

The Chinese University of Hong Kong  
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## Introduction to Philosophy

PHIL 1110 AIT G05 M 10: 30 - 13: 15

### I. Description of the Course

Phil 1110 is designed as a general introduction to philosophical thinking and problems. We are going to approach the subject by a critical and reflective discussion of those great philosophical ideas and thought-provoking problems. Lectures and discussions will focus on important philosophical themes such as reason, truth and justification; doubt, belief and knowledge; value, virtue and obligation; existence and reality; justice, fairness and rights, life and death, etc.

### II. The Objectives of the Course

The purpose of the course is 1) to help both Hong Kong and international students to learn some basic knowledge of philosophy, to deepen their understanding of the philosophical ground of their lives and thoughts; 2) to research further the issues taught, 3) and to develop their ability of dealing philosophically with the important life issues in our contemporary multi-cultural world.

### III. Course Requirements and Grading

Students are required to attend classes regularly, to participate in class discussions and in the assigned papers/group projects actively. Students will be evaluated mainly from their performance on one final exam (60%) and one presentation and short paper in the class (35%). Class participation will count for at least 5% toward the final grade.

### IV. Readings

- 1) Plato, *The Trial and Death of Socrates*, trans. by G.M.A. Grube, Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett, 1975.
- 2) Rene Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy*, trans. by Donald A. Cress, Indianapolis: Hackett, 1980.
- 3) Louis Pojman, *Introduction to Philosophy*, Wadsworth, 1999.
- 4) Steven Cahn, *Reason at Work: Introductory Readings in Philosophy*, Harcourt, 1990.
- 5) Barbara MacKinnon, *Ethics: Theory and Contemporary Issues*, Sixth Edition, Wadsworth, 2009.
- 6) 王慶節《解釋學、海德格爾與儒道今釋》，北京：中國人民大學出版社，2004.
- 7) other reading materials (announced in class)

### V. General Topics (tentative)

- 1) **Introduction: Socrates and the Spirit of Philosophy**
- 2) **The Nature of Knowledge and Possibility of Knowing**
- 3) **Truth, Certainty and Thought**
- 4) **Happiness, Utility and Moral Sciences**
- 5) **Moral Duty and Human Dignity**

- 6) **Justice and fairness**
- 7) **Life and Death: Abortion and Euthanasia**
- 8) **Existence and Meaning of Life: Sartre**

## **VII. 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/>. 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.