PHIL4371
Seminar in Chinese Philosophy
(Contemporary Significance of Wang Yangming’s Philosophy)

Course Outline (Draft)

| Time : Wednesday | Location : UCA 312 |

Course Overview
In this course, we will study the moral philosophy of the great Ming Dynasty Neo-Confucian Wang Yangming. However, we will not study him merely as a historical figure but try to bring him into conversation on, and to show his possible contributions to, some important contemporary issues in moral philosophy. The central idea of Wang Yangming’s moral philosophy is liangzhi, which will be examined in the context of the discussion of knowing-that and knowing-how in contemporary moral epistemology as well as the discussion of belief, desire, and desire in contemporary philosophy of action; another central idea of Wang Yangming’s is his idea of being in one body with ten thousand things (wan wu yi ti), which will be discussed in relation to the idea of empathy in contemporary moral psychology. Other philosophical issues on which we will bring Wang Yangming’s philosophy to bear include the issue of moral luck and moral responsibility, the situationist objection to virtue ethics, and the debate between moral realism and anti-realism.

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

Learning outcomes (as shown on CUSIS)
1. Develop sensitivity to the common concerns of human existence especially from a comparative perspective between eastern and western of philosophy.
2. Equip students with life-long learning capacities especially through understanding of the connections between academic pursuits and life experience.
3. Relate the subject matters to human experience and/or modern life.

Topics
(See course outline below)

Learning activities
1. Students are supposed to attend weekly class sessions regularly; absence without excusable reasons is not tolerated;
2. Students are supposed to come to class prepared, with the assigned readings for the given class carefully read;
3. Students are supposed to actively participate at the classroom discussion by raising questions and making comments regarding either the assigned readings or the instructor’s lectures or fellow students’ comments;
4. Students are supposed to write two book reports on Wang Yangming’s Chuanxilu in English, each with a minimum of 4 pages, double spaced, Times New Romans font size 12, with regular margins; each paper does not have to summarize the whole assigned readings but should focus on one or two main points that interest you most. Papers, with Veriguide, are due at the beginning (not the end!) of the dates indicated in the lecture schedule below; paper turned in after the beginning of the discussion sessions but before the end of the day are accepted with light discount (for example an A grade will be discounted as A-); papers turned in after the due date but within a week are accepted with a heavy discount (for example, an A grade will be discounted as B). After one week of the due date, no papers will be accepted;
5. Each student is supposed to give one presentation in class. The presentation is about one of the
readings assigned for weeks 4, 6, 9, 11, and 13 (excluding the readings from Wang Yangming). Do the presentation as if you are teaching this material to the class.

6. Each student is supposed to write a term paper, with at least 12 pages, double-spaced, Times New Romans font size 12, with regular margins. For detail, see the guideline below. The paper, with VeriGuide is due on April 28. No late papers will be accepted.

Guidelines for Term Paper:
Choose a topic of your own interest from those discussed in class. Make sure that this is a topic about which you have something of your own to say; summarize the relevant discussions of the topic by the author(s) we read and discussed in the class; explain what part(s) of this position you have most agreements or disagreements with; develop your own position, or provide your own arguments, and explain how your arguments will be able to overcome the problems with, or further support, the position you summarize; think what objections (possible or actual, including from those authors we discussed) there might be to your arguments; try to respond such objections. Your paper may have an introductory paragraph (announce what you are going to do in this paper) and a concluding paragraph (summarize the main arguments of your paper). You may also consider divide your paper into several sections.

In addition to the required readings, you may also consult secondary literatures. Whatever materials you are using, it is imperative to indicate very clearly from which sources these materials are (title of the book, or title of the article and the journal in which the article is published, publication year, and page number).

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<tr>
<th>Task nature</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tr>
<td>Class preparation/participation</td>
<td>Preparation for and participation at class discussions</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Two book reports</td>
<td>See item 4 in “Learning Activities” above</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<td>One presentation</td>
<td>See item 5 in “Learning Activities” above</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Term paper</td>
<td>See item 6 in “Learning Activities” above</td>
<td>45%</td>
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Recommended learning resources


______. Forthcoming. “Knowing-to.”


Course schedule

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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Required reading</th>
<th>Tutorials</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
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<tr>
<td>1 (January 11)</td>
<td>Introduction of the Course</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Reading Material</td>
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<td>2 (January 18)</td>
<td>Ryle’s Distinction between Knowing-that and Knowing-how: The liberal neutrality</td>
<td>Wang Yangming: Chuanxilu 1; Ryle 1946, 1968 and 1990</td>
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<td>3 (January 25)</td>
<td>Wang Yangming and the Knowing-that/Knowing-how Distinction</td>
<td>Wang Yangming: Chuanxilu 1 (continue); Huang forthcoming</td>
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<td>5 (February 15)</td>
<td>Wang Yangming’s Liangzhi as a Besire</td>
<td>(Book Report 1 due); Huang 2014a</td>
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<td>6 (February 22)</td>
<td>Empathy</td>
<td>Wang Yangming: Chuanxilu 2; Slote 2010: Chapters 1-3</td>
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<td>7 (March 1)</td>
<td>Wang Yangming on Empathy with Devils</td>
<td>Wang Yangming: Chuanxilu 2 (continue); Huang 2015</td>
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<td>8 (March 8)</td>
<td>Wang Yangming’s Empathy and Environmental Virtual Ethics</td>
<td>Wang Yangming: Chuanxilu 2 (continue); Huang 2016</td>
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<td>9 (March 15)</td>
<td>The Idea of Moral Luck</td>
<td>(Book Report 2 due); Williams 1981: chapter 2; Nagel 1979: chapter 3</td>
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<td>10 (March 22)</td>
<td>Wang Yangming on Moral Luck and Moral Responsibility</td>
<td>Wang Yangming: Chuanxilu 3; Huang Forthcoming 2</td>
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<td>11 (March 29)</td>
<td>Moral Realism, Anti-Realism, and Response-dependent Theory</td>
<td>Wang Yangming: Chuanxilu 3 (continue); McDowell 1998: chapter 7</td>
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<td>12 (April 5)</td>
<td>Wang Yangming: A Moral Realist, an Anti-realist, a Response-dependent Theoriest, or a Stimulation-dependent</td>
<td>Wang Yangming: Chuanxilu 3 (continue); Ivanhoe 2011</td>
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<td>13 (April 12)</td>
<td>Situationist Criticism of Virtue Ethics</td>
<td>(Book Report 3 due); Doris 2002</td>
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<td>14 (April 19)</td>
<td>Wang Yangming’s Response to Situationism</td>
<td>(To be added)</td>
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Contact details for teacher(s) or TA(s)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher</th>
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Academic honesty and plagiarism

Attention is drawn to University policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and to the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations. Details may be found at [http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/](http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/)

With each assignment, students will be required to submit a signed declaration that they are aware of these policies, regulations, guidelines and procedures. For group projects, all students of the same group should be asked to sign the declaration.

For assignments in the form of a computer-generated document that is principally text-based and submitted via VeriGuide, the statement, in the form of a receipt, will be issued by the system upon students’ uploading of the soft copy of the assignment. Assignments without the receipt will not be graded by teachers. Only the final version of the assignment should be submitted via VeriGuide.