

PHIL1413 Philosophies of Life 人生哲學
Course Outline

Time :	W 10:30-13:15	Location :	UCC C2
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Course overview

This course aims to help students understand important theories and ideas in philosophies of life, and learn how to use these ideas and theories in thinking and analyzing contemporary social, ethical and political problems in our everyday life.

人生哲學的課程目標在於引導學生理解人生哲學的基本問題, 理念與原理, 並學習如何運用這些理念原理對我們當前面臨的社會問題與人生道德問題進行哲學性的分析和思考.

Learning outcomes

1. Be familiar with the main ideas and theories in philosophy of life.
2. Demonstrate basic skills in reading, analyzing, and interpreting classical texts in philosophy of life.
3. Learn how to use philosophical theories and ideas in a critical understanding of those contemporary practical issues in our life.
4. Grasp basic skills in philosophical writings and discussion, and acquire an ability to strengthen these skills through self-learning and team-working.
5. In their papers, students should demonstrate the/an ability to analyze life issues and defend their own positions critically and philosophically.

Topics

- I. Introduction: The Concept of Philosophy of Life
 1. Socrates: a life without examination is not worth living
 2. Religious life and philosophical life
- II. Theories and Ideas in Philosophies of Life
 1. Moral absolutism and moral relativism
 2. Happiness and utility
 3. The categorical imperatives and moral duty
 4. The Confucian humanism and care for person
 5. The Daoist naturalism and unity of heaven and man
 6. Social justice, human alienation and liberation
- III. Philosophical Life Issues
 1. Do we have an absolute right to die?
 2. Family value and love affairs
 3. Is sex-work really a work?
 4. Housing problems in Hong Kong and Mainland China

Learning activities

In this course, you are expected to

- attend *all* lectures/tutorials/presentations to participate in discussion.
- read and think about the assigned readings before lectures or tutorial classes;
- either do a presentation or write a mid-size essay on the assigned topic;
- take the final examination.

Activities and workload:

In-class (mandatory):

1. Lecture: 3 hours each for 10 weeks.
2. Interactive tutorials & presentations: 3 hours (1.5x2) for 3 weeks (regular class time).

Out-of-class:

1. Reading: 3–4 hours on the basic and suggested readings for each of the topics.
2. Presentation & essay report: 8-10 hours on preparation for your assigned presentation or essay. (You should also try to design a schedule that allows you to apportion more time on discussing your preparation or assigned essay with your tutor/teacher a week before your essay is due).
3. Review for final exam: 10-20 hours.

Assessment scheme

<i>Task nature</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Weight</i>
Presentation/Essay	Interactive discussion and presentation/essay (2000-3000 words)	40%
Final Examination	3 essay type questions which you could choose from the four	60%

Recommended learning resources

Required Texts:

1. Plato, *The Trial and Death of Socrates*, trans. by G. Grube, (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1975)
2. James Rachels, *The Elements of Moral Philosophy*, 4th. 4th edition, (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2003)
3. Barbara MacKinnon, *Ethics: Theory and Contemporary Issues* (Boston: Wadsworth Pub., 2009)
4. a package of research essays regarding each specific topics discussed in the class. Most of these essays would come from the following references.

Other references:

1. Plato, *Five Dialogues*, (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1987)
2. Plato, *Republic*, (Basic Books, 1968)
3. Immanuel Kant, *Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals*, (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1993)
4. John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism*, (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1979)
5. John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty*, (Arlington Heights: Harlan Davison, Inc., 1947)
6. Fung You-lan *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy*, New York, Free Press, 1966.
7. 牟宗三, 《中國哲學十九講》, 臺灣, 學生書局, 1983年。
8. 《論語譯註》, 楊伯峻譯註, 北京, 中華書局, 1980年。
9. 《孟子譯註》, 楊伯峻譯註, 北京, 中華書局, 1960年。
10. 陳鼓應, 《老子注釋及評價》, 北京, 中華書局, 1984年
11. 《莊子今注今譯》, 北京, 中華書局, 1983年。
12. K. Marx and F. Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, (New York: International Pub. 1948)
13. John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, (Cambridge: Harvard Univ.Press, 1971)
14. Francis J. Beckwith, *Do the Right Thing*, (Boston, Jones & Bartlett, 1996)
15. Judith A. Boss, *Analyzing Moral Issues*, (London: Mayfield Pub., 1999)
16. Louis P. Pojman, *Ethical Theory*, (Boston: Wadsworth Pub., 1989)

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]

<i>Week</i>	<i>Topics</i>	<i>Required reading</i>	<i>Tutorials</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
1-2	<u>Socrates: a life without examination is not worth living</u>	Plato, pp.21-42; Rachels, pp.1-15; MacKinnen, pp.1-11.		
3	<u>Religious life and philosophical life</u>	Plato, pp.3-20 Rachels, pp. 16-31		
4	<u>Moral absolutism and moral relativism</u>	Rachels, pp.48-62; MacKinnen, pp.18-24		
5	Happiness and Utility	Rachels, pp.91-116; MacKinnen, pp.67-72		
6	<i>Presentation and discussion #1&#2</i>	To be announced		
7	Categorical imperatives and moral duty	Rachels, pp.117-140; MacKinnen, pp.85-96.		
8	<u>The Confucian humanism and care for person</u>	牟: 第三講; 《論語譯註》; 《孟子譯註》		
9	<u>The Daoist naturalism and unity of heaven and man</u>	《老子注釋及評價》; 《莊子今注今譯》(〈逍遙遊〉, 〈齊物論〉, 〈養生主〉)		
10	<i>Presentation and discussion #3&#4</i>	To be announced		
11	<u>Social justice, human alienation and liberation</u>	K. Marx and F. Engels, <i>The Communist Manifesto</i> ; Pojman, pp. 562-588.		
12	<i>Presentation and discussion #5&#6</i>	To be announced		
13	Conclusion and Review			

Details of course website

We use WebCT for this course. Relevant announcements and course documents 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)

Teacher	
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