirements

1. Attendance Policy

Attendance is required at all class meetings and field trips. Only valid medical or family emergencies qualify as an absence, and documentation of the same must be presented to the professor no later than the next class meeting. Students are permitted one excused absence, and will be docked one full grade from the class participation portion of their grade for each additional absence.

2. Assessment and Grading

- Class Participation and Attendance 20%

Students are expected to read all assignments and participate in class discussions.

- Short Essays and Presentation 20%

Students will be required to answer assigned questions based on the readings and their own supplemental research. In addition, students will give a short presentation individually or in pairs.

- Midterm Exam/Paper 30%
- Final Exam/Paper 30%

3. Academic Honesty Statement

Please click the following link to see The Beijing Center's policy on Academic Integrity: <http://thebeijingcenter.org/academic-integrity>

Course Schedule

Class 1 Introduction (Jan 16)

"Chinese Medicine" as a system of diagnosis and treatment

Film *To Taste a Hundred Herbs*

Class 2 (Jan 23)

Cosmological and Philosophical Background

Chinese Medicine and Healing, Ch. 2 (Han)

Cosmos and the Psyche (Chapter 1) (Handout) Richard Tarnas

The Way and the Word Nathan Sivin

Class 3 (Feb. 13)

Chinese medicine as a clinical practice

Handout—introduction to TCM

Modalities of Chinese Medicine: Food and Plants

Modalities of Chinese Medicine: Channel/Vessel Therapies

Qi and the Transmission of knowledge

Video----non-linear transmission

Class 4 (Feb. 27)

Chinese Medicine and Modernity: Constructing a Tradition

Integrating East Asian Medicine, Ch. 4 Multiple Enactments of Chinese Medicine

"Biography of Wu Bo-ping" (pdf)

"Participant-Observation in Yunnan Province" (pdf)

Volker Scheid. "Chinese Medicine and the Problem of Tradition" (pdf)

Chinese Medicine and Healing, Ch. 8 The People's Republic of China. (Including all vignettes)

Class 5 (March 6)

Research Paradigms

"White Paper on Acupuncture Research" (PDF)

"The Question of Efficacy" (PDF) Nathan Sivin

Epistemology and Tibetan Medicine (PDF)

Evidenced-based Medicine (PDF)

"Placebos and Painkillers: Is Mind as Real as Matter?" (PDF)

Class 6 (March 13)

Midterm

Spring Break (March 20)

Class 7 (March 27)

Field Trip—Guang An Men Chinese Medicine Hospital

Class 8 (April 3)

“Science” and the Chinese Medical Tradition

Neither Donkey Nor Horse (chapter 7)

“The Scientific and Contemplative Exploration of Consciousness” (PDF)

Integrating East Asian Medicine, Ch 8-9

Cognitive Science and Chinese Medicine (lecture)

Class 9 (April 10)

Integrated Medicine in Contemporary China

Integrating East Asian Medicine, Ch. 3 and 6

Medical Transitions in Contemporary China, Ch. 12, “The Institutionalization of Chinese Medicine”

“Qigong Fever”(Handout)

Class 10 (April 17)

Translating/Transplanting Chinese Medicine

Chinese Medicine and Healing, Ch. 9 and 10

Anne Harrington, *The Cure Within: A History of Mind-Body Medicine*, “From Mao to Moyers: Qi, China, and the Invention of an Ancient Tradition,” (2007) 222-242

Paul Unschuld, “Traditional Chinese medicine: some historical and epistemological reflections,” *Soc Sci Med*, 1987;24(12):1023-9.

Class 11 (April 24)

Defining “Effective Medicine”

Group/Pair Presentations

Class 12 (Friday, April 26th) (make-up class)

Field Trip:

- 1. Tour of Da Fu Tang Chinese Medicine Clinic and Imperial Medicine and Health Cultivation Research Institute**
- 2. Qigong in Ritan Park**

Class 13 (May 8)

Summary

Final Due in Class

Important Note:

While Professor Ochs is a licensed practitioner of Chinese medicine, in her capacity as the instructor in this course she cannot make nor is she making recommendations for medical services or health care of any sort.

Her lectures and classroom discussions examine the modalities, methods, and philosophies behind such diagnoses and treatments. However, neither those lectures and discussions nor the assigned readings are to be treated as advice to students about how to address their own health situation.

Likewise, Professor Ochs accompanies students on local field trips so that students might witness various methods of Chinese medicine in a unique and intimate setting. In doing so, she is not advocating certain treatments, but only introducing these settings to add to students' understanding of the complexities of Chinese culture and healthcare. Students should not see these visits as advocacy; only as unique opportunities to see Chinese medicine at work.

Students should not seek out Professor Ochs or any other faculty at TBC for suggestions concerning medical matters, nor will any of the faculty or staff at TBC provide any advice on treatments or prescriptions.

As with all TBC students, students in this course who need or are interested in pursuing medical treatment of any sort must speak with the staff in the office of Student Development at TBC, so that they may then be made aware of what their insurance and healthcare plan provides for, and what options are available. Students should not look to take what is in this class and apply to their own particular health circumstances without the advice of the medical services provided through the insurance plan they have for their time in China.