



Chinese Religions

REL 3318, Fall 2016

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Religion Department, University of Florida

Class Time & Location

Mon: 4:05-4:55 PM; Wed: 4:05-4:55; 5:10-6:00 PM

Location: AND 134

Office Hours & Contact Information

Mon: 2:30-3:50 PM, and by appointment;
123 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** (15 points): Each student is required to make one presentation in the semester (10-15 minutes). The presenter chooses a topic pertinent to class weekly section. The goal of this presentation is to integrate materials and organize ideas in a clear and concise way. Students are expected to demonstrate their own perspectives on certain issues. Students should **NOT** merely summarize the assigned reading. A successful presentation must analyze specific issue(s) and bring up at least 3 questions for discussion. The schedule will be determined in the beginning of the semester.
- **In-class Midterm** (35 points) **and Final Exams** (35 points): Each exam will include multiple-choice and

short-answer questions. Students should be aware that the exams will cover from the assigned readings, lectures, to course discussions.

Required Texts

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

Additional Readings (Available on eLearning)

- 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).

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)

W 1: 8/22, 8/24	Introductions to the Course Poceski, Intro (p.1-7)
W 2: 8/29, 8/31	Earliest Forms of Religious Life in China Poceski, ch. 1; Sommer 13–16, 21–26, 31–39
W 3: 9/7	Confucius and the Classical Confucian Tradition Poceski, ch. 2; Sommer 41–48, 55–70
W 4: 9/12, 14	Early Texts and the Emergence of Religious Daoism Poceski, ch. 3; Sommer 71–83
W 5: 9/19, 9/21	Daoist Traditions and Practices Poceski, ch. 4; Sommer 149–51, 199–203

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

W 6: 9/26, 9/28	Daoist Rituals and Popular Cults Kenneth Dean 173–187; DVD: <i>Bored in Heaven</i>
W 7: 10/3, 10/5	Spread and Flourishing of Buddhism in China Poceski, ch. 5; Sommer 127–143
W 8: 10/10	Review (Mon)
W 8: 10/12	Exam I (Wed)
W 9: 10/17, 19	Traditions and Schools of Chinese Buddhism Poceski, ch. 6; Sommer 119–125, 155–164
W 10: 10/24, 26	Devotional Practices Yü Chün-fang 407–448; DVD: Kuan-Yin pilgrimage
W 11: 10/31, 11/2	Popular Religions Poceski, ch. 7; Donald Lopez 423–436
W 12: 11/7, 9	Later Transformations of Confucianism Poceski, ch. 8; Sommer 169–75, 189–96
W 13: 11/14, 16	Islam and Christianity in China Poceski, ch. 9
W 14: 11/21	Contemporary Religious Life DVD: Alms
W 15: 11/28, 30	Religions in Modern China Poceski, ch. 10; Sommer 309–316
W 16: 12/5	Review (Mon)
W 16: 12/7	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 Systems at <http://elearning.ufl.edu/>

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. If students miss more than 2 class meetings (2 hours), each unexcused additional 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. The 12-day rule applies to students who participate in athletic or extracurricular activities.
- Any student caught signing the attendance sheet for anyone other than himself/herself will be regarded as cheating and reported to Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution at Dean of Students' Office.
- **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.