



508-246: Introduction to Chinese Civilization

Professor Xun Liu (xmgnyz@gmail.com)

This course introduces students to the foundational elements of Chinese civilization and society from a historical perspective. It examines the evolutionary history of main Chinese intellectual, political, social, economic, and religious traditions and institutions from the Neolithic to the present period. The course will focus on the rise and spread of intellectual and religious traditions of Confucianism, Legalism, Daoism, and Buddhism, the formative processes and change of the bureaucratic state, the evolution of principles and forms of social organization and gender relations, and the development of economy and material culture from the early and medieval periods of Chinese history to the modern period.

The goal of the course is twofold: first, to provide a lower division history survey course that not only fulfill the general non-Western course requirements for both the history majors and other undergraduates, and second, to prepare freshmen and sophomores for future upper division special topic courses and history seminars focused on China and East Asia offered in the History and other departments at Rutgers.

The course is conducted primarily through lectures, reading assignments, in-class group discussions, and occasional film screenings. Guided reading, analysis and discussion of primary sources (in translation) in class will be stressed as main means for students to gain a first-hand understanding of the topics at hand, and for them to develop a critical reading ability.

At the end of the course, students are expected to have developed a solid understanding of the intellectual traditions, the social and political structure, and the economic and cultural institutions which have historically shaped the Chinese culture and society from antiquity to the present.

Course Reading materials:

- 1) Pat Ebrey: *Cambridge Illustrated History of China*
London: Cambridge University Press, 2009/2010, 2nd Edition (ISBN:0521435196/052166991X)
- 2) Wm Theodore de Barry, *Sources of Chinese Tradition (1)*
NY: Columbia University Press, 1999. (ISBN: 02311093930 (v. 1)
- 3) Occasional Reading packets

Grading:

15%	Discussion-participation in class;
10%	Attendance [3 excused absences allowed. You forego your chance at the 10% if you miss more than the excused absences]
15%	5 Written Responses on selected source materials (3% each; No make-ups)
20%	Tests# 1 and 2 (10% each, short answers/brief discussions)
15%	Test# # 3 (short answers/short essay responses)
25%	Test# 4 (short essay responses)

Classroom rules:

Be considerate and courteous to one another. Avoid cellphone activities, having food and drinks, or creating disturbance or disruption in class.

