Lingnan University  
Department of Philosophy – MA in Practical Philosophy Programme

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<th>Course Title</th>
<th>The Taoist Wisdom of Life</th>
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<td>Course Code</td>
<td>PHI521</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recommended Study Year</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>No. of Credits/Term</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mode of Tuition</td>
<td>Lecture and tutorial</td>
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<td>Class Contact Hours</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Category in Major Programme</td>
<td>Traditions and Practical Wisdom</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prerequisite(s)</td>
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**Brief Course Description**
Confucianism and Taoism are generally regarded as the two main streams of Chinese philosophy. Although Taoism is unlike Confucianism in that it does not possess an institutionalized orthodoxy, Taoism has greatly influenced many aspects of Chinese culture, such as painting and literature. Its metaphysics is also considered to exhibit the most typically philosophical thinking in Chinese culture. In this course, students will study the philosophies of Lao Tzu and Chuang Tzu, and their influence within and beyond philosophy.

**Aims**
This course aims
1. To introduce Taoist philosophy of the Pre-Qin period;
2. To compare Taoism with Confucianism with regard to their themes, approaches, and doctrines;
3. To study the meaning of Taoism for daily life.

**Learning Outcomes**
By the end of the course, students are expected to understand the spirit of Taoism in the Pre-Qin period. They are also expected to reflect on the meaning of life in light of Taoist wisdom.

**Indicative Content**
1. Introduction  
   a. The rise of Taoism  
   b. The main concern of Taoism  
   c. The characteristics of Taoist thinking
2. The Philosophy of Lao Tzu  
   a. The metaphysics  
      - Tao, Wu and Yu  
   b. Man and Tao  
      - How to live in the world  
   c. The ideal man  
   d. The ideal society
3. The Philosophy of Chuang Tzu  
   a. Tao, Te and Nature  
   b. Attitudes towards life and death  
   c. Attitudes towards knowledge
The effort for liberation
e. The state of absolute freedom
f. The difference between Lao Tzu and Chuang Tzu

4. The evaluation of Taoism
   a. From a cultural point of view
   b. As a source of insights for contemporary life

Teaching Method
Lecture and tutorial

Measurement of Learning Outcomes
Assessment will be based on the presentation and performance in tutorials where they will discuss topics related to the themes of the course. Students are also requested to write a term paper and take the final examination. The assessment will be based on the knowledge they have earned and the depth of their reflection on the meaning of life in light of Taoist wisdom.

Assessment
60% Continuous assessment; 40% Final examination

Required Readings
牟宗三, 《才性與玄理》, 香港：人生出版社，1963。
牟宗三, 《中國哲學十九講》, 台北：學生書局，1983。
劉笑敢, 《老子》, 台北：東大，1997。
牟宗三, 〈老子《道德經》講演錄〉, 《鶴湖月刊》, 第334-343期。
鄭良樹, 《老子新校》, 台北：學生書局，1997。
郭慶藩, 《莊子集釋》, 台北：河洛圖書出版社，1974。

Supplementary Readings
牟宗三講, 陶國璋整理, 《< 莊子．齊物論 > 義理演析》, 香港：中華書局，1998。
袁保新, 《老子哲學之詮釋與重建》, 台北：文津，1991。
陶國璋, 《莊子齊物論義理演析》, 香港：中華書局，1998。
吳汝鈞, 《老莊哲學的現代析論》, 台北：文津，1998。