

**PHIL3800**  
**Metaphysics 形上學**

**Course Outline**

**Time: T 12:30pm-2:15pm**

**Location: LSK 306**

**Tut : TBA**

**Location: TBA**

**Course overview (as shown on CUSIS)**

This course discusses some central problems in metaphysics and reflects on the nature of metaphysics. Topics include: persistence, necessity, identity, essence, modality, counterfactuals, causation, properties, grounding and higher-order approach to metaphysics.

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

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

1. Understand the connection between metaphysical issues and other philosophical issues.
2. Grasp major themes in metaphysics.
3. Understand the relevance of metaphysical issues to/for the contemporary human setting.
4. Enhanced ability to research independently on the issues taught.

**Topics**

See the course schedule below for details.

**Learning activities**

- a. Lecture: 2 hours a week
- b. Tutorial: 2 hours every two weeks
- c. Reading: One or two articles for every lecture; one article for every tutorial
- d. Writing: Two term essays (2000-3000 words for each) on any metaphysical question

**Assessment scheme as prescribed on CUSIS (revise if necessary)**

<i>Task nature</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Weight</i>
Class participation and discussion		10%
Tutorial		20%
Essay#1	2000-3000 words; Deadline: 9 Mar 23:59	35%
Essay#2	2000-3000 words; Deadline: 11 May 23:59	35%

**Remarks on Assessment Scheme (if any)**

To ensure that the essay marking is fair to all who hand in the coursework on time, please be informed of the following regulation on midterm/final essay late submission:

If the essay is submitted after the given deadlines, there will be a 20% deduction of the grade (for the particular essay only, not for the total grade of the whole class) every single day.

For instance, if the midterm essay is submitted sometime on 10 Mar, then one will get only 80% of the marked grade; if the final essay is submitted sometime on 13 May, then only 60% of the marked grade. Therefore, if four days pass after the deadline and I still haven't received the essay, one will get zilch for their essay grade.

## Grade Descriptor

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

## Recommended learning resources

### Course schedule

<i>Week</i>	<i>Topics</i>	<i>Required reading</i>	<i>Recommended reading</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
Week 1 7 Jan	Overview	No required reading		
Week 2 14 Jan	Change and persistence	E. J. Lowe <i>A Survey of Metaphysics</i> , Ch.3		
Week 3 21 Jan	Necessity and identity	E. J. Lowe <i>A Survey of Metaphysics</i> , Ch.5		
28 Jan	No Class			
Week 4 4 Feb	Essence	E. J. Lowe <i>A Survey of Metaphysics</i> , Ch.6		
Week 5 11 Feb	Possible worlds	E. J. Lowe <i>A Survey of Metaphysics</i> , Ch.7		
Week 6 18 Feb	Laws of nature	John Carroll and Ned Markosian <i>An Introduction to Metaphysics</i> , Ch.4		
Week 7 25 Feb	Counterfactuals	E. J. Lowe <i>A Survey of Metaphysics</i> , Ch.8		
4 Mar	No class			<b>Submission Deadline for Essay#1: 9 Mar 23:59</b>
Week 8 11 Mar	Causation	E. J. Lowe <i>A Survey of Metaphysics</i> , Ch.10		
Week 9 18 Mar	Properties: Realism	Sophie Allen <i>A Critical Introduction to Properties</i> , pp. 7-14 and 28-35		
Week 10 25 Mar	Properties: Nominalism	Sophie Allen <i>A Critical Introduction to Properties</i> , pp. 39-51 and 67-77		
Week 11 1 Apr	Metaphysical Dependence	Gideon Rosen 'Metaphysical dependence: grounding and reduction'		
Week 12 8 Apr	Higher-order metaphysics	Lukas Skiba 'Higher-order metaphysics'	Jeremy Goodman 'Higher-order logic as metaphysics'	
Week 13 15 Apr	Review	No required reading		<b>Submission Deadline for Essay#2: 11 May 23:59</b>

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

<b>Teacher</b>	
Name:	Lo Tien-chun
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<b>TA</b>	
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Office location:	
Telephone:	
Email:	

**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.