

Prof. Ari Daniel Levine
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312 LeConte Hall

Office Hours:
Tuesday & Thursday 3:30-4:30
(and by appointment)

History 4600/6600 ANCIENT CHINESE THOUGHT

This reading- and writing-intensive course is a survey of the major works of ancient Chinese thought. Designed to teach critical thinking skills and the philosophical method, assignments will emphasize the interpretation and analysis of primary source texts in translation. This discussion-driven seminar depends upon the close and careful reading of texts, and forces you to take ideas seriously. You will frequently be called upon to defend an intellectual position using logic and rhetoric in both speaking and writing.

READINGS: You will not complete the course successfully if you fall behind in the reading schedule, nor will you be able to participate in class discussions or group projects.

Printed Books: All of these textbooks are available at the UGA Bookstore, but feel free to buy them cheaper online:

Graham, A.C., trans. *Chuang-tzu: The Inner Chapters*. New York: Hackett, 2003.

Henricks, Robert, trans. *Laozi: Te-Tao Ching*. New York: Ballantine, 1992.

Lau, D.C., trans. *Mencius*. New York: Penguin, 1970.

Schwartz, Benjamin I. *The World of Thought in Ancient China*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1985.

Slingerland, Edward, trans. *Confucius: Analects*. Indianapolis: Hackett, 2003.

Watson, Burton, trans. *Han Feizi: Basic Writings*. Columbia UP, 2003.

Watson, Burton, trans. *Mozzi: Basic Writings*. Columbia UP, 2003.

Watson, Burton, trans. *Xunzi*. Columbia UP, 2003.

Web Materials and Email: We will be using the WebCT system. I will post course-related messages and announcements to WebCT, so you are responsible for checking the course page regularly. I will only respond to emails sent from your uga.edu account. For more information about how to email me, see page 5.

A Warning: You and you alone are responsible for knowing how to adhere to the code of academic honesty. The penalties for academic dishonesty are severe, and ignorance is not an acceptable defense. If I suspect you have violated the code of academic honesty through plagiarism or cheating, you will be subjected to the university's official adjudication process. UGA's official policy on academic honesty can be found at:

http://www.uga.edu/ovpi/academic_honesty/culture_honesty.htm

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Two 5-page Essays (15%, 15%): First essay due on 9/18, second essay due on 11/8. You will submit them at the beginning of class. No extensions whatsoever will be granted. For every 24 hours past the due date and time, you will be penalized one letter grade. If you submit your essay 4 days (96 hours) past the due date, or do not submit it at all, you will *automatically* receive a course grade of withdraw failing (WF).

In these essays, you will engage in a close analytical reading of a short passage of a *single* philosophical text. Suggested paper topics will be provided, but feel free to write about a text which interests you, as long as you clear it with me first, at least 7 days before the essay is due. The point of these assignments is to give you a chance to engage in a close, critical reading of a primary historical text. I will be happy to read and critique paper drafts, as long as you submit them to me at least 7 days before the due date.

In-class midterm examination (10%): Scheduled for 10/13, this exam will combine short-answer identifications and short thematic essays. Subject matter will be drawn primarily from primary and secondary source readings.

Performance in debates (15%): The last three sessions of the course will be a "Philosophic Showdown," a series of intellectual debates. Students will be divided into seven teams, one for each of the texts we've read this semester. As a team, you will be responsible for this text in its entirety, meaning that each of you will have a mastery of your thinker's content and form. I will give you more instructions the second week of the semester.

Take-home final examination (15%): Due 12/11. You will be given a week to write an 8-page essay, with a choice of topics, addressing a crucial issue or concept in ancient Chinese thought.

Class attendance (10%): Your most important responsibility is to attend class regularly. Attendance will be taken, and all absences will be considered unexcused. After your second absence from class, each subsequent absence will deduct one percentage point from your final course grade.

Participation in discussion (10%): Your discussion grade will depend upon your active and constructive participation in class throughout the semester. Please read the assigned readings carefully and critically before you come to class. Please come to class with talking points to discuss, as well as questions you'd like to have answered. You and your team will be responsible for facilitating the course discussion of your text, so please come to class extremely well-prepared, with questions to guide the discussion.

My Distraction Policy: Please turn off all pagers, cell phones, iPods, and other electronic devices before entering the classroom. If your cell phone rings, you will be considered absent that day.

Short writing assignments (10%): Every day marked *Close Reading*, please submit a one-page *typed* double-spaced explication and analysis of a *single* passage from the week's readings. These short writing assignments will help you to focus your thoughts, and to hone your critical reading skills. They will also provide you with talking points to discuss, questions to be answered, and building blocks of your essays.

SYLLABUS:

Week 1 Finding Our Way
8/16 Introduction to the Course

Week 2 Into the Early Chinese Worldview
8/21 How to Read a Text: the *Book of Changes*
Reading: To be explained in class on 8/16
8/23 How to Read a Text: the *Book of Documents and the Book of Songs*
Reading: Selections from the *Book of Documents* and the *Book of Songs* (to be distributed at the end of class on 8/21); Schwartz 16-55

Week 3 The Trouble with Kongzi
8/28 *Close Reading* The *Analects* 1
Reading: Slingerland, *Confucius: Analects* 1-110
Just read the main text (the large print), not the commentary (the small print)!
8/30 *Close Reading* The *Analects* 2
Reading: Slingerland, *Confucius: Analects* 111-235
Just read the main text (the large print), not the commentary (the small print)!

Week 4 When Mozi Argued with Kongzi
9/4 *Thinking Through* The *Analects*
Reading: Schwartz 56-134
9/6 *Close Reading* Mozi 1
Reading: Watson, *Mozi: Basic Writings* 19-80

Week 5 Idealistically Authoritarian Utilitarianism
9/11 *Close Reading* Mozi 2
Reading: Watson, *Mozi: Basic Writings B* 81-140
9/13 *Thinking Through* Mozi
Reading: Schwartz 135-185

FIRST ESSAY DUE IN CLASS 9/18

Week 6 Dancing with the Dao
9/18 OPEN DAY
9/20 *Close Reading* *Daode jing* 1
Reading: Henricks, *Te-Tao Ching* 7-50

Week 7 Varieties of Mystical Experience
9/25 *Close Reading* *Daode jing* 2
Reading: Henricks, *Te-Tao Ching* 53-89
9/27 *Thinking Through* *Daode jing*
Reading: Schwartz 186-215

Week 8 The Absurd Comedy of Human Existence
10/2 *Close Reading* Zhuangzi 1
Reading: Graham, *Chuang-Tzu: The Inner Chapters* 43-75
10/4 *Close Reading* Zhuangzi 2
Reading: Graham, *Chuang-Tzu: The Inner Chapters* 76-111

Week 9 The Sorting Which Evens Things Out

10/9 *Thinking Through Zhuangzi*

Reading: Schwartz 215-237

10/13 IN-CLASS MIDTERM

Week 10 Varieties of Pedantic Experience

10/16 *Close Reading* Mengzi 1

Reading: Lau, *Mencius* 49-127

10/18 *Close Reading* Mengzi 2

Reading: Lau, *Mencius* 128-204

Week 11 Separating Signal from Noise

10/23 *Thinking Through* Mengzi

Reading: Schwartz 255-290

10/25 NO CLASS: FALL BREAK

Week 12 Flirting with the Dark Side

10/30 *Close Reading* Xunzi 1

Reading: Watson, *Xunzi: Basic Writings* 15-57, 83-114

11/1 *Close Reading* Xunzi 2

Reading: Watson, *Xunzi: Basic Writings* 125-174

SECOND ESSAY DUE IN CLASS 11/8

Week 13 Cynical Realism, Realistic Cynicism

11/6 *Thinking Through* Xunzi

Reading: Schwartz 290-320

11/8 OPEN DAY

Week 14 Welcome, Dark Lord!

11/13 *Close Reading* Han Feizi 1

Reading: Watson, *Han Feizi: Basic Writings* 15-72

11/15 *Close Reading* Han Feizi 2

Reading: Watson, *Han Feizi: Basic Writings* 73-130

Week 15 The Showdown Begins

11/27 *Thinking Through* Han Feizi

Reading: Schwartz 321-349

11/29 The Philosophic Showdown, Part 1

Week 16 The Showdown Concludes

12/4 Philosophic Showdown, Part 2

12/6 Philosophic Showdown, Part 3

12/11 Take-Home Final Essay Due

How to email your professor

(adapted from <http://mleddy.blogspot.com/2005/01/how-to-e-mail-professor.html>)

I usually check my email once a day, and respond to emails within 48 hours (except when I'm extremely busy, at a conference, or on vacation). Since I receive a high volume of mail every day, I get frustrated with people who are clueless about email etiquette. It's in your best interest to adhere to the following guidelines:

Send it from your UGAMail account. This immediately lets me know that your e-mail is legitimate and not spam, and saves me from having to fish your legitimate message out of my spam folder. Don't send it through the WebCT system. Don't send it from an external account, especially if your address is cryptic or cutesy or salacious or offensive.

Include the course number in your subject line. "Question about 3661 paper" is clear and sounds genuine, while "Question" looks like spam.

Think carefully about what you're writing. This is a formal letter to your professor, not an instant message to a peer. You want your professor to take you and your request seriously. So make sure to use proper English spelling, punctuation, and capitalization. Smiley faces are not appropriate for junior high graduates.

Choose an appropriate greeting. "Dear Prof. Levine" is always appropriate. Please spell my surname correctly. "Sir" is much too obsequious. "Dude" is way too informal. Do not use "Hey" or "Hello" as a greeting.

Avoid boilerplate apologies for missing class. I don't need to know the details of your personal medical history, or your car's service record. If you missed class because of some especially serious or tragic circumstances, it might be better to mention that in person than in an e-mail.

Ask politely. "Could you e-mail me the paper topics? Thanks!" is a lot better than "Hey! I lost my syllabus. And I need the paper topics now!"

Proofread what you've written. You want your e-mail to show you in the best possible light. Sounding whiny, self-absorbed, and demanding is not only inappropriate and annoying, but totally counterproductive.

Sign with your full name. Far too many students carelessly neglect to sign their emails, which makes it hard for me to identify the sender. Signing is an obvious courtesy, and it eliminates the need for stilted self-identification ("I am a student in your such-and-such class").

When you get a reply, say thanks. Just hit Reply and say "Thanks." The old subject line (which will now have a "Re:" in front) will make the context clear. It's always appropriate to acknowledge that someone's message got through, and it's just common courtesy to say thanks.