Course Description:

The main themes of this seminar course are *eros* and *thanatos*. It is a philosophical reflection of our *conditio humana*: sex, love, desire and death. Through intensive study of major Western and Chinese philosophical thought on these topics, the meaning of life will be the focus of discussion. Students are expected to read significant amount of primary texts and related articles so that fruitful discussion can be achieved in class.

Course Outline:

1. Introduction: Between Birth and Death – Mortality vs Immortality
2. All Begin with Plato: *Eros* in *Symposium* and *Thanatos* in *Phaedo*
3. The Epicurean and the Stoic Reaction
4. The Christian Answer to Death and Lust
5. The Chinese Ways of Life and Death: Confucianism and Daoism
6. The Psychoanalysis of *Eros* and *Thanatos*: Freud
7. The Extremity of Eroticism: the Marquis de Sade and Georges Batielle
8. The Phenomenon of Death and the Phenomenology of Dying: Heidegger and Sartre
9. Concluding Reflections: On the Possibility of a Meaningful Life

Primary Texts:


**Major References:**