

# Master Program for Studying Chinese Religions (in English)

Fudan University (Shanghai, China)

## 1. Overview

China has been called the “land of gods” since ancient times. Chinese people have a unique religious experience and practice, their religions being quite distinct from the Abrahamic faiths or Hinduism. In recent decades, discussion in the public sphere and academic research on Chinese religions are becoming cross-cultural phenomena in the tide of globalization and revitalization of faith. For the purpose of training future experts and promising young scholars in this field, the School of Philosophy, Fudan University resolves to launch a master program for Chinese religious studies in English. It will start in fall semester 2015 and will be open to applicants from around the world.

### Unique features

- First and so far the only master program for Chinese religious studies (*in English*) in Mainland China;
- Comprehensive and systematic academic training in Chinese religions;
- Unique location and irreplaceable resources of field research;
- Direct access to local religious communities and venues and personal contacts with prominent religious leaders;
- Scholarship application possible;

A Master’s degree will be issued by Fudan University (acknowledged by the Ministry of Education), once the thesis has been presented and defended.

Fudan University is located in Shanghai, the most dynamic and international mega-metropolis of China. Besides its cultural diversity and vital economic life, this city and the surrounding area are also known for their abundant resources in all religions, both historical and present. The School of Philosophy Fudan University has

long enjoyed cooperation and friendship with all the religious communities in Shanghai as well as in Mainland China. This program plans to organize regular visits for all students and provides opportunities for field research, so that students may directly encounter living Chinese religions, besides gaining an understanding of the theory and classical texts. Based in Shanghai, this program also presents opportunities for excursions to adjacent provinces, such as Jiangsu and Zhejiang. In the near future, this program will co-ordinate intensive courses and exchange programs with the leading universities and research institutes in Taiwan, Hong Kong, Japan, South Korea and South-East Asia.

## **2. The Department, the School, and the University**

Fudan University was founded in 1905. It is one of the top universities in Mainland China. The School of Philosophy ranked 17th (the highest in Asia) in the QS World University Rankings (2013). The affiliated Department of Religious Studies is well-known for its tradition and academic reputation. It is among the very few institutes that have undergraduates who have majored in religious studies in Great China. Some famous professors teach in the department, among whom more than 20 give lectures in English. Their research fields cover Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism, Islam, Christianity, popular religions and new religious movements. The department is undisputedly one of the best institutes for religious studies in Great China. Professors from other departments (such as Chinese literature, history, historical geography, sociology and international relationship) in Fudan University, in Shanghai, as well as from all over China, will be integrated in this program, too, in order to build up a cross-disciplinary teaching team.

### **Faculty members and their research field** (*incomplete, for your reference only*):

- Prof. Zhang Qingxiong (Ph.D., University of Fribourg, Switzerland): Philosophy of Vijnanavada, Phenomenology, Christian theology;
- Prof. Xu Yihua (Ph.D., Princeton University): Religion and International Politics, religious policy;

- Prof. Li Tiangang (Ph.D., Fudan University, Director of Department for Religious Studies): Chinese church history, Chinese popular religion, study of Confucian classics and Confucianism;
- Prof. Wang Xinsheng (Ph.D., Fudan University): Catholic theology, Chinese Islam;
- Prof. Benoit Vermander (Ph.D., Sciences Politiques de Paris): Anthropology of religion, spirituality;
- Prof. Wang Gang (Ph.D., The University of Chicago): Taoism, Taoist literature;
- Prof. Bai Tongdong (Ph.D., Boston University): Pre-Qin philosophers, Chinese political philosophy;
- Prof. Jason T. S. Lam (Ph.D., University of Cambridge): Sino-Christian theology, Christian thought;
- Prof. Milton W. Y. Wan (D.Phil., University of Oxford): Chinese Culture and Christianity, Chinese Philosophy, Spirituality;
- Prof. Liu Ping (Ph.D., Fudan University): Chinese Christianity, biblical studies;
- Prof. Zhu Xiaohong (Ph.D., Fudan University): Chinese Catholicism, feminist theology;
- Prof. Eberhardt Guhe (Ph.D., University of Mainz): Buddhist philosophy and logic, Sanskrit;
- Prof. Lawrence Y.K. LAU (Ph.D., The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology): Buddhist philosophy, relationship of religion and politics, Theravada Buddhism;
- Prof. Liu Zhen (Ph.D., University of Munich): Buddhist history, Sanskrit;
- Prof. Zhang Shuangli (Ph.D., Fudan University): Western Marxism and religion;
- Prof. Cai Qinghua (Ph.D., The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology): Taoism
- Prof. Yu Zhejun (Ph.D., University of Leipzig, Program Coordinator): Sociology of religion, Chinese popular religion.

**Partner:**

The Institute of Sino-Christian Studies (Hong Kong), established in 1995, aims to

promote Christian studies, construct Sino-Christian theology and enrich Chinese culture. Website: [www.iscs.org.hk](http://www.iscs.org.hk)

### **3. Credit system:**

The program *normally* lasts two years. Accordingly, we have a flexible credit system, which balances compulsory and elective courses.

Total credits required: **30**.

All courses are delivered in English.

In addition, this program provides courses in the Chinese language to improve the language skill of students in listening, speaking, reading and writing.

### **Three Credit Modules:**

- Courses in the Chinese language: 6 credits (2 X 3 courses, compulsory);
- Practical courses (field research and visits): 4 credits (2 X 2 courses, compulsory);
- Major courses: 20 credits (6-7 courses, elective).

### **Degree Requirements of granting:**

To be granted a degree students must

- obtain the prescribed credits (normally within two years);
- write an academic thesis under the supervision of a professor and defend it orally.

### **4. Courses**

The courses in this program cover almost all religious traditions in China, including Confucianism, Buddhism, Taoism, Islam, Christianity and popular religions. They also aim to provide an interdisciplinary understanding of Chinese religions from multiple approaches, such as history, classical studies, philosophy, theology, ritual, psychology, anthropology and sociology etc. Some subjects are listed as below (*incomplete, for your reference only*):

- History of Chinese Buddhism and Sutra-reading;
- Study of Confucian Classics and rites ;
- Muslim ethnical groups in China, Islam-Confucian dialogue, Menhuan system;
- Contemporary urban religion and field research;
- Festivals and rituals of Chinese popular religions;
- History and prospect of Sino-Christian theology;
- Chinese translation of Bible, indigenization of Christian theology in China;
- Christianity and Judaism in Chinese context;
- Relationship between religion and politics, religious policy in China;
- Faith and ritual of ethnical groups in south-western China;
- Sociological study of Chinese religions;
- Hermeneutics of classical texts of Chinese religions

The courses are divided into **three levels**, namely basic, intermediate and advanced, so that students can choose according to their prior knowledge in the field (see the diagram below, *incomplete, for your reference only*).

	<b>Buddhism</b>	<b>Christianity</b>	<b>Confucianism, Taoism and popular religion</b>	<b>Islam</b>	<b>Methodology</b>
<b>Basic</b>	Introduction to Chinese Buddhism	Introduction to Chinese Christianity	Introduction to Chinese traditional religion	Introduction to Chinese Islam	
<b>Intermediate</b>	Selected reading of Buddhist Sutras	Topics of Chinese Christianity	Selected reading of Taoist and popular religious texts	Topics of Chinese Islam (I)	Introduction to the sociology of religion; Introduction to the anthropology of religion; Text criticism

					and hermeneutics
<b>Advanced</b>	Topics of Chinese Buddhism	Sino-Christian theology; Chinese Translation of Bible	Intensive reading of Chinese traditional religious texts	Topics of Chinese Islam (II)	Topics of sociology of religion; Topics of anthropology of religion

## 5. Application and Admission

Number of candidates enrolled from around the world (fall semester, 2015): 50 students.

**Basic requirement:** applicants must have an acknowledged bachelor degree.

### Application documents:

[Please visit the official website of international students' office of Fudan University:

<http://admission.iso.fudan.edu.cn/>]

- Copy of passport (required by international student office)
- Application form (required by international student office)
- CV
- Copy of diploma
- *Notarized* copy of academic records
- Two letters of recommendation (sealed with signature)
- Personal statement (1000 words)
- Research project (4-6 pages, double space, 12 pound)
- Non-native speakers of English must provide an English level certificate (TOEFL 80; or IELTS 6.0);

**Application fee:** 800 RMB (*non-refundable!*).

**Deadline:** Application documents for the fall semester 2015 must be sent to the following address before April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2015:

Master Program for Chinese Religious Studies

Guanghua Tower (west) 23<sup>rd</sup> Floor

School of Philosophy, Fudan University

Shanghai, China

Zip: 200433

The admission list will be announced on the website (*under construction, will be notified soon*) of the program before June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2015. The official (printed) admission notification will be sent by post afterwards.

## **6. Tuition and Scholarship**

The tuition fee is 50,000 RMB/year.

Students unable to obtain the credits or pass the thesis-defense within two years CAN postpone graduation. But a fee of 25,000 RMB must be paid for every extended term.

All students can apply for a scholarship from the China Scholarship Council (CSC) and a Shanghai government scholarship.

## **7. Accommodation**

Students can apply for residence at the dormitory for international students of Fudan University, which costs 45-100 RMB/day in Handan Rd. campus. It is also easy to find private apartments for students near the campus.

For more information please contact: Dr. Zhejun YU

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