窗体顶端



**Confucianism in America**



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本科生    硕士生

Undergraduate    Master



English



N/A



Close reading, class discussion, essay writing.



Continuous assessment, participation – 30%; essay – 35%; essay – 35%



2 credits



Sam (George T.) Crane is Professor of Political Science at Williams College, where he teaches contemporary Chinese politics and ancient Chinese philosophy. Before arriving at Williams in 1989, he taught for a year at the Hopkins-Nanjing Center in Nanjing, and for three years at Georgetown University. He completed his Ph.D. at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1986.  His most recent book – Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Dao: Ancient Chinese Thought in Modern American Life (Wiley, 2013) – uses ideas drawn from pre-Qin Confucian and Daoist texts to understand contemporary American social issues.



This course will consider how Confucian ideas might be applied in a contemporary American social and cultural context. We will start with a general consideration of how philosophies and systems of thought move from one cultural context to another. Attention then turns to the zeitgeist of the United States in an effort to understand how Americans might respond to the introduction of Confucian ideas.  The class continues with close readings of English translations of Lunyu and Mengzi.  This will allow us to understand how concepts from these texts are presented in English and thus how Americans might come to comprehend “Confucianism” in translation. Class discussion will take up questions of translatability and how cultural products from one time and place might be transposed, through processes of globalization, to other times and places. We will finish with more specific efforts to apply Confucian concepts to American academic and social contexts.



Week One
Lecture on philosophical transposition and discussion of the American zeitgeist (时代精神)

Selections from Michael Freeden, et al. The Oxford Handbook of Political Ideologies (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013) and selections from; John Stuart Mill, On Liberty (New York: Penguin Books, 1974).

Week Two
Close reading and discussion of English translations of Lunyu and Mengzi.

Selections from David Hinton, trans., The Analects: Confucius (Counterpoint
Press, 1998); and selections from Irene Bloom, trans., Mencius (Columbia University Press, 2009)

Week Three
Reading and discussion of academic articles on Confucianism in comparative perspective.

Erica Brindley, “Moral Autonomy and Individual Sources of Authority in the
Analects,” Journal of Chinese Philosophy 38:2 (June 2011) 257-273; Joseph Chan, “Moral Autonomy, Civil Liberties, and Confucianism,” Philosophy East and West, vol. 52, no. 3 (July 2002), pp. 281-310; Jiyuan Yu, “Virtue: Confucius and Aristotle,” Philosophy East and West, vol. 48, no. 2 (April, 1998), pp. 323-347; Edward Slingerland, “Virtue Ethics in the ‘Analects’,” Journal of Religious Ethics, vol 29, no. 1 (Spring 2001), pp. 97-125; Justin Tiwald, ‘Confucianism and Virtue Ethics: Still a Fledgling in Chinese and Comparative Philosophy,” Comparative Philosophy, vol. 1, no. 2 (2010), pp. 55-63.

Week Four
Read and discuss Crane’s Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Dao: Ancient Chinese Thought in Modern American Life (Wiley, 2013)
Final Exam
There is not final exam.  Two papers will be assigned.  The first will ask students, based on their own reading of English translations of the Lunyu and Mengzi, to determine what aspect of either of these texts might be most compatible to contemporary Americans and why. The second will ask them to critically respond to the articles we read in class.



David Hinton, trans., The Analects (Counterpoint, 1999)
Irene Bloom, Mencius, (Columbia University Press, 2009)
Sam Crane, Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Dao: Ancient Chinese Thought in Modern American Life (Wiley, 2013)
Articles in PDF to be distributed in class.



Roger Ames and Harry Rosemont,The Analects of Confucius: A Philosophical Translation (Ballentine, 1999).

Burton Watson, The Analects of Confucius (Columbia University Press, 2009)

David Hinton, Mencius, (Counterpoint, 1999)

窗体底端