

Songyao Ren, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Philosophy
The University of Texas at Dallas
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Employment

2021-present The University of Texas at Dallas
Assistant Professor of Philosophy

Education

2016-2021 Duke University
Ph.D. in Philosophy

2014-2016 Columbia University
Master of Arts in East Asian Languages and Cultures

2011-2014 The University of Hong Kong
Bachelor of Journalism, with a double major in Philosophy,
First Class Honors

Research Interests

Ethics, Moral Psychology, Chinese Philosophy

Publications

Books

- Ren, Songyao. *Dispersion and the Good Life: A Study of Stoicism and Zhuangism*. Forthcoming. SUNY Press.
- Flanagan, Owen, Joseph E. LeDoux, Bobby Bingle, Daniel M. Haybron, Batja Mesquita, Michele Moody-Adams, Songyao Ren, Anna Sun, and Yolonda Y. Wilson. 2023. *Against Happiness*. Columbia University Press.

Peer-Reviewed Articles and Book Chapters

- Ren, Songyao. 2025. "A Defense of Resilience from a Zhuangism-Inspired Perspective." *Dao: A Journal of Comparative Philosophy*, 24 (4): 641-660.
- Ren, Songyao. 2025. "Fear and Courage in Early Confucianism," in *The Philosophy of Fear: Historical and Interdisciplinary Approaches*, 25-40, edited by Ami Harbin, Bloomsbury.
- Ren, Songyao. 2023. "Emotion, Auto-noesis, and the Self." *Philosophical Psychology* 36 (4): 716-724.

- Ren, Songyao. 2023. “Love, Grief, and Resilience.” *Philosophies* 8: 1-13. Special Issue on the Moral Psychology of the Emotions, edited by Laura Candiotta and Rick Furtak.
- Ren, Songyao. 2019. “Flow and Wonder in the Zhuangist Ideal of Wandering.” *History of Philosophy Quarterly* 36 (4): 299-318.
- Ren, Songyao. 2018. “The Zhuangist Views on Emotions.” *Asian Philosophy* 28 (1): 55-67.

Book Reviews and Commentaries

- Ren, Songyao. 2023. “Commentary on Green’s ‘Recalcitrant Beliefs and Epistemic Akrasia’.” *Southwest Philosophy Review* 39 (2): 101-104.

Edited Issues

- Saunders, Frank, Jamin Asay, Alexis McLeod, and Songyao Ren (eds.). 2022. Truth in Asian Philosophy, topical collection in the *Asian Journal of Philosophy*.

Talks and Presentations

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| 2026 | “Zhuangzi and Meaning in Life,” Roundtable Discussion with Karyn Lai and Frank Saunders, Collaborative Learning Project |
| 2026 | “Open-Mindedness: Insights from the <i>Zhuangzi</i> ,” Midwest Conference on Chinese Thought, Gettysburg College |
| 2024 | “The Dual-Perspective Model of Resilience in the <i>Zhuangzi</i> ,” Duke Centennial Philosophy Conference, Durham |
| 2024 | “Resilience: Inviolability or Responsiveness,” East-West Philosophers’ Conference, University of Hawai’i at Manoa |
| 2023 | “A Defense of a Zhuangism-Inspired Account of Resilience,” Mentoring Workshop for Early Career Women Faculty in Philosophy, University of Missouri, Columbia |
| 2023 | “A Defense of a Zhuangism-Inspired Account of Resilience,” APA Pacific Division, San Francisco |
| 2022 | “Commentary on Green’s ‘Recalcitrant Beliefs and Epistemic Akrasia’,” The Southwestern Philosophical Society, The University of Nevada, Las Vegas |
| 2022 | “Emotion, Culture, and Well-Being,” Frontiers of BrainHealth Lecture, The University of Texas at Dallas |
| 2022 | “Love, Grief, and Resilience,” Workshop on Chinese Philosophy, The University of Maine, Orono |
| 2022 | “Love, Grief, and Resilience,” Center for Values in Medicine, Science, and |

Technology, The University of Texas at Dallas

- 2022 “Dispassion and the Good Life: A Comparison of Stoicism and Zhuangism,”
APA Eastern Division
- 2021 “Positive/Negative Emotions and Well-Being,” Center for Values in Medicine,
Science, and Technology, The University of Texas at Dallas
- 2021 “The Good and the Beautiful in the *Analects*,” Center for Asian Studies, The
University of Texas at Dallas
- 2021 “Dispassion and the Good Life: A Comparison of Stoicism and Zhuangism,”
Great Lakes Philosophy Conference
- 2019 “Flow and Wonder in the Zhuangist Ideal of Wandering,” European Association
for Chinese Philosophy Conference, Ghent University, Belgium
- 2017 “The Zhuangist Views on Emotions,” Australasian Society for Asian and
Comparative Philosophy (ASACP) Conference, Deakin University, Australia
- 2017 “Comments on Justin Tiwald’s ‘Dai Zhen on Human Nature and Moral
Cultivation’,” Duke Center for Comparative Philosophy, Durham

Teaching

UT Dallas-Undergraduate Courses:

Introduction to Philosophy (Spring 2026)
Introduction to Ethics (Fall 2021, Spring 2022, Spring 2023, Fall 2023, Fall 2025, Fall
2026)
Asian Philosophical Tradition (Fall 2022, Fall 2025)
Philosophy of Emotion (Spring 2023)
Philosophy of Happiness (Fall 2023, Fall 2026)
Ethical Theories (Spring 2024)

UT Dallas-Graduate Courses:

Happiness and Well-Being (Fall 2022)
Philosophy of Emotion (Spring 2022)
Chinese Philosophy (Fall 2021, Spring 2024)

Duke-Undergraduate Courses:

Introduction to Philosophy (Spring 2020, Fall 2020)

Graduate Advising

- Ang Li, 2021-2024
- Yueh-Jung Lee, 2021-2026
- Joey Turner, 2023-present

- Haoyi Song, 2024-present
- Jeongmi Hwang, 2025

Undergraduate Advising

- Jeffrey Vancil, 2023-2024

Professional Service

- 2026-2027 Vice President for the Association of Chinese Philosophers in America
- 2024-2025 Secretary/Treasurer for the Association of Chinese Philosophers in America
- 2024 Moderator for the panel on Confucian Governance and Social Justice, East-West Philosophers' Conference, University of Hawai'i at Manoa
- 2021-2022 Committee member for the Neuroscience, Psychology, and Ethics Task Force, Global Happiness Council (GHC), under the Center for Sustainable Development, Columbia University
- 2021 Moderator for the panel on Animal Ethics, APA Central Division

Service to the University

- 2025-2026 Member of the Search Committee for Assistant Professor of Philosophy
- 2024-2026 Member of the Distance Learning Committee
- 2024-2026 Member of the Marvin and Kathleen Stone Scholarship Selection Committee
- 2023-2024 Member of the AHT Executive Committee
- 2023-2024 Member of the History and Philosophy Program's Speakers Committee
- 2022-2023 Member of the Search Committee for Assistant Professor of Creative Non-Fiction
- 2022-2023 Member of Graduate Studies Committee
- 2022 Guest Speaker for A&H Living Learning Communities
- 2021 Guest speaker for the Round Table Discussions at Hobson Wildenthal Honors College

Referee Experience

The Philosophical Forum, Philosophical Psychology, Dao: A Journal of Comparative Philosophy, Bloomsbury

Awards and Fellowships

2021	Graduate Student Essay Award, Great Lakes Philosophy Conference
2019, 2021	Competitive Summer Research Fellowship, Duke University
2019	Kenan Fellowship in Ethics, Duke University
2017	Graduate Student Essay Prize, Australasian Society for Asian and Comparative Philosophy
2016	Master of Arts Thesis Award (“Non-Duality and the Two Worlds of <i>Hong Lou Meng</i> ”), Columbia University
2015	Woodenfish Scholarships, Woodenfish Foundation
2013	The K.K. Ho Prize, The University of Hong Kong
2013	Kai Chong Tong Award, The University of Hong Kong
2012, 2013	Dean’s Honors List, The University of Hong Kong
2012	Serena Yang Award, The University of Hong Kong

References

David Wong

Susan Fox Beischer and George D. Beischer Professor of Philosophy
Duke University
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Owen Flanagan

James B. Duke Professor Emeritus of Philosophy
Duke University
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Gopal Sreenivasan

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Chris Fraser

Hon-Yin and Suet-Fong Chan Professor, School of Chinese
University of Hong Kong
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Jonathan Y. Tsou

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Professor of Philosophy
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