Chinese Medicine

Course: ASIA 297  
Term: Fall 2016  
Instructor: Prof. Shelly Ochs  
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Course Description
The theory and practice of medicine in China has a long and well-documented history. Before the introduction of Western medicine into China, there was no reason to identify this set of ideas and applications as “Chinese.”

However, beginning in the Republican Period (1911-1949), traditional medicine began to be seen as an integral part of “strengthening the nation” and was promoted as part of the cultural heritage of China that could be used to help build a new China.

This course will explore how and why “Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM)” has been and continues to be an important part of the political and cultural identity of both people and institutions in China.

The core of the course is a study of the concepts of health and disease in Chinese medicine. Many of these concepts, --- qi, yin and yang, the five phases, empty and full, and the unity of the heavens and humans---are part of the fabric of Chinese culture, and are therefore central to understanding other aspects of Chinese culture, such as painting, martial arts, culinary arts, and literature. We will uncover how these seemingly philosophical notions are applied to complex clinical situations through the modalities of acupuncture, herbal medicine, qi gong, and orthopedic manipulations. Case studies from historical sources, modern physicians, and the instructor’s own practice will be discussed, and students will gain an understanding of the thought process behind diagnosis, treatment and evaluation. Scientific research on Chinese medicine and the difficulties in designing and carrying out such research will be explained.

We will also ground our studies with an understanding of the philosophical underpinnings that influenced the views of health and disease in the formative period of Chinese medicine, the Han Dynasty. Comparisons with early Greek
medicine will give students a wider perspective on the history and development of medicine and its claims to be scientific or empirical. This perspective is also useful when considering the various forms of “alternative medicine” popular today and the arguments put forth by their adherents and opponents.

“Chinese medicine” can also be defined as a set of healing techniques employed by physicians and other specialists in hospitals and clinics throughout the world. Acupuncture and Chinese herbal medicine are currently utilized in contexts as diverse as fighting malaria in Africa, increasing positive outcomes for high-tech fertility procedures in North America, and treating people suffering from “Qigong psychosis” in urban China. What makes all these practices part of a single tradition of medicine? How has Chinese medicine adapted to unique circumstances in its adopted countries? How are different aspects of Chinese medicine being accepted or rejected in modern times? The class will close with a consideration of how both continuation and innovation will be part of the future of Chinese medicine.

Our classroom studies will be augmented by a visit to a Chinese medicine clinic, a martial art studio and the medicinal gardens in Beijing. Guest speakers will include a fifth-generation martial arts master, and local physician-researchers working in the fields of Chinese herbal medicine pharmacology, clinical trials on acupuncture, and integrated Chinese-Western medicine.

**Important Note:**

While Professor Ochs is a licensed practitioner of Chinese medicine, in her capacity as the instructor in this course she cannot make nor is she making recommendations for medical services.

Her lectures and classroom discussions examine the modalities, methods, and philosophies behind such diagnoses and treatments; but neither those discussions nor the assigned readings are to be treated as advice to students about how to address their own health situation.

Likewise, Professor Ochs accompanies students on local field trips so that students might witness various methods of Chinese medicine in a unique and intimate setting. In doing so, she is not advocating certain treatments, but only introducing these settings to add to students’ understanding of the complexities of Chinese culture and healthcare. Students should not see these visits as advocacy; only an opportunity to see the practice of Chinese medicine.

Students should not seek out Professor Ochs or any other faculty at TBC for suggestions concerning medical matters, nor will any of the faculty provide any advice on treatments or prescriptions. Students who are interested in having
medical treatment of any sort are advised to speak with the staff in the office of Student Development at TBC, so that they may be made aware of what their insurance and healthcare plan provides for, and what options are available.

**Course Outcomes**

This course is designed to give students a general understanding of the fundamental ideas and practices that constitute traditional medicine in China today. Students will complete this course having an understanding of how philosophical, political, and social frameworks effect the legitimation and transmission of medical knowledge. It is hoped that students will be able to use this as a case example when considering other instances in which “modern” versus “traditional” knowledge is at stake in development policies and discourses. Students will leave the class with a more sophisticated and nuanced view of the differences and similarities between traditional Chinese medicine, biomedicine, and “complementary and alternative medicine”.

**Instructor:**
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**Attendance Policy**
Attendance is required at all class meetings and field trips. Only valid medical or family emergencies qualify as an absence, and documentation of the same must be presented to the professor no later than the next class meeting. Students are permitted one excused absence, and will be docked one full grade from the class participation portion of their grade for each additional absence.

**Academic Honesty Statement**
Please see the following link, and read the text carefully:
http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg_academicintegrity.shtm

**Assessment**
Class Participation and Attendance 20%
Students are expected to read all assignments and participate in class discussions. A short written assignment is due at the end of every class. Students should include one paragraph summarizing the main argument for each reading, as well as a paragraph expressing the student’s own critical analysis.
Class Presentation 10%
Midterm Exam 30%
Final Exam 40%

**Readings**

**Required Texts: (Students should purchase prior to coming to China)**

1. **The Web That Has No Weaver : Understanding Chinese Medicine**  

2. **Integrating East Asian Medicine into Contemporary Healthcare**  
   Edited by Volker Scheid and Hugh MacPherson, Churchill Livingstone (2012)

3. **The Geography of Thought,**  
   By Richard E. Nisbett

**Class Schedule**

**Class 1 Jan 13**  Introduction and Video 9,000 Needles

**Class 2 Jan 20**  
**Basic Concepts of Clinical Chinese Medicine**  
Ted Kaptchuk, *The Web That Has No Weaver*, Ch. 1, and Chs. 6, 7 and 8,  
*Integrating East Asian Medicine*, Ch. 4

*Discussion of Diagnosis and Case Studies*  
*Exercise: pulse and channel diagnosis*

**Class 3 Feb 10**  
**Science and Art: Learning and Practicing Chinese Medicine**  
Ted Kaptchuk, *The Web That Has No Weaver*, Chs. 9, 10  
*Integrating East Asian Medicine*, Chs. 2, 3, 5

**Class 4 Feb 17**  
**Qi in Medicine, Martial Arts and Culture**  
Chen, Nancy. *Breathing Spaces: Qigong, Psychiatry and Healing in China*,  
Introduction, Ch. 8.  
Hinrichs and Barnes, *Chinese Medicine and Healing*. Ch. 10

**Class 5 Feb 24**  
**Modalities of Chinese Medicine: Food and Plants**  
Kaptchuk, Ted. *The Web That Has No Weaver*, Ch. 3, 9 and 10  
Narby, Jeremy. *Intelligence in Nature*, Chs. 7, 8

**Class 6 March 3**  
**Visit to a Traditional Chinese Medicine Clinic and Pharmacy**
Class 7 March 10
Modalities of Chinese Medicine: Channel/Vessel Therapies
Wang, Ju-yi. *Applied Channel Theory in Chinese Medicine*. Ch. 2, Ch. 4, “Physiology of Acupuncture” (PDF)
“Acupuncture East and West” (PDF)

Class 8 March 17
Midterm—(in-class exam)

Class 9 March 31
Daoism, Chinese Medicine and Life Cultivation Practices (yang shen)
Readings TBA

Class 10 April 7
The Geography of Thought
Nisbett, Richard E., *The Geography of Thought*, Chs. 1, 7, 8

Class 11 April 14
Defining “Effective Medicine”
*Integrating East Asian Medicine*, Chs. 2, 8, and 10
“Placebos and Painkillers: Is Mind as Real as Matter?” (PDF)
“The Scientific and Contemplative Exploration of Consciousness” (PDF)

Class 12 April 21
Visit to Medicinal Garden or Chinese Medicinal Museum
(presentations on-site on medicinal plants)

Class 13 May 5
The Future of Chinese Medicine
*Integrating East Asian Medicine*, Ch. 6, 7, 8, and 9
Fruhauf, Heiner. Series of 3 articles on the future of Chinese Medicine
Class Debate about the Future of Chinese Medicine

Class 14 May 12
Final Due in Class
Presentation and Discussion of Final Papers