

The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology
Division of Humanities

HUMA 1001B
(Spring 2021)

**FOUNDATIONAL TEXTS IN THE HUMANITIES:
THE FOUR BOOKS—ZHU XI'S READING**

Lecturer: Professor Charles W. H. CHAN

Office hours: Mon & Thurs: 12:00-13:50

Office: Rm. 3357, Tel.: 2709-9515 (home) or 2358-7765 (office)

E-mail: hmwhchan@ust.hk

IA: Mr Chun Yin LAW, E-mail: hmlcyin@ust.hk

TA: Mr Yin Hei KONG, E-mail: yhkongaa@connect.ust.hk

Lectures:

Mondays 9:30-11:20

Tutorial sections:

T1 and T2: Fri 9:00-10:50

T3 and T4: Thur 12:00-13:50

T5 and T6: Fri 16:00-17:50

T7: Fri 11:00-12:50

Description:

The Four Books (四書) include the *Analects* (論語), the *Mencius* (孟子), the *Great Learning* (大學) and the *Doctrine of the Mean* (中庸). As the embodiment of the teachings of the ancient sages and worthies of Confucius (孔子), Mencius (孟子), Zengzi (曾子) and Zixi (子思), they had long been venerated as sacred texts by Confucian scholars in China, as well as her neighboring countries, namely Korea, Japan and Vietnam. They, however, did not form an organic set of philosophical treatises until Zhu Xi (朱熹, 1130-1200), the renowned Neo-Confucian great synthesizer in the Southern-Song, grouped them together. Apart from giving them the specific format, Zhu also wrote them prefaces and commentaries, highlighting their themes and suggesting how they should be studied and practiced, as a result of which the *Collected Commentaries on the Four Books* (四書集注, or more precisely 四書章句集注) was produced.

Zhu’s commentaries, alongside with the books upon which they elaborated, were the most widely read and, thus, the most influential texts among the literati from the early 14th Century onward up until the early 20th Century. The significance they had attained in late Imperial China can be compared to that of the *Bible* in medieval and early modern Europe.

Their popularity, of course, had much to do with the fact that they constituted the core of the official curriculum for the Civil Service Examinations during those six centuries. What is even more essential, however, is that as the fruit of a lifetime search for the ideal personality and governance, Zhu’s *Collected Commentaries* was indeed a major source of inspiration for generations of Confucian gentlemen whose aspirations were nothing but the ideals of “inner-sageliness and outer-kingliness” and “communion of Heaven and man”.

This course will guide students to read carefully through the lines of the books, in a way as recommended by Zhu, and to investigate into the following questions:

- 1) What are the specific contents, structures and functions of each of these books and how should they be studied?
- 2) How do they form an organic whole and what ultimate concerns are they intended to address?
- 3) What does “the recovery of the innately good nature” really mean? How the mastery of these books can lead to its realization?
- 4) Apart from the self-cultivation program, what sociopolitical blueprint have these Books come up with in order to bring peace and prosperity to the world?

It is expected that through probing into these crucial questions, students will not only appreciate better the essence of the Neo-Confucian teachings of how to become a sage or a worthy for oneself and to bring about a much better world for others, but also gain a deeper understanding of the religion and philosophy that lies behind: the peculiar cosmology, ontology, philosophical anthropology, philosophical psychology, epistemology, ethics, social and political theories that characterize the Confucian tradition that was permanently shaped by Zhu’s reading of the Books.

Schedule of lectures and tutorials:

Weeks	Dates	Lectures	Presentations
1	1 Feb	About the course	
2	8 Feb	Introduction: How studying the Four Books can enrich you?	First meeting: T1 & T2: Fri, 19 Feb T3 & T4: Thur, 18 Feb T5, T6 & T7: Fri, 19 Feb

4	22 Feb	Background: Why Zhu's reading of the Four Books is important?	
5	1 Mar	<i>The Great Learning</i> (I): University education, the <i>Great Learning</i> , and the text	
6	8 Mar	<i>The Great Learning</i> (II): How does Zhu read its classic portion?	
7	15 Mar	The <i>Analects</i> (I): Conscientiousness & altruism (忠恕), ceremony & humanity (禮仁), and human nature & the Heavenly Way (性與天道)	The <i>Great Learning</i> : T1, 5 & 7: Fri, 19 Mar T3: Thur, 18 Mar
8	22 Mar	The <i>Analects</i> (II): The obligations of the great minister (大臣)	The <i>Great Learning</i> : T2 & 6: Fri, 26 Apr T4: Thur, 25 Mar
9	29 Mar	The <i>Mencius</i> (I): Theories on human nature (性) and self-cultivation (教)	The <i>Analects</i> : T1, 5 & 7: Fri, 9 Apr T3: Thur, 8 Apr
10	12 Apr	The <i>Mencius</i> (II): What a sage-king (聖王) should do?	The <i>Analects</i> : T2 & 6: Fri, 16 Apr T4: Thur, 15 Apr
11	19 Apr	The <i>Doctrine of the Mean</i> (I): Equilibrium & harmony (中和), and wisdom, humanity & Courage (知仁勇)	The <i>Mencius</i> : T1, 5 & 7: Fri, 23 Apr T3: Thur, 22 Apr
12	26 Apr	The <i>Doctrine of the Mean</i> (II): The five universal ways (五達道), the nine standards (九經), and sincerity (誠)	The <i>Mencius</i> : T2 & 6: Fri, 30 Apr T4: Thur, 29 Apr
13	3 May	Concluding remarks	The <i>Doctrine of the Mean</i> : T1, 5 & 7: Fri, 7 May T3: Thur, 6 May
			The <i>Doctrine of the Mean</i> : T2 & 6: Fri, 14 May T4: Thur, 13 May

Note that subject to actual enrolment, changes might have to be made to the dates for presentations listed above. Revisions, if any, will be announced after the add-drop period.

Outcomes:

Upon completion of this course, students are expected to be:

1. Familiar with the Four Books as foundational texts of the Chinese philosophical and spiritual traditions,
2. Familiar with Zhu Xi's commentaries as the most representative interpretation of the books,
3. Proficient in close reading of both the books and Zhu's commentaries,
4. Well-informed of both the inspirations and aspirations of traditional Chinese literati, and
5. Capable of relating the wisdom embodied in the books and commentaries to issues and problems they encounter today and of utilizing it to enrich their lives, both practically and existentially.

Assessment:

1. Lecture attendance and participation (20%):
 - a. Attendance will be counted right after the add-drop period. 1.5% will be deducted every time when students are found absent without any reasonable excuse.
 - b. Students who do not turn on their video will only receive 0.5% per lecture even if Zoom records their attendance of the meeting.
 - c. To take leave, students must send apologies to the IA in advance, if possible, while producing afterwards such necessary documents as medical certificates or invitation letters to conference or interview.
 - d. Students, in principle, should show enthusiasm towards the course. To ensure students' involvement, every lecture, a number of them will be randomly selected, at various times, to either read the texts, answer questions, give comments, or offer their thoughts or reflections on subjects or materials that have just been taught and discussed. These students are to give their responses through the speaker rather than the chat. Those who fail to do so will have part of their attendance score for that lecture (1%) forfeited, even though they are indeed present.
 - e. On the other hand, those taking the initiative to raise good questions, provide sensible answers, or in one way or another contribute meaningfully toward classroom discussions will be rewarded with 1% each time they participate, to a maximum of 5%.

2. Tutorial presentation and discussion (32%):
 - a. There will be altogether four tutorial presentations, each on one of the Four Books.
 - b. Students in each of the tutorial sections will either voluntarily form, or be randomly divided, into four groups, which in turn will be assigned with the duty of presenting on one of the books.
 - c. Having been assigned the Book, each group will also be provided with a set of primary sources four weeks in advance to prepare for its presentation.
 - d. Each group as a whole is to give a coherent and systematic presentation on the sources provided within 70 minutes and to raise meaningful questions for discussions toward the end of the presentation. The remaining 35 minutes will be for Q&A.
 - e. Presentation materials, such as ppts, are to be submitted to the IA two days in advance so that they may be uploaded to the canvas for students in the same section to study before coming to tutorials. For instance, if the presentation takes place on 19 March, then the materials will have to be submitted to the IA by noon, 17 March.
 - f. Out of the total of 32%, 18% will be given to students as a group member. This 18% will be evenly divided into two parts, with the first part being given by the IA and the second part by their fellow groupmates through peer evaluation. Regarding details of the peer evaluation, please refer to the document “Presentation_peer evaluation” on the canvas.
 - g. 9% of the score will be given by the IA to students as an individual. To facilitate this process, students are required to specify in the presentation the part of the materials for which they are solely responsible.
 - h. The remaining 5% will be awarded to those actively and productively engaging themselves in classroom discussions.
 - i. Note that free riding is strictly prohibited. Once found, the students might lose all their marks in this category. Students who are aware of such violations should take the initiative to report them to the IA, or the Professor if deemed necessary.

3. Two short essays (24% each) or one long essay (48%) :
 - a. Students are required to write two short essays for the whole semester.
 - b. The first essay will be on either the *Great Learning* or the *Analects*, whereas the second one will be on either the *Mencius* or the *Doctrine of the Mean*.
 - c. To write both these essays, students may choose any subject of interest to

them within the two books being assigned, so far as they have consulted the IA and gained his approval. Those who have difficulty in finding appropriate topics may, however, base their essays on the primary sources provided in any of the lectures and tutorials related to the assigned two books.

- d. Students should fully utilize the number of words at their disposal to articulate their ideas. Excluding punctuation marks, footnotes and references, the length of each essay will be within the range from 1000 to 1500 words, and score will be deducted from those either shorter or longer, with 5% per one hundred words. Students are to indicate the number of words used (for the main body) at the end of their essays.
- e. Marks will be added to essays that have consulted secondary sources, such as scholarly books and articles in journals or encyclopedias.
- f. The essays are to be neatly typed and double-spaced and be submitted to the IA through Canvas before the due dates.
- g. While the first essay is due 5 April, the second one is due 10 May. Note that unless exceptional contingencies, request for extension will normally not be entertained. Rather, penalty will be applied to late essays, with a daily deduction of 5%.
- h. Students may, however, opt for writing a long essay on one of the Four Books as a substitute. In such a case, they will have to declare their intention by writing the IA no later than 15 March. Any late declaration will not be entertained.
- i. While the requirements for long essay remain basically the same as that for the short ones, those opting for it will have to produce an essay within the range of 2000-3000 words (excluding punctuation marks, footnotes and references) and have it submitted by 10 May. Note that score will be deducted from essay either shorter or longer, with 2.5% per one hundred words and that a penalty of 10% per day will also be applied to unjustifiable late submission.

Required primary sources:

1. 朱熹撰，《四書章句集注》（北京：中華書局，1983）。
2. 朱熹撰；鄭明等校點，《朱子語類》，卷 14-64，收入朱傑人、嚴佐之、劉永翔主編，《朱子全書》（上海古籍出版社；安徽教育出版社，2010），冊 14-16。

Suggested secondary reading:

1. 謝冰瑩（等）編譯，《新譯四書讀本》（臺北：三民書局，1987）。
2. 邱漢生，《四書集注簡論》，（北京：中國社會科學出版社，1980）。
3. 錢穆，〈朱子之四書學〉，《朱子新學案》，第四冊（臺北：三民書局，1971），頁 180-229。
4. 陳來，《近世東亞儒學研究》（北京：北京大學出版社，2018）。
5. Gardner, Daniel Kip. *Chu Hsi and the Ta-hsüeh: Neo-Confucian Reflection on the Confucian Canon*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986.
6. Gardner, Daniel Kip. *Zhu Xi's Reading of the Analects: Canon, Commentary, and the Classical Tradition*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2003.
7. *The Four Books: The Basic Teachings of the Later Confucian Tradition*, trans, with introduction and commentary by Daniel K. Gardner, Hackett Pub., 2007.

Useful databases:

1. For primary sources:
中國哲學書電子化計劃 (<http://ctext.org/zh>)
2. For secondary sources (all of which can be found in the University Library):
 - a. 世紀期刊人文社科精品數據庫文史哲 (1950-1993)
 - b. 中國期刊全文數據庫——文史哲、教育與社會科學綜合、政治軍事與法律及經濟與管理 (1994-)
 - c. 臺灣期刊論文索引系統 (1970-)
 - d. 香港中文期刊論文索引 (1990-)
 - e. *Bibliography of Asian Studies* (1971-)

Academic integrity:

The whole University is very serious about upholding academic integrity. Students are required to comply with the Academic Honor Code adopted by the Senate, which is as follows:

1. Honesty and integrity are central to the academic work of HKUST. Students of the University must observe and uphold the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty in all the work they do throughout their program of study.
2. As members of the University community, you have the responsibility to help maintain the academic reputation of HKUST in its academic endeavors.
3. Sanctions will be imposed on students, if they are found to have violated the regulations governing academic integrity and honesty.

For regulations that help you understand and avoid academic dishonesty, please visit <http://ugadmin.ust.hk/integrity/student-1.html>.