

**PHIL1210**  
**Philosophical Thinking Through Writing 語言、哲學思考與寫作**

**Course Outline**

<b>Time :</b>	<b>H 9:30-12:15</b>	<b>Location :</b>	<b>LSB LT2</b>
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**Course overview**

This is a writing-intensive introductory course aimed at training students in the basic skills needed for philosophical reading, thinking, and writing. The course introduces principles of philosophical argumentation and critical thinking, along with techniques for philosophical writing. The instructor and students then jointly employ these principles and techniques to analyze and discuss selected philosophical problems. Students will be required to apply the methods of argument and writing skills introduced in the course to compose several short argumentative essays.

**Learning outcomes (as shown on CUSIS)**

1. Demonstrate competence in reading comprehension, critical evaluation, and argumentative writing with respect to at least three philosophical topics.
2. Demonstrate competence in writing a short philosophy essay that explains a problem and then states and defends a thesis concerning it.

**Topics**

1. What counts as philosophical thinking and writing?
2. Writing to understand reading
  - a. Taking Notes
  - b. Writing a summary
  - c. Writing an abstract
  - d. Extracting an author's thesis
  - e. Outlining an essay
3. Evaluating argumentative prose
  - a. Formulating and evaluating a definition
  - b. Evaluating an argument by analogy
  - c. Evaluating a formal argument
4. Drafting and revising the philosophical essay
  - a. The eight-step sequence
  - b. The opening paragraph
  - c. Paragraph structure
  - d. The closing paragraph
  - e. Reviewing papers in response to others' comments
5. Manuscript preparation and format
  - a. Integrating quotations and citing sources
  - b. Integrating quotations
  - c. Avoiding plagiarism
  - d. Citing and documenting sources
7. Using Library and Online Resources
  - a. Philosophical dictionaries
  - b. Encyclopedias, book series, and specialized references
  - c. Journals

## 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;
- 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. Written exercises: an average of 4–5 hours each week on preparing and writing essay assignments throughout the term.

## Assessment scheme

<i>Task nature</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Weight</i>
7 written exercises	Writing a Summary 5% Writing an Abstract 5% Extracting an Author's Thesis 5% Outlining an Essay 5% Formulating and Evaluating a Definition 5% Evaluating an Argument 15% Writing and Revising an Essay 40 %	80% of overall mark
Class Participation	The class participation portion of your grade will be based on regular class attendance and participation. 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.	20% of overall mark

## Recommended learning resources

### Required Readings :

1. Bedau, Hugo, *Thinking and Writing about Philosophy*, Boston, MA: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1996.
2. Martinich, A. P., *Philosophical Writing: An Introduction*, Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1989
3. Mogck, Brian David, *Writing to Reason* Malden, MA : Blackwell Pub., 2008
4. Closs, Julie ed., *Doing Philosophy*, London ; New York : Continuum, 2007.

### Supplementary Readings :

3. Soccio, Douglas J., *How to Get The Most Out of Philosophy*, Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1998
4. Fisher, Alec, *The Logic of Real Argument*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988
5. J. Wilson, *Thinking with Concepts* (Cambridge: CUP, 1963)
6. Gorovitz, Samuel, and Ron G. Williams, *Philosophical Analysis: An Introduction to Its Language and Techniques* (New York: Random House, 1963)

7. Waston, Richard A., *Writing Philosophy: A Guide to Professional Writing and Publishing*, Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1992
8. Feinberg, Joel, *Doing Philosophy: A Guide to The Writing of Philosophy Papers*, Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1997
9. A.W. Sparkes, *Talking Philosophy* (London: Routledge, 1991)
10. Peter A. Angeles, *Dictionary of Philosophy* (New York: Harper Perennial,1981)
11. Audi, Robert ed., *The Cambridge dictionary of philosophy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999(劍橋哲學辭典 / 英文版主編羅伯特·奧迪 ; 中文版審訂召集人林正弘 ; [主編王思迅] 台北 : 貓頭鷹出版, 2002)
12. Lacey, A.R., *A Dictionary of philosophy*, London : Routledge, 1990
13. Blackburn, Simon, *The Oxford dictionary of philosophy*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, c1994
14. Website: <http://www.epistemelinks.com/index.asp>.
15. Baggini, Julian, *The philosopher's toolkit : a compendium of philosophical concepts and methods*, Oxford, UK ; Malden, Mass. : Blackwell Publishers, 2003
16. Seech, Zachary, *Writing Philosophy Papers*, Belmont, Calif. : Wadsworth/Thomson, c2004

### Course schedule

<i>Week</i>	<i>Topics</i>	<i>Required reading</i>	<i>Tutorials</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
1	What counts as philosophical thinking and writing?	Mogck, Brian David : Ch. 8		
2	Writing to Understand Reading - Taking Notes	Closs, Julie : Ch. 3		
3	Writing to Understand Reading - Writing a Summary and Writing an Abstract	Bedau, Hugo : Ch.2, pp.9-24		
4	Writing to Understand Reading - Extracting an Author's Thesis and Outlining an Essay	Bedau, Hugo : Ch.2, pp.24-34		
5	Evaluating Argumentative Prose	Bedau, Hugo : Ch 3		
6	Writing a Philosophical Paper	Bedau, Hugo : Ch 4		
7	The Structure of a Philosophical Essay	Martinich A. P. : Ch. 3		
8	Tactics for Analytic Writing	Martinich A. P. : Ch. 5		
9	Drafting the Philosophical Essay	Bedau, Hugo : Ch 5, pp.106-126		
10	Revising the Philosophical Essay	Bedau, Hugo : Ch 5, pp.127-160		
11	Integrating Quotations and Citing Sources	Bedau, Hugo : Ch 6		
12	Using Library and Online Resources	Bedau, Hugo : Ch 7		

**Details of course website**

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

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

<b>Teacher</b>	
Name:	Dr. Lo Kit-hung
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