

The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology  
Division of Humanities

**HUMA 1001B**  
**(Spring 2020)**

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

Lecturer: Professor Charles W. H. Chan

Office hours: Tue 11:00-12:30 & Wed 13:00-14:30, or by appointment

Office: Rm. 3357, Tel.: 2358-7765, E-mail: [hmwhchan@ust.hk](mailto:hmwhchan@ust.hk)

TA: Mr Kong Yin Hei (tutorial presentations), [yhkongaa@connect.ust.hk](mailto:yhkongaa@connect.ust.hk)

IA: Mr Law Chun Yin (quizzes & essays), [hmlcyin@ust.hk](mailto:hmlcyin@ust.hk)

**Lectures:**

LTA, Tue 13:30-15:20

**Tutorial sessions:**

T1 and T2: Fri 9:00-10:50, Lecture Theater H (held in alternative weeks)

T3 and T4: Mon 15:00-16:50, Lecture Theater H (held in alternative weeks)

T5 and T6: Wed 9:00-10:50, Rm 4620, Lift 31-32 (held in alternative weeks)

T7: Thu 15:00-16:50, Lecture Theater H

**Description:**

The Four Books include the *Analects*, the *Mencius*, the *Great Learning* and the *Doctrine of the Mean*. As the embodiment of the teachings of the ancient sages and worthies of Confucius, Mencius, Zengzi and Zixi, 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 (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* 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 14<sup>th</sup> Century onward up until the early 20<sup>th</sup> 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 attainment of inner-sageliness and the achievement of

outer-kingliness.

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 questions below:

- 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, Tutorials and Quizzes:**

Weeks	Dates	Lectures	Tutorials	Quizzes
1	11 Feb	Introduction: 1. About the course 2. How studying the Four Books can enrich you? (to be continued)		
2	18 Feb	How studying the Four Books can enrich you?	First meeting for tutorial arrangement: T1, T2 (Fri, 14 Feb, 9:00-9:50, 10:00-10:50) T3, T4 (Mon, 17 Feb, 15:00-15:50, 16:00-16:50) T5, T6 (Wed, 19 Feb, 9:00-9:50, 10:00-10:50) T7 (Thu, 13 Feb, 15:00-15:50)	
3	25 Feb	Why Zhu Xi’s reading of the Four Books is important?		
4	3 Mar	<i>The Great Learning</i> (I): Its functions and characteristics and the ways to study it It’s content and structure		
5	10 Mar	<i>The Great Learning</i> (II): Messages conveyed by the classic portion		
6	17 Mar	<i>The Analects</i> (I):	Tutorial presentations for	

		Its functions and characteristics and the ways to study it	the <i>Great Learning</i> : T1: Fri, 13 Mar T3: Mon, 16 Mar T5: Wed, 18 Mar T7: Thu, 19 Mar	
7	24 Mar	The <i>Analects</i> (II): Spiritual attainment of Confucius	Tutorial presentations for the <i>Great Learning</i> : T2: Fri, 20 Mar T4: Mon, 23 Mar T6: Wed, 25 Mar	Quiz on the <i>Great Learning</i>
8	31 Mar	The <i>Mencius</i> (I): Mencius as inheritor of the Way: his spiritual attainment, teachings and writings	Tutorial presentations for the <i>Analects</i> : T1: Fri, 27 Mar T3: Mon, 30 Mar T5: Wed, 1 Apr T7: Thu, 2 Apr	
9	7 Apr	The <i>Mencius</i> (II): Mencius' theories on self-cultivation	Tutorial presentations for the <i>Analects</i> : T2: Fri, 3 Apr T4: Mon, 6 Apr T6: Wed, 8 Apr	
10	14 Apr	The <i>Doctrine of the Mean</i> (I): Its structure, title, and nature and the ways to study it	Tutorial presentations for the <i>Mencius</i> : T1: Fri, 17 Apr T3: Mon, 20 Apr T5: Wed, 15 Apr T7: Thu, 16 Apr	
11	21 Apr	The <i>Doctrine of the Mean</i> (II): Reading its 1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> sessions	Tutorial presentations for the <i>Mencius</i> : T2: Fri, 24 Apr T4: Mon, 27 Apr T6: Wed, 22 Apr	Quiz on the <i>Analects</i> and the <i>Mencius</i>
12	28 Apr	The <i>Doctrine of the Mean</i> (III): Reading its 3 <sup>rd</sup> session	Tutorial presentations for the <i>Doctrine of the Mean</i> : T1: Fri, 8 May T3: Mon, 4 May T5: Wed, 29 Apr T7: Thu, 7 May	
13	5 May	Concluding remarks	Tutorial presentations for the <i>Doctrine of the Mean</i> : T2: Fri, 15 May T4: Mon, 11 May T6: Wed, 6 May	Quiz on the <i>Doctrine of the Mean</i>

**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 making use of it to enrich their lives, both practically and existentially.

**Assessment:**

1. Quizzes (30%):
  - a. There will be a total of three quizzes.
  - b. However, only the best two results will be counted. Thus, each of these three quizzes will constitute 15% of the overall performance of the students.
2. Presentation and classroom performance (30%):
  - a. There will be altogether four tutorial presentations, each on one of the Four Books.
  - b. Students in each of the seven tutorial sessions (T1 to T7) will, thus, be randomly divided into four groups, which in turn will be assigned with the duty to present 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 is expected to give a clear presentation on the primary sources within 75 to 90 minutes. The remaining time will be for Q&A and discussions.
  - e. Materials prepared for the presentation, such as ppt, are to be submitted to the TA through e-mailing one week in advance, so that he may upload to the canvas for students in the same session to study before coming to the tutorial. For instance, if the presentation takes place on 13 Mar, then the materials will have to reach the TA on or before 6 Mar, 24:00.
  - f. Out of the 30%, 16% will be given to students as a member of their group. This 16% will be evenly divided into two parts, with the first part being given by their fellow groupmates through peer evaluation and the other by the TA. Regarding details of the peer evaluation, please refer to the document "Presentation\_peer evaluation" in the canvas.
  - g. 8% of the mark will be given to students as an individual. To facilitate this process, students are required to specify in the presentation materials the part for which they are solely responsible.
  - h. The remaining 6% will be awarded to those actively and productively engaging in classroom discussions during the tutorials.
  - 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 have the cases reported to the TA, or the Professor if necessary.

3. Essay (40%):
  - a. Students are required to write an essay on the basis of a careful reading of the entire set of the primary sources for their tutorial session.
  - b. Marks will be added to essays that have consulted secondary sources, such as scholarly books and articles in journals or encyclopedias.
  - c. The essay will be 1000 words in length, excluding punctuation marks and footnotes. Marks will be deducted from those either shorter or longer, with 5% per one hundred words.
  - d. The essay has to be neatly typed and double-spaced and be submitted to the IA through e-mailing before its deadline.
  - e. The essay is due four weeks after the student's presentation. For instance, if the presentation takes place on 13 Mar, then the submission deadline for the essay will be 10 Apr before 24:00. Note that unless exceptional contingencies, request for extension will not be entertained. Rather, penalty will be applied to late reports, with a daily deduction of 5%.
  - f. Optional individual consultation will be provided by the IA with regard to how the essay should be written. Those who wish to take advantage of this service are to approach the IA within the first two weeks after their presentation. After that, their request can hardly be entertained.

### **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>.

### **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。
3. 中國哲學書電子化計劃：漢代之後：宋明 (<https://ctext.org/song-ming/zh>)。

**Suggested 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. Gardner, Daniel Kip. *Chu Hsi and the Ta-hsüeh: Neo-Confucian Reflection on the Confucian Canon*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986.
5. Gardner, Daniel Kip. *Zhu Xi's Reading of the Analects: Canon, Commentary, and the Classical Tradition*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2003.
6. *The Four Books: The Basic Teachings of the Later Confucian Tradition*, trans, with introduction and commentary by Daniel K. Gardner, Hackett Pub., 2007.