

Chinese Islamic Philosophy

Sample Syllabus, suitable for 500-level graduate course with 12 students

Professor Information:

Email Address: Qiu.Lin@Duke.edu

Office Hours: Wed 3-5pm

Office Location: West Duke Rm 650

Class Information:

Class Time: Mon and Wed 1-2:15pm

Class Location: West Duke 202

Course Description: This is a discussion- and research-intensive course aimed at introducing seminar participants to the Han-Kitab, an Islamic philosophical tradition indigenous to China, and to one of its founding figures, Wang Daiyu 王岱輿 (1570-1660). As this is a fast-emerging sub-field within Chinese philosophy, we will cover an extensive ground in 10 sessions and active participation is essential for this joint adventure. Starting with the historical and sociological contexts in which the Han-Kitab took shape, we will center the course around its earliest and most influential author, Wang, to learn about his views on the nature of God, the Muhammadan Spirit, the rest of creation, human nature, and other topics pending students' interest (e.g. Wang's intellectual relation to other Han-Kitab figures, return to the Real, life and death). Since neo-Confucianism and Sufism form significant backgrounds to Wang's philosophical theorizing, we will also spend a fair amount of time familiarizing ourselves with the fundamentals of these two very distinct systems of thought. Texts will be read in English translation, with some preference to Chinese terms and phrases, but no familiarity with Chinese is required.

Learning Goals:

- Participants will gain familiarity with the Han-Kitab and Wang Daiyu as Chinese Islamic philosopher.
- Participants will critically and charitably engage with the primary texts, develop research questions, and carry out the research needed to constitute an independent project.
- Participants will offer constructive feedback to others' presentation and written works, supporting each other and making progress as a group.

Texts:

- Adler, Joseph A. *Reconstructing the Confucian Dao: Zhu Xi's Appropriation of Zhou Dunyi*. SUNY Press, 2014.
- Benite, Zvi Ben-Dor. *The dao of Muhammad: a cultural history of Muslims in late imperial China*. Harvard University Asia Center Publications Program, 2005.
- Murata, Sachiko. *The First Islamic Classic in Chinese: Wang Daiyu's Real Commentary on the True Teaching*. SUNY Press, 2017.

- Murata, Sachiko. *Chinese Gleams of Sufi Light: Wang Tai-yu's Great Learning of the Pure and Real and Liu Chih's Displaying the Concealment of the Real Realm. With a New Translation of Jami's Lawa'ih from the Persian by William C. Chittick*. Suny Press, 2000.

All other texts will be made available via Sakai. The schedule below is subject to change. In the event of changes, I will send an email class-wide and update the syllabus on Sakai.

Course Requirements:

- **Participation (20%)**: your participation in class discussion will be judged on 1) grasp of and depth of reflection on the assigned reading material and 2) ability to listen and respond relevantly to the comments of other students in the course. Consistent and constructive participation will weigh in favor of the better grade in case you end up on the borderline of two final course grades based on your other work.
- **Paper Proposal (5%)**: You will be asked to submit an one-page proposal five-eight sessions into the course to state (1) a topic of interest, (2) how it contributes to the current state of the literature, and (3) what are the research needed to turn the ideas into a full-length paper. The word limit for this document is 500 words.
- **Writing (35%)**: You are required to write one research paper for this course. Since Wang is a figure with tremendous research potential, I highly recommend every participant to identify a topic of interest, and develop an independent project from it. The paper should not exceed 6,000 words (double spaced, 12 point, PDF format). I will offer some prompts upon request, but participants are encouraged to this opportunity to attempt something original and worthy of their investment. Please discuss with me which topics seem to align most closely with your interests and strengths before starting to write.
- **Presentations and commentary (15% x 2+10%)**: Each participant is required to present on an assigned reading, her/his own research project, and serve as the commentator for another participant's project presentation. The 20 minutes of each session is devoted to presentation, which should serve as a guide for the rest of class with 2-3 key issues involved in the reading and some accompanying observations about them. Project presentation and commentary will take the format of conference talks: 20 minutes for the speaker, 5 minutes for commentary, and 5 minutes for Q&A.

Reading Schedule

Class 1	<p>Introduction to the course: Why study Wang Daiyu, and how are we going to do it in this course?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Islam in China and the <i>hui</i> Muslims ● Current state of literature in the Anglophone and the Sinophone worlds ● Focus of this course ● Possible lines of research
Class 2	<p>Wang's philosophical milieu: fundamentals of neo-Confucianism Adler: "Introduction" Chapter one: "Zhu Xi, Zhou Dunyi, and the Confucian <i>Dao</i>"</p>
Class 3	<p>Chapter Six: "Discussion of the Supreme Polarity Diagram"</p>
Class 4	<p>Wang's historical milieu: Islam in the Ming China Benite: "Introduction" Chapter 1: "The Islamic Educational Network"</p>
Class 5	<p>Chapter 2: "Self-Perception and Identity Among the Scholarly Constituency" Chapter 3: "The Han-Kitab Authors and the Chinese Islamic School"</p>
Class 6	<p>Wang's earlier works Murata (2010): Chapter 2 "The Works of Wang Tai-yu" (esp. pp 43-59) Murata (2017): "Introduction" "Self-Narrative"</p>
Class 7	<p>1.1. "The Real One" 1.2. "The Original Beginning" 1.3. "Predetermination" 1.4. "Universal Compassion" 1.5. "The Real Solitude" 1.6. "The Real Sage" 1.19. "<i>Huihui</i>: The Returning Returned" 1.20. "Bearing Witness" 2.1. "The Five Constants" 2.2. "Real Loyalty" 2.3. "Utmost Filial Piety" 2.4. "Listening to the Mandate"</p> <p><i>*Please be sure to consult the supplementary material, available at Sakai, for the Confucian notions of sagehood, the five constants, real loyalty, filial piety, and so forth. That will help you see the extent to which Wang understands them differently.</i></p>
Class 8	<p><i>*Paper proposal due</i> Wang's magnum opus: <i>The Great Learning</i> Murata (2010): "Introduction" Chapter 1: "Chinese-Laguage Islam" (pp. 13-23)</p>

	Chapter 3: “Wang Tai-yu’s <i>Great Learning</i> ”
Class 9	Wang’s project Chapter 4: “ <i>The Great Learning of the Pure and Real</i> ” “Preface” “Introduction” “Synopsis: Comprehensive Statement”
Class 10	Wang’s metaphysics: within an enemativist framework “The Real One” “The Numerical One” Lin: “Wang Daiyu on the Non-Ultimate and the Great-Ultimate: an Islamic Makeover”
Class 11	Wang’s epistemology: three distinct levels of bearing witness “The Embodied One” “General Discussion”
Class 12	Student research presentations
Class 13	Student research presentations