Monday, September 16, 10am  Massey Business Center 100
Innate Nature & Human Rights
The international debate over human rights has neglected to take into account the major indigenous Chinese tradition, Daoism, which offers a valuable alternative to other socio-political models. In this talk, Jeffrey Dippmann of Central Washington University and President of the Association of Regional Centers for Asian Studies makes use of Daoist writings to provide a description of that tradition’s emphasis on individual rights rooted in a theory of human nature, as well as concrete examples of Daoism’s advocacy for universal human rights from communal and cosmic perspectives.

Tuesday, September 17, 6:30 p.m.  Student Life Center, Beaman A
Contemporary Daoism & Environmental Preservation
Environmental preservation and stewardship represent global challenges and these are perhaps more acute in China where its emergence as the 2nd largest economy in the world has been purchased at terrible environmental costs. In an effort to foster new and creative environmental policies the China Daoist Association recently implemented an Eight Year Plan for Ecological Protection (2010-2017). Working with the Alliance of Religions and Conservation, the association sponsored the first ever pan-China Daoist Ecology conference in Jurong, near the sacred mountain of Mao Shan. Dr. Dippman outlines the principles and practical policies developed during that conference.

Dr. Jeffrey Dippmann is a Professor in the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies at Central Washington University. His current research is in the analysis of the Daoist conception of human rights and the self as portrayed in the Taipingjing text, and the notion of liminality in the lives of Daoist nuns. He often leads study abroad trips to Asia for CWU students, including trips to China’s sacred Buddhist mountain Emeishan, and sites in Cambodia (Angkor Wat) and Vietnam.

Wednesday, September 18, 7:30 p.m.  The Black Box Theatre (located on Compton Ave. behind the new Troutt Theater)
Rakugo is a 400-year-old tradition of comic storytelling, Japan’s equivalent of stand-up comedy. Ever popular, Rakugo has had little exposure in North America, but that is all about to change. Canadian Katsura Sunshine, the only foreign storyteller among a almost 700 practicing professionals today, aims to shine the spotlight on this ancient art form with his English translations of Rakugo’s classic stories, presented alongside beloved stories skilfully crafted by his own Master, Katsura Bunshi VI.

Traditional Japanese Rakugo storyteller Katsura Sunshine (Gregory Robic) earned a B.A. in Classics and English from the University of Toronto, and an M.A. in Theatre from Osaka University of Arts. He became a Rakugo apprentice to Katsura Bunshi in 2008, received the name Katsura Sunshine, and completed his three-year Rakugo apprenticeship. Sunshine has a regular spot on four television programs in Japan, has his own radio show, and writes a monthly newspaper column about Rakugo.