Course Description:

This seminar course is an in-depth investigation into Confucianism in pre-Ch’ in China. Its primary objective is to guide students to an original and genuine understanding of the Confucian teachings formulated in their formative years.

For such an understanding to be achieved, what is requisite will be a thorough survey of the thought of Confucius, the founder of the School that bears his name, and those of Mencius and Hsün Tzu, the two towering figures in the Warring States Period who, both coincidentally and unequivocally, proclaimed themselves defenders of the Confucian faith, despite the divergence of their philosophical inclinations.

The thoughts of these three eminent masters had jointly, and yet each distinctively, constructed the basic philosophical and spiritual frameworks within which Confucians of all the subsequent ages, at least within the traditional period, were to perceive the world and position themselves.

In investigating their thoughts, special attention will be given to the following questions:
1. From where did they derive their source of inspiration and to what did they aspire? How did they relate themselves to the cultural legacy inherited from the ancient past? What was their understanding of the core of that legacy?

2. What were the historical backgrounds that gave rise to their thoughts? What ages they were the so-called “Spring and Autumn” and the “Warring State” periods? What were the most pressing problems these ages presented to the Confucian masters? What blueprints had these masters put forward as solutions and how distinct these blueprints were from those of their contemporaries, including the Taoists, the Mohists and the Legalists?

3. What sociopolitical backgrounds did they come from? How did they define their identity? What specific missions, on both the individual and communal levels, did they assign to themselves? How did they see their failure to secure the patronage from the wealthy and the powerful and look upon themselves when they could not even fulfill their self-designated missions?

4. Despite the adversities they faced, what made them so perseverant and enthusiastic toward their missions? Why disillusionment and failure could have never defeated them, nor in the slightest disrupted their serenity, equanimity and joyfulness? What, in actuality, was their ultimate concern? How did they see human destiny?

5. What were their ontological and cosmological thinkings, that is, the ways they perceived the relationship between transcendence and immanence and that between the universe and the self? What were their philosophical anthropology and philosophical psychology, that is, the ways they saw human nature and human mind? What self-cultivation and educational programs did they advocate? What spiritual practices they had ever proposed?

6. As exemplars, what enduring impacts their words and deeds had had on subsequent generations? Do their legacies still have anything significant to do with people nowadays?

Interpretations of Confucianism have always been diversified. To attain an authentic understanding of it, one must read the texts that record its teachings, both intensively and extensively. Students taking this course should, thus, be prepared for devoting much of their time and efforts to tackling the relevant primary sources, without which the messages they carried would be hard to be deciphered.

While textual analysis, namely philological investigation and philosophical explication, will be the basic methodology employed in this course, such contextual approaches as placing early Confucianism against its economic, socio-political,
historical, cultural and religious backgrounds will also be adopted, so as to enable the students to foster a more comprehensive and reliable understanding of all the subject matters involved.

Schedule for Lectures and Students’ Presentations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEKS</th>
<th>DATES</th>
<th>SUBJECTS</th>
<th>PERSON/S IN CHARGE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Feb 1</td>
<td>Introduction: Subject Matters, Significance, and Methodology Backgrounds: Cultural Legacy, Sociopolitical Upheaval and the Rise of the Shih</td>
<td>Professor</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Feb 8</td>
<td>The Shih as the Cultural Vanguard: Identity and Character</td>
<td>Professor</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Feb 15</td>
<td>Confucius</td>
<td>Professor</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Feb 22</td>
<td>Confucius</td>
<td>Professor</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Feb 29</td>
<td>Confucius</td>
<td>Professor</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Mar 7</td>
<td>Presentations on Confucius</td>
<td>Students</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Mar 14</td>
<td>Mencius</td>
<td>Professor</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Mar 21</td>
<td>Mencius</td>
<td>Professor</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Apr 11</td>
<td>Presentations on Mencius</td>
<td>Students</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Apr 18</td>
<td>Hsün Tzu</td>
<td>Professor</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Apr 25</td>
<td>Hsün Tzu</td>
<td>Professor</td>
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Grading Scheme:

1. Attendance (11%):  
   Attendance will be counted right after the add-drop period. 1 % will be deducted every time when students are found absent without any reasonable excuse.  
   Students have been absent for five times or more without sufficient rationale will fail the course.  
   Students who need to take leave should send apology to the professor in advance, so far as it is possible. Approval will only be granted to those who have good reason. And necessary document, such as a certificate issued by a medical doctor, will have to be produced afterwards.  

2. Participation in class (24%):  
   Students should show enthusiasm towards the course and are required to have studied the teaching materials, especially the primary sources quoted in the PPT, before coming to class.  
   To ensure their active participation in classroom discussions, every lecture, students will be requested to either read the materials and explain them, answer questions, give comments, or offer their thoughts or reflections on subjects that have been lectured on and discussed about.  
   Students being selected are to give appropriate responses in order to gain their participation score (1.5%) for that lecture.  
   In addition, those taking the initiative to raise good questions, provide sensible answers, or contribute meaningfully toward classroom discussions will be also rewarded with 1.5% each time they participate, to a maximum of 7.5% for altogether five times in the whole semester.  

3. Presentation (25%):  
   In consultation with the instructor, students are to select an area of interest to them to present in class.
To ensure that they have four weeks to prepare for their presentation, students should have their subject decided at the end of the first lecture on February 8 and their specific topic no later than two weeks preceding their presentation. Likewise, to enable their fellow classmates to have the time to study the presentation materials beforehand, students should have them submitted to the professor by the Saturday before their presentation. Any delay in submitting topic or presentation materials will affect the final scores of their presentation, with a deduction of 1% per day. The presentation should have a clear focus. Its arguments should be solidly grounded, systematically organized and logically presented. The presentation should last for 15-20 minutes, so that there will be time for discussion and feedback.

4. Final Paper (40%):
   The paper should be approximately 6000 words in length. It should demonstrate not only a firm mastery of the relevant primary sources, but also a good understanding of the related secondary sources. To write a good paper, one should choose a precise research topic, study all the relevant primary sources, write a literature review on the representative scholarly works, state one’s own position, and argue for it solidly and convincingly on the ground of the sources available. The paper is due two weeks after all the classes are over, that is, May 23, 2024. A penalty of 5% per day will be applied to late submission without reasonable excuse.

Intended Learning Outcomes:

After taking the course, students will:
1. Gain an overview of Classical Confucianism, discovering how pre-Ch’in Confucian thinkers made sense of the universe in which they lived, how they positioned themselves both as individuals and as members of the society and polity, and what ideals were they committed to, on both personal and socio-political levels.
2. Familiarize themselves with the primary sources fundamental to the study of Classical Confucianism.
3. Strengthen their ability to present their points of view and comment on those of the others in front of an audience.
4. Learn how to think critically when conducting their research on the subject they choose and to write professionally when delivering their findings.


**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 more information, please visit the following link:
https://registry.hkust.edu.hk/resource-library/regulations-student-conduct-and-academic-integrity

**References:**

1. 朱熹，《四書集注》。
2. 錢穆，《四書釋義》，修訂重版（臺北：學生書局，1978）。
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7. 焦循，《孟子正義》。
8. 王先謙，《荀子集解》。
9. 李瀟生，《荀子集釋》（臺北：學生書局，1979）。
10. 梁啟雄，《荀子簡釋》（臺北：華正書局，1974）。
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13. 牟宗三，《名家與荀子》（臺北：學生書局，1994）。
14. 蔡仁厚，《孔孟荀哲學》（臺北：學生書局，1990）。
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16. 王國維，《殷周制度論》，《觀堂集林》（北京：中華書局，1959），卷十，第二冊，頁451-80。
17. 胡適，《說儒》，《胡適論學近著》（上海：上海書店，1989，據商務書館1935年出版影印），第一編，頁3-81。
18. ____，《諸子不出於王官論》，《胡適文存》，一集（臺北：遠東圖書公司，1961），頁254-61。
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59. The several volumes of *Dao Companion to Classical Confucian Philosophy*, *Dao Companion to the Analects*, and *Dao Companion to the Philosophy of Xunzi*, published in recent years, contain dozens of interesting and stimulating articles on Classical Confucianism.

N.B.: Among the above listed, the most essential ones have already been placed on reserve in the University’s Library for easy access.