



The Beijing Center

北京中国学中心

TBC 2510 Daoism

Please Note: This is a sample syllabus, and the course schedule is subject to change. Students will receive the updated syllabus prior to the start of first class.

Course Description

Chinese people have had a variety of faiths. During the long course of China's feudal society, Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism used to serve as the three mainstays for Chinese culture and civilization and pervasively and persistently dominated the traditional Chinese mind. They permeated not only the ruling circles and political institutions of the upper classes, but also the beliefs and customs of the people from the lower social strata. Hence, without an adequate knowledge of Chinese religions as it were, one can hardly obtain a sound knowledge of Chinese tradition, nor can one very well know about the way of life of the Chinese people and Chinese society.

In the process of its rise to its decline throughout the country's feudal society, religious Daoism established a relationship with China's Confucianism and the heterogeneous religions of mutual repulsion and mutual assimilation, developing toward syncretism. In each stage of its development, religious Daoism was always closely linked with and exerted profound influence upon the politics, economy, culture, art, natural sciences, and social life.

Course Outcomes

This class is a guide to the spiritual landscape of Daoism. In it the students will encounter events in the history of Daoism, meet the sages who wrote the Daoist texts, be introduced to the various schools of Daoist thinking, and get a feel for what it means to practice Daoism today.

Attendance Policy

Unexcused absence is not allowed in this class. 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. All other absences are considered to be unexcused. Late attendance may eventually cause grade deduction.

Academic Honesty Statement

Please see the following link, and read the text carefully: [Academic Integrity – The Beijing Center](#)

Assessment

15% to 20% of the class time will be used to have a class discussion on the assigned reading. Several schools organized field trips to religious places of worship and Daoist monasteries as a part of the class activities to provide the students with first-hand experience of the living Daoist practice.

The term grade consists of class attendance 10%, class involvement 10%, mid-term exam 30% and a term paper 50%. Term paper (10-15 pages) should be submitted no later than the last day of class.

Required Texts

Wilhelm, Richard. 1962. *The Secret of the Golden Flower*. New York: A Harvest Book.

Chan, Wing-tist. *The Way of Lao Tzu, Translated, with introductory essays, comments, and notes by*, WING-TSIT CHAN, paperback, New York, St. John's University Press, 1963.

Fung Yu-lan. *Chuang-Tzu, A new Selected Translation*, Shanghai, Commercial Press, 1933. (available in SACRED TEXTS OF THE WORLD a universal anthology)

Fung Yu-lan. *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy*, New York, The Free Press, 1997

Reserved Readings

Wong, Eva. 1997. *Taoism - A complete introduction to the history, philosophy, and practice of an ancient Chinese spiritual tradition*. Boston: Shambhala Publications.

Robinet, Isabelle. 1997. *Taoism-Growth of a Religion*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Kohn, Livia. 2003. *Monastic Life in Medieval Daoism*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

Wong, Eva. 2000. *The Health, Longevity, and Immortality*, Boston: Shambhala Publications.

All the above-mentioned readings are available in TBC library.

Class Schedule

Week 1

Introduction: Definitions and Controlling Concepts Taoism-Growth of a Religion P1-25

Week 2

The Warring States Taoism-The Dao TeJing Chan, Wing-tist, *The Way of Lao Tzu, a Translation and Study of the Tao-te Ching*, paperback, New York, St. John's University Press, 1962.

Week 3

Zhuangzi Fung Yu-lan, *Chuang-Tzu, A new Selected Translation*, Shanghai, Commercial Press, 1933.

Week 4

The Celestial Masters Taoism-Growth of a Religion P53-78 Kohn, Livia. 2003. *Monastic Life in Medieval Daoism*. Honolulu: University of Hawai i Press. Wong, Eva. 2000. *The Health, Longevity, and Immortality*, Boston: Shambhala Publications. P70-115

Week 5

Gehong and His Tradition Taoism-Growth of a Religion P78-114 Kohn, Livia. 2003. *Monastic Life in Medieval Daoism*. Honolulu: University of Hawai i Press. Wong, Eva. 2000. *The Health, Longevity, and Immortality*, Boston: Shambhala Publications. P201-277

Week 6

The Shangqing and Lingbao School Taoism-Growth of a Religion P114- 184

Week 7

The Tang Period Taoism-Growth of a Religion P184-212

Week 8

Under Song and the Yuan: Interior Alchemy Taoism-Growth of a Religion P212-257

Week 9

The Decline of The Taoist Religion and the Rise of Secret Societies during the Period of the Ming and Qing Dynasties

Week 10

Seven Taoist Masters Wong, Eva. 1997. *Taoism - A complete introduction to the history, philosophy, and practice of an ancient Chinese spiritual tradition*. Boston: Shambhala Publications. Robinet, Isabelle. 1997. *Taoism-Growth of a Religion*. Stanford: Stanford University Press. P5-98

Week 11

Taoist Monastic Life-Monastic Life in Medieval Daoism P87-140

Week 12

Systems of Taoism Taoism-A complete introduction P99-195

Week 13

Finals Week