

Course Title	:	Traditional Chinese Thought and Management
Course Code	:	GEC352/MGT252
No. of Credits	:	3
Teaching Hours	:	45
Frequency of Offering	:	Both Terms
Category	:	General Education, Free Elective (nonBBA Elective)
Prerequisite	:	Nil

### **Brief Course Description**

This course prepares students with an understanding of the relationship between traditional Chinese thought and Chinese management in contemporary contexts at the introductory, broad-based and general level. It not only aims at providing students with the concepts, principles of traditional Chinese thought that influence management practices, but also tries to help students to understand the implications of various aspects of traditional Chinese thought for cross-cultural management issues. Through the course, students are expected to improve their understanding of the impact of traditional Chinese thought on management practices, both within Chinese culture and in cross-cultural contexts, and thus will be equipped with relevant competence and understanding to handle such cultural issues in their future career.

### **Learning Outcomes**

On completion of this course, students will be able:

To understand the basic concepts, principles of traditional Chinese thought and their relationship with Management.

To understand implications of traditional Chinese thought for organizational values and management practices.

To analyze management strategies and practices by using traditional Chinese perspectives.

To recognize how traditional Chinese perspectives can be applied to management in cross-cultural settings.

### **Measurement of Learning Outcomes**

Case studies and the final examination assess comprehension of, and ability to explain and describe traditional Chinese concepts and principles discussed in the course.

The group presentation assesses each student's ability to apply traditional Chinese thought to the analysis of management strategies and practice.

Class activities assess analytical and decision making skills related to [theoretical](#) knowledge.

Students are expected to understand and apply traditional ethics throughout the course. This is assessed through course work and final examination. No marks will be given to writings with views which imply unethical decision and behavior in all written assignments or in the examination.

## **Indicative Content**

### Source of Traditional Chinese Thought

The book of Change, Art of War, Confucianism and Taoism and other classical schools are the main source of traditional Chinese thought. This part briefly introduces the classical concepts, principles and suggestions that are regarded as having had the greatest impact on Chinese culture. In particular, the central ideas in the Book of Change, in Sun Tzu's Art of War, and in the Analects and other core Confucian texts, will be explained. How these central ideas have facilitated and constrained innovation and effective change management in Chinese societies will be discussed.

### Ideas from the Book of Change

This part selects extracts from the book of change, and introduces the Yin-Yang Concept and the Five Elements-mental, wood, water, fire and earth. The application of the Yin-Yang Concept to Teamwork (the whole and the individual, balanced team, capability and integrity, etc) and Leadership (leadership qualities, centralization and decentralization). Rules and practice, authority and responsibility) and the application of the Five Elements to Personnel Assignment (matching personality types to job positions) will be discussed.

### Ideas from Art of War (by Sun Tzu)

This part introduces the principles of Art of War. The application of these ideas to competitive actions and strategic positioning, to internal and external analysis will be discussed, along with the role of flexibility in managing change and innovation.

### Ideas from the Analects and other Core Confucian texts

This part introduces central Confucian ideas, such as Wu Lun and unequal relationships, the five virtues, and harmony, and discusses their application to leading and managing staff, to relational networking in and between organizations, and to business ethics and social responsibility.

### Contemporary Applications

Applications by contemporary leaders and managers in Chinese business.

Practitioners will be invited to share their experiences with the students.

Consideration of whether, and how, traditional Chinese thought can be applied to management in cross-cultural organizational contexts.

Possible inherent weaknesses and practical limitations of these ideas, and ways of avoiding their potential negative impact, will be considered.

Case studies will be used to help students to understand and assess the application of the

concepts and principles discussed in the course.

### **Teaching Method/Class Activities**

Students should actively engage in the learning process and in applying concepts to practical cases. There are three major learning modes used in this course:

Lectures. Class sessions will involve lectures, case studies, discussions and debates.

Cooperative Learning. Students are encouraged to learn actively and cooperatively in teams. Students in groups of four to five should undertake an action learning project to pay a visit to a general management person in an organization and conduct an in-depth interview with him/her.

Sharing with Guest Speakers. Practitioners will be invited to share with the students how they use traditional Chinese thought in management. (Guests practitioners will be recruited from a pool of business leaders who have made use of traditional Chinese thought).

### **Field Study Project & Report**

The field study exercise is an opportunity for students, in groups, to focus on an incident, management strategy, or managerial practice in a firm, which reflects traditional Chinese thought. Groups are strongly encouraged to conduct an interview with an executive in a business organization or a non-profit organization. The Field Study Report will include the background, analysis and the management strategy or management practice for the chosen firm. Each group will also present their analysis and findings to the class.

### **Assessment**

Class Attendance and Participation	10%
Class Exercises and Group Discussion	20%
Group Presentation	30%
Final Examination	<u>40%</u>
Total	100%

### **Required Readings**

1. Brahm, L., J. (2004), *Doing Business in China: The Sun Tzu Way*, Tuttle Publishing.
2. Rarick, C. A. (2004), *The Wisdom of Chinese Management*, Xlibris Publishing.
3. Alson, I. (2003), *Chinese Culture, Organizational Behavior, and International Business Management*, Praeger/Greenwood.
4. Wee, C. H. & Lan L. L. (1998), *The 36 Strategies of The Chinese: Adapting Ancient Chinese Wisdom to The Business World*, Singapore, Reading, Mass: Addison-Wesley.
5. Khoo K. H. (1997), *Sun Tzu and Management*, Selangor, Malaysia: Pelanduk

Publication.

6. 黃昭虎, 李開勝 (1997), *孫子兵法：商場上的應用*, 新加坡：Addison Wesley.\*

### **Suggested Readings**

1. Mun, K. C. (2006), *Chinese Leadership Wisdom from the Book of Change*, Hong Kong: Chinese University Press.
2. 王平 (2003), *宗法宗族思想觀念與中國私營企業管理*, 香港：中國評論文化有限公司.\*
3. 蘇東水 (2002), *東方管*, 山西經濟出版社.\*
4. Tu, W. M. and Tucker, M.E. (2003), *Confucian Spirituality*, New York: Crossroad Pub.
5. Nivison, D. (1996), *The Ways of Confucianism*, Open Court.
6. Herman, S. M. (1994), *The Tao at Work: On Leading and Following*, San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
7. Hansen, C. (1992), *A Daoist Theory of Chinese Thought*, Oxford University Press.
8. Graham, A.C. (1989), *Disputers of the Tao*, Open Court.
9. Tu, W. M. (1985), *Confucian Thought: Selfhood as Creative Transformation*, Albany: State University of New York Press.
10. Schwartz, B. (1985), *The World of Thought in Ancient Chin*, Belknap Press.
11. Fingarette, H. (1972), *Confucius: The Secular as Sacred*, San Francisco: Harper. (Reissued by Waveland P. 1998).
12. Chan, W. T. (1963), *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, Princeton University Press.

\* Individual consultation can be provided to non-Chinese speaking students in regards of the Chinese Language readings.

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