Course Information: PHIL C088 section 001 — 3 undergraduate credits

Instructor: Prof. R. J. Magyar, Ph.D.

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Office Hours: 11:00 – Noon. Mondays & Wednesdays.

Office: 5064 McAlister Hall

Course Description: Eastern philosophy is an introduction and review of significant perennial issues in the history of philosophy. Students will study traditional worldviews from India, China, Tibet, Japan, and the Middle East. The course aims at developing an appreciation of philosophy, an awareness of perennial issues in philosophy, and an introduction to significant Eastern philosophers and philosophies. Overall, the ultimate goal is to bring about a confident competence on the basic branches and problems of philosophy relative to the mentioned objectives. This competence will be determined by homeworks, quizzes, a midterm examination, a final examination, a thesis paper, and class participation.

We will be reading primary sources in Eastern philosophy as well as secondary sources in order to learn about these philosophies. Some primary sources that we will be reading are representative selections from the Upanishads, Bhagavad-Gita, Book of the Dead, Dhamapada, various Buddhist Sermons, Confucius’ Analects, Lao-Tzu’s Tao-te-ching, Mencius’ On Human Nature, and Milandaphana’s The Chariot.
Basic branches of philosophy to be addressed in the course will include metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, political philosophy, aesthetics, logic, and philosophy of mind. As a class we will direct some attention to the discrepancies between various philosophers. Furthermore, we will attempt to understand the pragmatic relevance of these philosophies to our modern world while simultaneously discovering the essential traits of philosophizing.

Prerequisites: None.

Course Learner Objectives:
Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:
- appreciate the value of philosophy;
- understand the main branches of academic study in philosophy;
- form judgments on some of the philosophical issues studied;
- know the meaning of key philosophical concepts;
- develop a basic philosophical vocabulary;
- broaden and hone one’s worldview;
- relate the practical relevance of philosophy to current issues;
- acquire a basic comprehension of significant eastern and western philosophies;
- formulate comparative analysis of eastern and western philosophies; and
- discover (personal) insights by authentically appropriating ideas from the readings.

Instructional Approach:
Rather than authoritatively describing the facts about Eastern philosophies, I will be engaging you in thinking on the subjects and issues in the readings. This interaction will be brought about via the Socratic method. The necessary conditions for participating in the class are 1) to take an attitude of respectful open-mindedness, 2) to think critically, and 3) to express your thinking by conversing in class. While the subject matter of philosophy is somewhat difficult, speaking will encourage you to think more deeply and sincerely about the material.

Required Texts:
1. Frederick Copleston’s *Religion and the One*
2. Chris Pretiss’ *Zen and the Art of Happiness*
3. Selections from Ancient Eastern Philosophies (PDF via email); hereafter referred to as *Selections*.

Recommended Text: Joel Feinberg’s *Doing Philosophy: A Guide to the Writing of Philosophy Papers*
Course Schedule:

1/6: Introduction to the Course.
1/8: Zen and the Art of Happiness, chapter 1 - 4.

1/15: Zen and the Art of Happiness, chapters 8 - 10.

1/20: Religion and the One, chapter 1 & 2.
1/22: Religion and the One, chapter 3 & 4.

1/27: Religion and the One, chapter 5 & 6.
1/29: Religion and the One, chapter 7.

2/3: Religion and the One, chapter 8 & 9.
2/5: Religion and the One, chapter 10.

2/12: MIDTERM.


2/24: Selections, Reading #2: Dhamapada.
2/26: Selections, Reading #3: Diamond Sermon.

2/31: Selections, Reading #4 & 5: Fire Sermon & Heart Sutra.
3/2: Selections, Reading #6: Confucius’ Analects (edited).

3/7: Selections, Reading #7: Lao-Tzu’s The Way (edited).

3/14: Selections, Reading #9 & 10: The Chariot & Upanishads

Assessment and Grading Policy:

The course grade will be determined by assigning the following percents to each of the following categories:

- 25% Final
- 25% Midterm
- 25% Thesis Paper
- 15% Homeworks & Quizzes
- 10% Participation
The University grading system is as follows:

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tr>
<td>A+</td>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
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<td>A-</td>
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<td>B+</td>
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<td>B</td>
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<td>B-</td>
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<td>C+</td>
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<td>C-</td>
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**Exams:** There will be two closed-book examinations: the midterm and the final. These examinations will consist of multiple choice, true/false, short answer, and essay questions. Prior to the tests, more details will be discussed.

**Thesis Paper:** The term paper for this course will be a substantial inquiry into a topic of your choice. The paper is to be an argumentative essay on a controversial issue in philosophy. The essay must include a bibliography that is to contain at least three reference sources (other than the readings in the course text). Though no rewrites will be accepted, you may consult with me on rough drafts. Your term paper must be an argumentative thesis paper wherein you present, and cogently argue for, your position on a particular philosophical issue. Argumentative thesis papers are from 5-7 pages in length wherein the paper is double-spaced, with one-inch margins, and uses a standard font of 12-point size.

**Quizzes:** Quizzes will be given before the start of sessions. These are closed-book true/false and short-answer quizzes taken at the beginning of the sessions to diagnose basic reading comprehension.

**Home-works:** Home-works will be assigned in class and will be submitted in hard-copy format. Late home-works will only be accepted with an excused absence. Electronic submissions will not be graded; if you are excusably absent the date a homework is due, then you may send an email with the contents of the homework in the body of an email to show that the work was completed on time (though you must turn in the homework as hard-copy the next session).

**Participation:** It is expected that you will come to class prepared, having read any assigned readings before coming to class. It is also expected that you will participate in class. As explained above part of your grade will be based on your class participation. Unexcused absences will negatively affect your grade. Mere attendance does not constitute sufficient participation. Please turn off cell-phones.

**Grading Standards:**

**Grade of A:**

* Consistently superior scores on exams.
* Assignments completed in prescribed form, on time, with evidence of careful research on subject matter and planned presentation.
* Consistently shows independent thinking in terms of the subject matter of the course, either in written assignments and/or class discussion.
* Shows grasp of relationships among various parts of subject.
* Applies learning to new situations.
* Asks questions that are appropriate and stimulate relevant discussion.
Grade of B:
* Consistently above average achievement on examinations.
* Assignments completed in prescribed form and on time - above average in quality.
* Demonstrates independent thinking in written assignments and/or class discussions.
* Shows grasp of general organization of subject matter by noting parallels in written assignments and discussions.
* Demonstrates that the reasons for learning subject matter are understood and some applications made.
* Asks questions which clarify presentation of the subject and demonstrate above average knowledge.

Grade of C:
* Satisfactory scores on examinations.
* Assignments completed in correct form, on time, and of an acceptable quality.
* Presents evidence of satisfactory grasp of assigned subject matter, either written assignments and/or class discussions.
* Shows satisfactory grasp of organization of subject matter.
* Demonstrates some understanding of the relationship of the subject to academic, vocational, or social goals.
* Asks relevant questions.

Grade of D:
* Below average examination scores but high enough to show better-than-chance responses.
* Assignments completed in imperfect form or not completed on time; quality of work is marginal.
* Shows grasp of individual units of subject matter but little evidence of inter-relationships.
* Shows some application of material, but with little insight.
* Is a passive listener rather than an active participant in class discussion?

Grade of F:
* Unsatisfactory test scores.
* Assignments omitted, incomplete or unacceptable.
* Is inattentive in class.
* Demonstrates little or no interest in or comprehension of subject matter.
* Unsatisfactory progress toward achieving intended class goals.

Americans with Disability Act:
Students with documented disabilities who need course accommodations, have emergency medical information or require special arrangements for building evacuation should contact the instructor within the first two weeks of class.

Academic Honesty Policy:
Drexel University is committed to a learning environment that embraces academic honesty. In order to protect members of our community from results of dishonest conduct, the University has adopted policies to deal with cases of academic dishonesty. Please read, understand, and follow the “Academic Honesty Policy” as written in the Official Student Handbook.

Student’s Responsibilities:
If the student requests an incomplete (I) or no-credit (NC) grade, it is the student’s responsibility to make sure she/he meets the University criteria and
deadlines for requesting these grades. If the student stops attending the class, she/he will not be automatically dropped from the course and she/he will receive a grade according to her/his overall performance. It is the student’s responsibility to make sure that she/he is properly enrolled in or withdrawn from the course.

**Course Drop/Withdrawal Policy:**
Once a student is registered, it is his/her responsibility to attend the course, drop the course, or withdraw from the course. Dropping and withdrawing are distinct actions that impact your course enrollment status. In either case, a form, with signature, is required. There are billing consequences and academic record impacts during this process; therefore, the student must attend to the proper procedure when dropping or withdrawing from a course. Please refer to the enroll/drop/withdraw policies. (N.B. Accelerated courses are on a compressed timeframe.)

**Incompletes:**
To be eligible for an incomplete you will need a sufficient excuse and a negotiated incomplete contract/form. Please do not abuse this privilege.

**Financial Obligations:**
Students who do not satisfy financial obligations to Drexel University cannot be entitled to a grade by the instructor or the University.

Instructor reserves the right to make changes to this syllabus if circumstances warrant such change. All changes will be provided to students in writing.