

# European Sensory Science Society

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## POST OF THE MONTH MAY 2018

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Review of the International and Interdisciplinary PhD Course:

**"Food, Health and Philosophy in East and West"**

**April 2018 in Hong Kong, Shenzhen and Guangzhou, China**

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I have just returned home to Denmark from attending the PhD course: "Food, Health and Philosophy in East and West". The course took place in Hong Kong in South China, and lasted for two weeks. It runs every year in spring and has been offered since 2007 with great success. Participants come from all over the world, we were PhD students from Denmark, China, Brazil, France, and The Netherlands.



Food and Health views are different across the world. Attending the course "Food, Health and Philosophy in East and West" has been a tremendously insightful experience. Throughout the course, I have practised a lot of reflection and thinking about Eastern culture and how it is both very different from Western culture and simultaneously a better understanding of Chinese people and the process of internalising and integrating all my impressions will continue for a long time. Philosophy, is a long learning process and this course has particularly helped me in cross-cultural reflections as well as to look at my research field and surroundings from both natural, social, and human sciences. The course is perfect in illustrating how natural, social, and human sciences all contribute to the creation of a better world.

The course offers a combination of academic lectures and field trips to universities, food markets, hospitals, and religious sites. All to augment the learning process. The course covers a huge scope of topics and is very intense, but needs to be to cover such diverse outcomes. Some of the visits and lectures that stood out for me were:

- Visiting Hong Kong University
- Talking to Buddhist monks about health views
- Experiencing wet food markets
- Visiting Sun Yat-Sen University
- Visiting Genomics Institute
- Lectures and discussions with pastors
- Visiting Biostime – Health & Happiness company
- Eating at various interesting Chinese restaurants
- So much more

It truly is an interdisciplinary learning course and brings forward cross-cultural impressions and reflections. The course makes you aware of the potentials of science and its role in food and health globalization. The course is in general very open-minded and offers fruitful crosstalk across academic fields. It can be used in the health area to see their own research and topic from a greater methodological perspective.



The professors and course organizers are extremely professional and experienced. One can really see the relationship building and understand the importance of cross-cultural research collaboration can work in a successful manner.

The course is important to everyone who is interested in collaboration with and understanding of cultural differences and potential barriers for research. It encourages us to think broader than just natural science and perhaps challenge the way we see things from a Western point of view.

I can highly recommend the course to all who will be conducting cross-cultural research and want to bring in a greater interdisciplinary understanding of differences in East and West. It is a unique PhD course and the whole experience exceeded my expectations with lots of scientific and personal learnings.

For more information about the PhD course: <http://www.thinkchina.ku.dk/phd-course/>



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