Spring 2019
TBC 2510 Introduction to Daoism

Credit Hours: 3.0
Class Times and Location: 1:30-4:00pm, Room 439
Instructor: WEN Haiming, Ph.D.
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Course Description
Together with Buddhist and Confucianism, Daoism played an important role in the forming of Chinese civilization. While as the only indigenous religion among the three, Daoism is hard to define. It permeated almost every aspects of Chinese life, from the imperial court, upper class to the beliefs and customs of the lower class; from pre modern era to the 21st century China. In each stage of its development, Daoism linked closely with politics, art, natural science and social life of the Chinese people and society.

Starting from Laozi and his Tao te Ching, the most translated work in world literatures besides Bible, the main goal of the course will be to understand various aspects of Daoist text, Daoism (Daoist philosophy), and Daoist religion, and familiarize the students with the theological and ritual foundations of Daoist religion. The founding, development, modernity of Daoism will be introduced to the students. Besides, one or two field trips, one dialogue with Daoist Monks and one movie discussion will also be included. The course concludes with reflections on the nature of Daoism and the way it has been perceived and interpreted by modern scholars and common people.

Learning Outcome
1. Students are required to have a general knowledge of early Daoist thinkers, like Laozi and Zhuangzi, etc. and their teachings in historical context;
2. Students should be familiar with the main phases and development in Daoist doctrine and practices;
3. Students should have an awareness of the social cultural impact of Daoism within Chinese culture and how its ideas and practices influenced traditional Chinese society.

Textbook


Course Requirements

1. Course readings


2. Attendance Policy
For general rules, please refer to TBC regulations.
Specifically for this course:
1. Unexcused absence is not allowed in this class, including the field trips to Baiyun Guan or Miaofeng Mountain;
2. 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.
3. All other absences are considered to be unexcused. Late attendance may eventually cause grade detraction.
   Note cell phones and computers are not allowed in the class (except for occasional collective usage arranged by the professor)

3. Grading
a. Attendance (15%);
b. Presentation and class involvement (15%): Students are expected to present on the articles and book chapters assigned by the professor. A 15-20 minute presentation and students’ discussion on the topic are required.
c. Midterm exam (30%);
d. Final Exam (40%) and Paper (double space, 4-8 pages long).

4. Academic Honesty Statement
Please click the following link to see The Beijing Center’s policy on Academic Integrity: [http://thebeijingcenter.org/academic-integrity](http://thebeijingcenter.org/academic-integrity)

Course Schedule

**Week 1**
Course Introduction and Cultural Origin of Taoism
Introducing Daoism related Concepts and related philosophical thoughts
**Readings:** a. *Taoism-Growth of Religion*, P.1-25
Concepts: Yin and Yang, Book of Changes, Nature & Nurture;
Note: A Daoist will be invited to the class, showing Taoist tools, dressings, etc. and answering questions and interacting with the students.

**Week 2**
Foundation of Taoism (I): Laozi, Dao-te Ching and Warring States Daoism
Laozi and Zhuangzi are two important figures in Daoist founding history because they provide a comprehensive introduction to the mainstays of the Daoist teachings and outlines early visions and practices of body cultivation as well as the dominant facets of Chinese
cosmology.
Key concepts: cosmology, non-action, Dao, Qi, etc.


**Week 3**
Field Trip: Baiyun Temple in Beijing City Center
Please be noted: Baiyun Temple closes at 4pm. The field trip may on Feb. 3 or 4 depending on TBC’s weekend arrangement and the students’ availability.

**Questions to be observed:**
How is Daoism related with people’s common life and commercial activities? What’s the attitude of the Daoists to common people and vice versa, according to your observation there?
Laozi’s statue and three stone harmonious monkeys are to be founded by the students.

**No classes on Feb. 15 and 22** due to TBC academic excursion and the Spring Festival Holiday.

**Week 4** Foundation of Taoism (II): Laozi, Dao-te Ching
Further study of Dao-te Ching.
Readings:

**Week 5**
Foundation of Taoism (III): Daodejing and Zhuangzi
Key concepts: the Circulating of Qi and the art of Nourishing Life, etc.

**Week 6**
Foundation of Taoism (III): Daodejing and Zhuangzi
Key concepts: the Circulating of Qi and the art of Nourishing Life, etc.

Mid-term Exam on March 22.
Spring Break on March 29.
Tomb Sweeping Festival on April 5

**Week 7**
Foundation of Taoism (IV): Zhuangzi and Warring States Daoism
Zhuangzi’s dialectics: Dreaming of Butterflies, etc
**Reading:** *Chinese Philosophy (WCP)*, by Haiming Wen, Cambridge University Press, 2012.

**Week 8**
Foundation of Taoism (V): Zhuangzi and Warring States Daoism
Zhuangzi’s dialectics: Cook Ding, etc
Reading:


**Week 9**
The Growth and Expansion of Taoism:
1. The Celestial Masters: Exploring the main medieval schools: the millenarian and peasant-based
Readings: Taoism-Growth of a Religion, P53-78
2. Ge Hong and Wei-Jin Dynasty Daoism
Readings: Taoism-Growth of a Religion, P78-114
3. Shangqing School and Lingbo School’s Reconstructing of Taoism
Readings: Taoism-Growth of a Religion, P114-184
4. The Rise and Fall of Daoism in Tang and Post-Tang Era
Readings: Taoism-Growth of a Religion, P184—212
5. The Expansion of Taoism among the Mongol Rulers in Yuan Dynasty
Readings: Taoism-Growth of a Religion, P212-257

Questions to be observed by the students: Why Daoism but not other religions? Why the Mongols finally be converted as Tibetan Buddhists?

**Week 10**
Daoism: China and Overseas: Ming and Qing Dynasty as well as Popular Religions

1. The Decline of Daoism and the synthesis of three “religions”
2. Confronting the changes of western religions
3. Summary: Daoism and Popular Religion in Imperial China

Discussion on Movie “ A Chinese Ghost Story” (倩女幽魂, Directed by Ching Siu-tung, 1987)
Please be noted: an advance watching of the movie is required.

**Week 11**
Final Week: final paper due.