

Course Code: PHIL 4423

Course Title: Topics in Textual Analysis: Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*

2016-17 Term 2

Instructor: Cheung, Kam Ching Leo (張錦青) (email: leokccheung@cuhk.edu.hk)

Tutor: TBA

Time / Venue : Wednesday 15:30-17:15 / SK Lee Building 304

BLACKBOARD LEARN will be used for this course.

Course Description:

Ludwig Wittgenstein is widely regarded as one of the most important philosophers in the twentieth century. His early work *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (The *Tractatus*) is considered by many as one of the most important philosophical works published in the twentieth century.

The *Tractatus* has great influences on important philosophical schools, including the Vienna Circle. Nevertheless, it also has its own intrinsic values and importance in itself.

This course is a guided in-depth study of the *Tractatus*. The instructor would read and study the *Tractatus*, entry by entry, with the class. The main points in the entries of the *Tractatus* will be explained, discussed and debated.

It is hoped that by taking this course, students would be able to understand the main points, the whole sense and the argumentative structure of the *Tractatus*, and to appreciate the rigor and beauty of this masterpiece of the twentieth century philosophy.

Learning outcomes:

After taking this course, students should be able to:

- understand the key concepts, major issues, theses and positions in Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*, as well as its whole sense and argumentative structure.
- critically discuss and evaluate the major theses and positions in the *Tractatus*, and its whole sense.
- appreciate the main concerns and the nature of the major issues tackled in the *Tractatus*.

- understand various different interpretations of the *Tractatus*, and come up with their own judgements on the relevant interpretative positions.
- acquire skills in argumentative discussion and in writing about issues in the *Tractatus* in particular, and Wittgenstein's Philosophy in general.

Learning activities:

Learning activities of this course include lectures, tutorials, reading essays, and writing a short essay and a term paper:

1. Lecture: 2 or 3 hours a week (mandatory).
2. Tutorial class: one hour session every week for the last eight weeks (mandatory).
3. A short essay.
4. A term paper.

In this course, students are required to attend all the lectures and tutorials. Students are expected to read assigned essays before the lectures and study tutorial materials, consisting of assigned essays or book chapters, before the tutorial classes.

Students are also expected to devote sufficient time to the writing of a short essay and a term paper throughout the whole course. Surveying and reading the relevant literature and analyzing the materials are essential to the production of satisfactory short essay and term paper.

Students should be able to develop and enhance their analytical and argumentative skills through discussion in tutorials and classroom and writing the short essay and the term paper.

Assessment:

Tutorial performance	(15%)
Short essay	(20%)
Term Paper	(65%)

Tutorials: TBA

Short essays: You need to write a short essay for this course. It would carry a maximum 20% of the mark of the course.

Word limit of each short essay: 1500-2000

Deadline for the short essay: TBA

A set of topics will be given to you three to four weeks before the deadline of the short essay.

Term paper:

Word limit of the term paper: 3000-5000

Deadline for term paper: TBA

Attention:

In your *term paper and short essay*, if there are any ideas, opinions and/or materials which are taken from others, no matter whether you quote them word by word or not, you MUST provide the sources. Otherwise, you would be considered as having committed Plagiarism. (Please also refer to <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/> for ‘Honesty in Academic Work’.)

Students are required to submit their short essays and term papers to the **VeriGuide** system before handing them in. Please visit the following website for the VeriGuide system: <http://veriguide1.cse.cuhk.edu.hk/portal/page/index.jsp>

Main texts:

Wittgenstein, L. (1974). *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*. D. F. Pears and B. F. McGuinness, trans. London: RKP.

——— (1981). *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*. C. K. Ogden, trans. London: RKP.

Outline Content:

1. The “preface”
2. Philosophy (TLP 4-4.0031, 4.1-4.116, 6.53-7)
3. The Tractarian ontology (TLP 1-2.063)
4. The picture theory I (TLP 2.1-2.225)
5. Thought, proposition and picture (TLP 3-3.144)
6. Analysis and logical syntax (TLP 3.2-3.5)
7. The picture theory II (TLP 4.01-4.0641)
8. Showing, variable and the general propositional form (TLP 4.12-4.53)
9. Logical operation and logic (TLP 5-5.5352)

10. The general propositional form and propositional attitude (TLP 5.54-5.5571)
11. Solipsism (TLP 5.6-5.641)
12. The general propositional form and logical propositions (TLP 6-6.13)
13. Propositions of mathematics and natural science (TLP 6.2-6.3751)
14. Ethics, the meaning of life and the mystical (TLP 6.4-6.522)

References:

(i) Works by Wittgenstein

The Blue and Brown Books, Oxford: Basil Blackwell 1958.

Notebooks 1914-16, 2nd edn., G. H. von Wright & G. E. M. Anscombe (eds.), G. E. M. Anscombe (tran.), Oxford: Blackwell 1979.

Philosophical Occasions 1912-1951, Indiana: Hackett 1993.

***Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, C. K. Ogden (tran.), RKP 1981.

***Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, D. F. Pears & B. F. McGuinness (trans.), London: RKP, 1974.

(ii) Works on the Tractatus

**Anscombe, G. E. M. (1971). *An Introduction to Wittgenstein's Tractatus*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

**Black, M. (1964). *A Companion to Wittgenstein's Tractatus*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Copi, I. M. and Beard, R. W. eds. (1973). *Essays on Wittgenstein's Tractatus*, New York: Hafner Press.

Heck E. H. ed. (2002). *From Frege to Wittgenstein*. Oxford: OUP.

McManus, D. (2006). *The enchantment of Words: Wittgenstein's Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*. Oxford: Clarendon.

**Mounce, H. O. (1981). *Wittgenstein's Tractatus: An Introduction*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Pears, D. (1987). *The False Prison Volume One*. Oxford: Clarendon.

Stocker, B. ed. (2004) *Post-Analytic Tractatus*. Aldershot: Ashgate.

** . These books are reserved at the University Library (with 4 hours loan period).

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/> .

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.