# PHIL4323 Philosophy of History 歷史哲學

## Course Outline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tr>
<td>F 8:30-11:15</td>
<td>MMW 707</td>
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**Course overview**

This course introduces philosophical reflections on history. It divides into two parts: (1) deals with questions in the logic of historical thinking, such as the objectivity of historical knowledge, the concept of causation in history, the nature of historical explanation; (2) discusses various attempts to arrive at a metaphysical interpretation of history, for example Hegel’s and Marx’s theories of history.

Advisory to Majors: to be taken in year 2 or above.

**Learning outcomes**

1. Grasp the contribution of philosophical reflections of history to the understanding of the human condition.
2. Acquire a critical view on theories proposed by various philosophers of history.
3. Grasp the contribution of philosophy of history to reflections on intercultural understanding.
4. Demonstrate an enhanced ability to research independently on the issues taught.

**Topics**

1. What is philosophy of history?
2. Historical explanation
3. Historical understanding
4. Truth and fact in history
5. Can history be objective?
6. The laws of history
7. Speculative philosophy of history: Kant and Herder
8. Speculative philosophy of history: Hegel
9. Speculative philosophy of history: Karl Marx
Learning activities

In this course, you are expected to

- read and think about the assigned readings;
- develop the skills mentioned in the course outcomes through philosophical discussion and writing (examination essays and critical discussion of tutorial readings);
- attend all lectures/tutorials to participate in discussion.

Activities and workload:

In-class (mandatory):

1. Lecture: 1.5 hours each week.
2. Interactive tutorial: 1.5 hour session every week.

Out-of-class (average workload per week):

1. Reading: 4–5 hours on the basic and suggested readings, 2–3 hours on tutorial reading assignments and presentation.
2. Essays: an average of 2–3 hours each week on preparing and writing essay assignments throughout the term. You should try to design a schedule that allows you to apportion more time on writing and discussing your essay with your tutor/teacher two to three weeks before each essay is due.

Assessment scheme

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Task nature</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One Term Essay</td>
<td>3000 – 5000 words</td>
<td>40% of overall mark</td>
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<tr>
<td>Two Discussion Notes on tutorial readings</td>
<td>Each around 1000 words</td>
<td>30% of overall mark</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>The class participation portion of your grade will be based on regular class attendance and participation as well as on in-class individual or small group presentations. In addition, you will be expected to participate actively in on-line discussions via facebook. Two absences are allowed during the semester, each additional absence will lower your class participation grade by one letter grade. More than six absences and/or failure to complete any of the written assignments detailed below are grounds for failing this course.</td>
<td>30% of overall mark</td>
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### Recommended learning resources

#### Required Readings:

- **Tucker, Aviezer** (2009), *A Companion the Philosophy of History and Historiography* , (West Sussex: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.)

#### Supplementary Readings:

- **Mandelbaum, Maurice** (1977), *The Anatomy of Historical Knowledge* (Baltimore and London: The John
Hopkins University Press).


**Course schedule [you may want to modify the format of this part to suit your needs; e.g., a separate, detailed list for tutorials might be preferred]**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Required reading</th>
<th>Tutorials</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Truth and fact in history</td>
<td>Walsh, W. H. (1967): Chapter 4</td>
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Details of course website

We use Moodle for this course. Relevant announcements and course documents (e.g., lecture notes) will be posted regularly on the website.

Feedback for evaluation

1. Students are welcome to give feedback on the course at any time. They can do so by communication to teacher or tutor in class, by email, posting comments and questions to the eLearning platform, or during tutorials.
2. As with all courses in Philosophy Department, students evaluate the course through a survey and written comments at the end of the term.

Contact details for teacher(s) or TA(s)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name:</td>
<td>Dr. Lo Kit-hung</td>
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<tr>
<td>Office location:</td>
<td>Room 406, Fung King Hey Building</td>
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<td>Telephone:</td>
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<td>Email:</td>
<td><a href="mailto:alexdrlo@cuhk.edu.hk">alexdrlo@cuhk.edu.hk</a></td>
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