

COURSE OUTLINE

PHIL-110

Introduction to Chinese Taoism 1 Semester Hour

HOWARD COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Description

An interdisciplinary introduction to Chinese Taoism using the methods and categories of philosophy but including the historical and cultural milieu of China, traditional Chinese landscape painting as expressive of Taoist philosophy and an examination of the wisdom texts *Tao Te Ching* and *Chuang-tzu*. Prerequisite: Eligible to enroll in ENGL-121. (1 hour weekly)

Overall Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Describe the development of Taoism as a religion and philosophy in China.
2. Analyze Taoism's worldview or metaphysics with respect to human existence, the cosmos, and ultimate reality.
3. Analyze Taoism's epistemology or knowledge theory.
4. Analyze Taoism's axiology or values system with respect to ethics and the moral life.
5. Compare and contrast Taoism and Western philosophy under the categories of metaphysics, epistemology, and axiology.
6. Define and explain the significance of Taoist images, including the valley, the female and the uncarved block.
7. Critically examine the concept of the Tao as an explanatory principle in Chinese life and thought and the role of nature as a model for the social order.

Major Topics

- I. Taoism and Confucianism
 - A. As represented by Lao-tzu and Confucius
 - B. As differing responses to the warring states period
 - C. As together creating a composite view of Chinese thought
- II. Key Taoist concepts
 - A. The Tao
 - B. Yin and Yang as complementary forces making one unity
 - C. Wu-wei or active non-doing
 - D. Mirror Mind
 - E. Inner nature
 - F. P'u or the power of things in their natural simplicity

III. Taoism in the modern world

- A. Traditional Chinese medicine and acupuncture
- B. Taoist principles applied to businesses and organizations
- C. Feng Shui or geomancy in architecture
- D. T'ai Chi Ch'uan and Qi Gong

Course Requirements

Grading/exams: Grading procedures will be determined by the individual faculty member but will include the following:

Reflective or analytic papers based on the concepts and methods of Taoist philosophy

Final grades will be based on essay exams or papers in combination with informal writing assignments and active student participation in class discussions.

Writing: Specific writing assignments will be determined by the individual faculty member but will include at least 1000 words of formal writing.

Other Course Information

This course meets the College definition for **Cultural Diversity**.

This course is a Humanities elective and an Arts and Sciences elective.