

**COURSE SPECIFICATION DOCUMENT**

<b>Academic School/Department:</b>	School of General Education
<b>Programme:</b>	Minor in Chinese Studies
<b>FHEQ Level:</b>	5
<b>Course Title:</b>	Chinese Philosophy and Chinese Society
<b>Course Code:</b>	MCL 5205
<b>Course Leader:</b>	George Xingseng Zhang
<b>Student Engagement Hours:</b>	120
Lectures:	22.5
Seminar / Tutorials:	22.5
Independent / Guided Learning:	75
<b>Semester:</b>	Fall/Spring
<b>Credits:</b>	12 UK CATS credits 6 ECTS credits 3 US credits

**Course Description:** The course will be based on critical reading and interpretation of selected texts available in English by influential Chinese thinkers and philosophers in ancient times such as Confucius, Lao Zi, Zhuang Zi etc. and analytical and critical commentary writings by both Chinese and European sinologists. With emphasis on a few fundamental concepts and ideas that impact on the Chinese way of thinking and behaviour, the course explores how the Chinese people and society interact with such key philosophies, ideas and events that construct the Chinese culture and underlines the structure and working of the Chinese society in the past and at the present.

**Prerequisites:** GEP 4180

**Aims and Objectives:**

The course aims to develop a sound understanding on the part of the students of key concepts and ideas of ancient Chinese philosophers and thinkers that have both informed and formed the bedrock of the Chinese culture and influenced the Chinese society even today, through critical reading of selected texts in English translation. Wherever possible, students will refer to the key concepts in original Chinese,

utilising their linguistic and intercultural skills acquired through the Chinese Language and Culture courses. Through the link established between Chinese cultural fundamentals, modern China, and Chinese society, the course enables students to gain an insight into not only the named Chinese philosophers and thinkers, but also the behaviour of Chinese people, so as to have a deep understanding of modern China. The course aims to enhance students' ability to apply complex abstract concepts to the past and current Chinese social and political situations, as well as their transferrable presentation, research and writing skills.

**Programme Outcomes:**

A detailed list of the programme outcomes is found in the Programme Specification. This is maintained by Registry and located at:

<http://www.richmond.ac.uk/programme-and-course-specifications/>

**Learning Outcomes:**

By the end of this course, successful students should be able to:

- demonstrate familiarity with some key concepts, ideas and contents in selected texts from Analects, Daode Jing, and some other relevant classic works
- demonstrate enhanced knowledge of the main phases of the development of Chinese thought by studying the role that these key concepts and texts ('classics') have played over time
- demonstrate awareness of the importance of specific concepts and ideas in the context of Chinese language and their implications for the Chinese culture and behaviours of the Chinese people
- demonstrate fundamental bilingual research skills through comparing the original with the translation and an enhanced awareness of the importance of shifting interpretations of key texts over time
- apply comparative and critical analyses with their own reflections and to express themselves clearly both in oral presentation and in written format

**Indicative Content:**

- Selected reading from a variety of Chinese classics through English translation by reputable translators such as Arthur Waley and James Legge: including extracts from Analects, Daode jing (*Tao te ching*), Xiaoyao You (Zhuangzi) and the Art of War (Sunzi) etc.
- In addition to the above that relate to Confucianism and Taoism, it will also examine Buddhism and its integration into Chinese culture, along with the above two mentioned schools of thoughts
- Popular religions and ancestral worship practice and their role in shaping the Chinese culture

- Tang poetry, as a vehicle of expression, both aesthetic and political, with the use of language combining emotion and images, and its impact on modern Chinese writing and culture
- Expression and reflection of all above in the behaviour of Chinese in modern China and today in search of the national revival with the dilemma and challenges faced

**Assessment:**

This course conforms to the University Assessment Norms approved at Academic Board.

**Teaching Methodology:**

This course combines lectures and interactive discussion. Students are encouraged to reflect on their own reading of the selected Chinese classical texts in the light of the recommended readings by both Western and Chinese sinologists and Chinese studies specialists and are expected to participate fully in classroom discussions. Learning is supported by a range of additional readings with tasks both in and outside classroom, involving project, group or pair work. Student work is assessed through a variety of ways using both formative and summative approaches.

**Bibliography:**

See syllabus for complete reading list

**Indicative Text(s):**

- Ebrey, Patricia Buckley. *The Cambridge Illustrated History of China*. 2nd ed. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010.
- Norman, Jerry. *Chinese*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988.
- Spence, Jonathan. *The Search for Modern China*. London: W W Norton and Co, 1991.
- Yu, Anthony. *State and Religion in China: Historical and Textual Perspectives*. Chicago: Open Court, 2005.
- Jing, Jun (ed.). *Feeding China's Little Emperors: Food, Children, and Social Change*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000.
- Palmer, David A, Glenn Shive and Philip L. Wickeri. eds. *Chinese Religious Life*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- Han, Lifeng; Wu, Emma Lejun; Cai, Hua, *Insider China*. Lexus Ltd., 2009.
- Lin, Yutang, *The Chinese Way of Life*. World Publishing Company, 1959.

