



# **Chinese Religions**

REL 3318, Fall 2014

Yu-jing Chen

Religion Department, University of Florida

## **Class Time & Location**

Mon: 3:00-3:50 PM; Wed: 3:00-3:50 PM and 4:05-4:55 PM

Location: MAT 105

## **Office Hours & Contact Information**

Mon: 12:50-2:40 PM, and by appointment;  
132 Anderson Hall; email: yujingche@ufl.edu

## **Course Description**

The course introduces and surveys the main religious traditions in China, including Buddhism, Confucianism, Daoism, and popular religion. While the course explores the formations and transformations of essential beliefs, practices, doctrines, and religious institutions, it also examines the mutual exchange and influence among different traditions. The lectures, discussions, and reading of select primary and secondary sources allow students to explore the multi-faceted religious life in both medieval and modern China.

## **Prerequisites**

There are no formal prerequisites, although some prior knowledge of Chinese history will be helpful. No knowledge of the Chinese language is required.

## **Course Format**

This course is a combination of lectures, discussions, and presentations based on the assigned readings. Students are also encouraged to engage in the study of relevant materials.

## **Requirements**

- **Attendance** (15 points, and see note on attendance below).
- **One Presentation.** The student who is responsible to present should summarize the assigned readings of the week, highlight key issues, and bring up at least 3 questions for discussion. Each student has 10-15 minutes (15 points).
- **Two Exams** based on lectures, the assigned readings, videos, and course discussions (each 35 points).

## **Required Texts**

- Poceski, Mario. *Introducing Chinese Religions*. Routledge, 2009.  
Also available in an e-book format, as *Chinese Religions: the eBook*.<sup>1</sup>
- Sommer, Deborah, ed. *Chinese Religion: An Anthology of Sources*. Oxford University Press, 1995.

## **Additional Readings** (Available by logging on to Course Reserve (ares) in Library West website)

- Dean, Kenneth. *Taoist Ritual and Popular Cults of Southeast China*. Princeton University Press, 1993: 173-187 (conclusion).
- Yü, Chün-fang. *Kuan-Yin: The Chinese Transformation of Avalokiteśvara*. Columbia University Press, 2000: 407-448 (ch.10).
- Lopez, Donald S. *Religions of China in Practice*. Princeton University Press, 1996: 423-436 (ch.34).
- Bays, Daniel H. "Chinese Protestant Christianity Today," in Daniel L. Overmyer ed., *Religion in China Today*. Cambridge University Press, 2003: 182-198.

## **Educational Objectives and Learning Outcomes**

1. To provide students the framework, the main features, and the historical development of Chinese religious traditions.
2. To broaden students' understanding of the Chinese religions from doctrinal, political, cultural, historical, institutional, literary, and artistic perspectives.
3. To survey how a variety of elements reshape the contemporary ideas of Chinese religious practices.

## **Lecture Topics and Course Schedule** (Tentative and subject to change)

<b>W 1:</b> 8/25, 8/27	<b>Introductions to the Course</b> Poceski, Intro (p.1-7)
<b>W 2:</b> 9/3	<b>Earliest Forms of Religious Life in China</b> Poceski, ch. 1; Sommer 13–16, 21–26, 31–39
<b>W 3:</b> 9/8, 9/10	<b>Confucius and the Classical Confucian Tradition</b> Poceski, ch. 2; Sommer 41–48, 55–70
<b>W 4:</b> 9/15, 9/17	<b>Early Texts and the Emergence of Religious Daoism</b> Poceski, ch. 3; Sommer 71–83
<b>W 5:</b> 9/22, 9/24	<b>Daoist Traditions and Practices</b> Poceski, ch. 4; Sommer 149–51, 199–203

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<sup>1</sup> The (cheaper) e-book version of Poceski's book is published by JBE Online Books ([jbeonlinebooks.org/eBooks/chineseReligions](http://jbeonlinebooks.org/eBooks/chineseReligions)). Students can choose to use either version of the book.

- W 6: 9/29, 10/1**     **Daoist Rituals and Popular Cults**  
Kenneth Dean 173–187; DVD: *Bored in Heaven*
- W 7: 10/6, 10/8**     **Spread and Flourishing of Buddhism in China**  
Poceski, ch. 5; Sommer 127–143
- W 8: 10/13**            **Review** (Mon)
- W 8: 10/15**            **Exam I** (Wed)
- W 9: 10/20, 10/22**   **Traditions and Schools of Chinese Buddhism**  
Poceski, ch. 6; Sommer 119–125, 155–164
- W 10: 10/27, 10/29** **Devotional Practices**  
Yü Chün-fang 407–448; DVD: *Kuan-yin (Guanyin) Pilgrimage*
- W 11: 11/3, 11/5**     **Popular Religions**  
Poceski, ch. 7; Donald Lopez 423–436
- W 12: 11/10, 11/12** **Later Transformations of Confucianism**  
Poceski, ch. 8; Sommer 169–75, 189–96
- W 13: 11/17, 11/19** **Islam and Christianity in China**  
Poceski, ch. 9
- W 14: 11/24**           **Christianity Today**  
Daniel Bays 182–198; DVD: *The Cross—Jesus in China*
- W 15: 12/1, 12/3**     **Religions in Modern China**  
Poceski, ch. 10; Sommer 309–316
- W 16: 12/8**            **Review** (Mon)
- W 16: 12/10**          **Exam II** (Wed)

### ***Online e-Learning System and Course Reserves***

The syllabus and other course materials are posted online via UF’s e-Learning system. To access it, go to the e-Learning Support Systems homepage <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/>. The Course Reserves can be found at <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/>. After choosing “My Account” option of the library webpage, log on to “Course Reserves” by your GatorLink username and password.

### ***Grading***

The final grade will be based on the course requirements. Grades will be computed on this scale:  
A = 100 – 93%; A- = 92.9 – 90%; B+ = 89.9 – 87%; B = 86.9 – 83%; B- = 82.9 – 80%; C+ = 79.9 – 77%;  
C = 76.9 – 73%; C- = 72.9 – 70%; D+ = 69.9 – 67%; D = 66.9 – 63%; D- = 62.9 – 60%; E = 59.9% or less.

## ***Attendance***

- Students are expected to **read all** the assigned materials **before** coming to class.
- Absences from class will have adverse effect on the final grade. Each unexcused hour of absence will lead to an automatic **1 point reduction** of the attendance grade.
- Valid excuses for missed classes must be submitted *in writing* and in a timely manner, along with pertinent legitimate documentation.
- Any student caught signing the attendance sheet for anyone other than themselves will be regarded as cheating and reported to Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution at Dean of Students' Office.
- Please attend the class **on time**. Coming late, leaving early and any disruptive behavior can be counted as unexcused absences.
- **No cell phones, iPads, or laptops in class**, except for taking notes. Using cell phones, texting messages, or browsing online are prohibited in class.
- For more on the university's attendance policies, see <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx#absences>

## ***Exams***

- **No make-up exams** will be given, except of illness or other emergency. If a student has a valid reason to reschedule the exam, he/she must present proper and legitimate written documentation to justify the inability to take the exam on schedule.
- Students should prepare for all exams seriously. The exams are **closed book** tests. Cell phones and any other electronic devices are not allowed during the exams.
- Students should be aware that the exams will cover from **the assigned readings, videos, lectures, to course discussions**.

## ***Plagiarism and Cheating***

Students are expected to adhere to university codes of academic integrity. Plagiarism and cheating are serious offenses that will result in a failing grade and severe penalties. Any suspected plagiarizing and cheating will be directly reported to Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution at Dean of Students' Office and be rigorously investigated. For more information on the policy of academic honesty, see <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/student-honor-code.aspx>

## ***Student Disability Services***

Student with a disability must first register with **the Disability Resource Center** at the Dean of Students Office via <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc> and get accommodation letter. The student should consult with the instructor and the Disability Resource Center at **the beginning of the semester**. Official documentation from the Dean of Students Office is required before requesting classroom, reading, or testing accommodation.