Course Description:
This course will be an introduction to the major systems of thought of classical China. The emphasis of the course will be on the pre-Han dynasty (ca. 500 – 200 BCE) schools, although some brief attention will also be given to the later Neo-Confucian movement of the Song dynasty (960-1279), and to the emergence of Buddhism in China. These systems directly informed subsequent Chinese culture, and the class will include consideration of how cultural differences between China and the West may have emerged from them.

No clear demarcation between political, religious, ethical, and philosophical issues existed for the thinkers of ancient China. As a result, this course will cover a variety of philosophical, spiritual, and political concerns. The course will nonetheless have a unifying theme, namely, the theories of human nature that were developed by Chinese thinkers and the ways in which these theories structured political, religious, and philosophical views.

Goals and Objectives:
i. Increased awareness of Chinese political, ethical, and philosophical history.
ii. Enhanced recognition and understanding of cultural differences between China and western societies and their roots in the Chinese intellectual heritage.
iii. Improved critical reading and reasoning abilities.
iv. Exposure to stimulating and provocative philosophers from a major intellectual tradition.

Course Policies and Procedures:

Attendance: Attendance in lectures is expected. Since testable material is regularly introduced in lectures, it is impossible to miss class frequently and still do well in the course.

Late Papers: Assignments must be submitted at the beginning of the class period on which they are due for full credit. Late papers must be turned in by the start of the next class meeting; after that they will not be accepted. All accepted late papers are penalized a flat 10%.

Make-up Work: I am willing to re-schedule assignments for individuals who have a legitimate reason for doing so. If you know you are going to miss an exam date, you must notify me at least two class days in advance in order to receive a make-up. Unless you have made a prior arrangement with me, missed exams may be made up only in case of a documented emergency.

Disabilities Policy: Please see me if you have a disability which may affect your performance in the course (this includes learning disabilities such as dyslexia and attention deficit disorder). We will make arrangements to facilitate learning and fair evaluation.

Academic Dishonesty Policy: Academic dishonesty includes cheating on tests and homework as well as plagiarism. If you engage in academic dishonesty, I will notify you that you will receive an ‘F’ in the course. Upon being notified, you have five days to submit a written request to the department chairperson for a hearing on the matter, if you wish to have one. If no hearing request is made, or if the decision from the hearing goes against you, you will receive a course grade of ‘F’. Please see the Student Academic Conduct Policy of the University for details.
PHL 355: Chinese Philosophy    Spring, 2008    Eric Loomis

Course Description and Syllabus

Procedures for Assessment of Student Performance: Given that you adhere to the course policies, your grade will be determined on the basis of graded assignments as specified below:

Evaluation:

- Mid-semester exam (objective and short-essay) 20%
- Best Four of Five Short Essay Assignments 12% each
- Final exam (comprehensive: objective and short-essay): 22%
- Class attendance and participation: 10%

Assignments and other information are regularly posted on my home page:
http://www.southalabama.edu/philosophy/loomis/index.htm

The short written assignments are to be double-spaced, typewritten and 4-6 pages in length. Please see the attached "Short Assignment Guide" for details. They are due at the start of class one week after they are handed out. For late papers see the policy above.

Class Attendance. Your score is determined as follows:

- 2 or fewer unexcused absences: 10/10
- 3 unexcused absences: 8/10
- 4 unexcused absences: 6/10
- 5-6 unexcused absences: 4/10
- More than 6 unexcused absences: 0%

Regular classroom participation can increase your attendance score, but not above 10.

The number of unexcused absences is determined at the end of the semester by counting the number of times your name is missing from the sign-in sheet that I pass through the class most days.

Required Texts:


ii. A small number of papers are available on reserve in the university Library, online in the Course Reserve section of the library website at http://library.southalabama.edu/, and in the Philosophy Department (HUMB 124). Note that these are required readings.

iii. A version of the Waley translation of The Analects by Confucius. You can either purchase a copy (used copies are about $5 from Amazon.com) or print-out a copy online from:
http://www.geocities.com/onkellotus/Andere/AnalectsWaley.html

Syllabus: This syllabus is subject to change. Any changes will be announced in class in advance. "Sources" = Sources of the Chinese Tradition. CP = Course Packet (on reserve).

Week     Topic and Reading
1.      Introduction. Early concepts of Chinese philosophy.  
   Readings:
   - The Analects. Translation by Arthur Waley
2.      Ritual in Chinese culture: The Analects of Confucius
   Reading:
   - The Analects, cont.
PHL 355: Chinese Philosophy    Spring, 2008    Eric Loomis

Course Description and Syllabus

Reading:
- H. Fingarette Confucius – The Secular as Sacred. CP

Short Assignment #1 Handed Out 1/24 (due 1/31)

   Readings:
   - Confucious – The Secular as Sacred, cont.
   - Sources pp. 66-72
   - Mo-tzu selected chapters CP

5. Mohism on fatalism and heaven.
   Reading:
   Selected Mo-tzu chapters. CP

Tuesday 2/5 Mardi Gras: No Class

6. Yangism and Introduction to Taosim.
   Readings:
   - Yangism (handout)
   - Zhuangzi (Chuang-Tzu), selections. CP

   Short Assignment #2 Handed Out 2/12 (Due 2/19)

   Readings:
   - Zhuangzi, cont.
   - Selection from Graham ("Heaven and Man go their own Ways") CP

8. Lao-Tzu’s Dao De Jing.
   Reading:
   - Dao De Jing, CP.
   Short Assignment #3 Handed Out 2/28 (Due 3/6)

   Reading:
   - Dao De Jing, cont.
   Mid-Term Exam Thursday 3/6

10. Spring Break: No Class

11. The Confucian Response I: Mencius.
    Reading: Sources, 112-58.

12. The Confucian Response II: Hsun-Tzu
    Reading: Sources, 159-83.

    Short Assignment #4 Handed Out 3/27 (Due 4/3)

13. The Legalist Critique.
    Reading: CP: Selections from the Han Feizi

    Readings:
    - Han Feizi, cont.
    - Sources, 415-32, 481-9

15. Pure Land, cont. Chan Buddhism
    - Sources, 491-519.

    Short Assignment #5 Handed Out 4/15 (Due 4/22)

    Reading: Sources, 667-697.

Final Exam Thursday May 1, 10:30-12:30.
Here are some general guidelines for writing the short paper assignments. Please save this guide. The short papers are to be no more than 6 pages long, and no less than 4 pages, and are to be double-spaced, and typewritten (normal font size and margins). Short assignments are intended to give you practice in writing an argumentative essay. You are to take a position on the assigned topic, and do your best to persuade the reader of the correctness of your position through arguments and evidence.

General Suggestions
i. Get straight to the point. Don't bother with lengthy introductory or concluding paragraphs. One or two sentences to introduce your topic are usually sufficient.

ii. Articulate your thesis or position clearly. The reader cannot understand what you are arguing for if you do not make this clear. Although this is not difficult to do, failure to clearly state a thesis is probably the single most common problem with philosophy papers.

iii. Be concise. Most or all of what you say should be articulating or defending your thesis, or illustrating the links in your reasoning. Avoid lengthy sentence constructions wherever possible.

iv. Stay on track. It's easy and often tempting to wander into areas that don't directly relate to the question.

Grading Criteria.
A number of factors are considered in determining your grade. Since these factors interrelate in various ways, it is senseless to try to assign a percentage value to each. Let's just say that an ‘A’ paper does well in every area, lower grades have trouble in one or more areas.

1. Accuracy of content. Obviously, if you present another's position, you need to get it right.

2. Thesis coherently stated (if applicable). If a question asks you to take a position, what position you are taking must be made clear.

3. Primary claims supported with evidence. You must back up your major claims with some evidence, be it textual, argumentative, empirical, etc. I realize that the degree to which you are able to do this on short assignments is limited, but some support is usually possible.

4. Paper coherently structured. It should be clear how each paragraph relates to the overall paper, and how each sentence works within each paragraph.

5. Grammar and spelling correct. Be sure to proofread your papers.

Comment Key. I use a few abbreviations in grading your papers. Here’s what they mean.

Mark Meaning
Awk. Phrasing or construction is awkward.
Clt. Give a citation indicating where you're getting a quotation or other information.
Thesis? The thesis of your paper is unclear or missing.
Unc. What you are saying is unclear or confusing in some way. I can’t understand it.
Vag. What you’re saying is vague; I can understand it but it’s too general or abstract.
Exp. Explain further what you are saying. Usually indicates a need for either a definition of some expression, an illustration of some point, or a justification for a claim.
E.g.? Exempli gratia means for example. Give an example.
Dev. Develop some point or claim. This differs from Exp. in that what you’ve said here is justified but needs to be explored. Dev. is often applied to good points that are passed-over too quickly. Slow down and develop the consequences of what you’ve said.

I.e.? or Pt? Id est means that is. I’m having trouble seeing the point of what you’re saying. Often indicates that the marked passage isn’t really relevant to the paper.

Con.? I don’t see the connection between the indicated remarks.
Non-s. Non sequitur means does not follow. What you’ve said doesn’t follow from the argument or reasons you’ve given.

w/c Word choice is wrong or questionable.
¶ Begin a new paragraph here.
? Indicates a general puzzlement on the reader’s part.
✓ Indicates a good point or argument.