

## Course Outline (General Education)

Course Code: UGED2261	Year: 2022-23 Term 2
Course Title: Philosophy and Human Life	
Time: Mon 10:30-12:15	Venue: LDS 214
Course Teacher: Ka-wing Leung	Email: kleung@cuhk.edu.hk
Office Location: 432, Fung King Hey Building	Phone: 39434730

**Course overview:**  
 This course investigates problems in different realms of human life from a philosophical point of view. It also demonstrates how philosophical thinking can make a distinctive contribution to our understanding of ourselves, others, and the world. Topics to be discussed include: different systems of value, human happiness, religion and ultimate concern, and ethical issues in modern life.

**Learning outcomes:**

1. Discuss ethical issues concerning human life.
2. Critically analyze different ideas of happiness in modern society.
3. Reflect on the meaning of life in philosophical way.
4. Evaluate and reflect on one's identity.

**Learning Activities:**  
 Lectures: Students are expected to attend all lectures and repeated absences will result in grade drop.  
 Discussions: Students are expected to participate in class discussions.  
 Readings: 2–3 hours each week on the required and suggested readings.

**Weekly Course Schedule and reading assignment:**

Week/Date	Topic	Requirements
1. / Jan 9	Philosophy as a way of life – Pythagoras	Osborne (2004), Ch. 6; Cohen (2016), 12-15.
2. / Jan 16	Unexamined life is not worth living –Socrates	Warburton (2011), Ch.1; Plato, <i>Apology</i> , in Cohen (2016), 90-105.
3. / Jan 23	Lunar New Year	
4. / Jan 30	Are you a Caveman? – Plato	Warburton (2014), Ch.1; Plato, <i>Republic</i> , Book VII, in Cohen (2016), 352-368.
5. / Feb 6	What is happiness? – Aristotle	Warburton (2014), Ch.2; Aristotle, <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> , Book I, in Cohen (2016), 577-585.
6. / Feb 13	Death is nothing - Epicurus	Adamson (2015), Ch.5 & 6; Inwood (1994), “The extant letters”.
7. / Feb 20	How to deal with anger? – Seneca	Adamson (2015), Ch.12; Seneca (2019)
8. / Feb 27	Who am I? – Descartes	Warburton (2011), Ch.11; Descartes, <i>Meditations on First Philosophy</i> , I & II, in Ariew (2019), 40-47
9. / Mar 6	Reading Week	
10. / Mar 13	What can I know? – Kant	Warburton (2011), Ch.19; Kant, <i>Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics</i> , Preface, §1-5, in Ariew (2019), 719-730.
11. / Mar 20	Life is suffering – Schopenhauer	Warburton (2011), Ch.23; Schopenhauer (2015), Ch.12.
12. / Mar 27	God is dead – Nietzsche	Warburton (2011), Ch.29; Kaufmann (1956), Ch.4.
13. / Apr 3	Being-in-the-world – Heidegger	Reynolds (2014), Ch.2; Kaufmann (1956), Ch.8.
14. / Apr 10	Easter Monday	
15. / Apr 17	Man is freedom – Sartre	Warburton (2011), Ch.33; Kaufmann (1956), Ch.9, 4.

**Required readings and other recommended readings:**

- Adamson, P. 2015. *Philosophy in the Hellenistic and Roman Worlds: A History of Philosophy without any Gaps*, Volume 2. Oxford: Oxford University Press. (Online)
- Ariew, R. & E. Watkins (eds). 2019. *Modern Philosophy: An Anthology of Primary Sources*. (3. Edition). Indianapolis: Hackett. (Online)
- Baggini, J. 2005. *What's It All About: Philosophy and the Meaning of Life*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. (Online)
- Cohen, S. M, P. Curd, & C. D. C. Reeve (eds). 2016. *Readings in Ancient Greek Philosophy from Thales to Aristotle*. (5. Edition). Indianapolis: Hackett. (Online)
- Hadot, P. 2002. *What Is Ancient Philosophy*, trans. M. Chase. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press.
- Inwood, B. & L. P. Gerson. (eds.). 1994. *The Epicurus reader*. Indianapolis: Hackett.
- Kaufmann, W. (ed.). 1956. *Existentialism from Dostoevsky to Sartre*. New York: Meridian Books.
- Osborne, C. 2004. *Presocratic Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. (Online)
- Reynolds, J. 2014. *Understanding Existentialism*. London: Routledge. (Online)
- Sartre, J.-P. 1948. *Existentialism and Humanism*, trans, P. Mairet. London: Methuen.
- Schopenhauer, A. 2015. *Parerga and Paralipomena*, Volume 2, trans. A. del Caro & C. Janaway. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (Online)
- Seneca 2019. *How to Keep Your Cool. An Ancient Guide to Anger Management*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. (Online)
- Solomon, R. C. & D. Sherman (eds). 2003. *The Blackwell Guide to Continental Philosophy*. Oxford: Blackwell. (Online)
- Solomon, R. C. (ed.). 2005. *Existentialism*. (2. Edition). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Warburton, N. 2011. *A Little History of Philosophy*. New Haven: Yale University Press. (Online)
- Warburton, N. 2014. *Philosophy: The Classics*. (4. Edition). London: Routledge.

**Assessment scheme:**

Assessment component	Description	Weight (%)
Class participation	In-class discussions	10%
Mid-term exam.	Questions on course topics	40%
Final essay	Essay on chosen course topics	50%

**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 are required to submit a [signed declaration](#) (attachment 1) 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.

**Feedback for evaluation**

- Course and teaching evaluation survey will be conducted in the second last week of the course. Students are reminded of their responsibility and right to give feedback to facilitate enhancement of the course.
- Students are welcome to give feedbacks to the course teacher at any time in person or through emails.

**Grade Descriptors:**

[http://phil.arts.cuhk.edu.hk/~phidept/UG/Grade\\_descriptors.pdf](http://phil.arts.cuhk.edu.hk/~phidept/UG/Grade_descriptors.pdf)