

# PH.D. FINAL ORAL DEFENSE

by **CHIH-WEI PENG**

**Friday, October 18, 2024,**

**11:00 AM (HST)**



*Title of Dissertation:*

***Thinking Like Dao: Environmental Virtue Ethics in Daoism***

## **ABSTRACT:**

This dissertation aims to establish that Daoist ethics can be understood as a form of environmental virtue ethics, grounded in the *Laozi* (老子) and the *Zhuangzi* (莊子), and supplemented by the *Huainanzi* (淮南子). Specifically, the central argument is that the Daoist key concept of *wuwei* (無為 non-action) can be interpreted as a moral virtue and, furthermore, as an environmental virtue—either as a virtue of environmental stewardship or as a virtue of communion with nature. The ultimate objectives of cultivating *wuwei*, along with other Daoist environmental virtues—including care (慈 *ci*), courage (勇 *yong*), frugality (儉 *jian*), not-contending (不爭 *buzheng*), and simplicity (樸 *pu*)—are to help natural entities return to their state of *ziran* (自然 self-so-ness) and to assist virtuous individuals in achieving *xiaoyaoyou* (逍遙遊 carefree wandering) with nature.

## **IN-PERSON:**

Sakamaki Hall D-302

## **JOIN via ZOOM:**

<https://hawaii.zoom.us/j/95259439896>

## **DISSERTATION COMMITTEE:**

**Prof. Franklin Perkins (Chair), Prof. Steve Odin, Prof. George Tsai, Prof. Masato Ishida, and Prof. Hong Jiang (University Representative)**

*Department of Philosophy at University of Hawai'i at Mānoa*