PHIL4381

Seminar on Eastern Philosophy:
Korean philosophy in comparison with other traditions
東方哲學研討：從比較哲學視角看韓國哲學

Course Outline

Time: M 1:30pm-4:15pm	**Location: ERB 408**

Course overview (as shown on CUSIS)

This is a seminar course devoted to an in-depth examination of the selected topics in Eastern philosophy. The specific content varies from semester to semester. Offerings with different subtitles can be taken for credit, up to a maximum of two times.

Why does Korean philosophy matter today? This course invites students to rethink the boundaries of philosophy by examining how Korean thinkers have responded to shared human questions through distinct conceptual resources and cultural contexts.

In this semester, we approach Korean Philosophy from a comparative perspective. We will begin by studying the historical significance, aims, and limitations of comparative philosophy as a method. We will then move beyond the conventional approach of juxtaposing ancient Chinese intellectual traditions with modern Western problems and instead examine how East Asian nations developed their own conceptual sets—an East Asian philosophical methodology—that enabled distinct trajectories of philosophical thinking into the present.

Subsequently, we will trace key themes in the development of Korean philosophy, exploring its continuity and transformation across history and its influence on Korean cultural identity. Through close reading, discussion, and multimedia resources, students will deepen their understanding of Korean thought and consider how traditional insights can contribute to contemporary philosophical inquiry.

Ultimately, this course aims to cultivate intercultural philosophical literacy and methodological creativity through the study of Korean and East Asian thought.

* Advisory to Majors: to be taken in year 3 or above.

Learning outcomes (as shown on CUSIS)

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. **Explain and critically evaluate** key concepts, arguments, and methodologies in Korean philosophy within a comparative framework.
2. **Analyze primary and secondary sources** from diverse philosophical traditions, demonstrating close reading and interpretive skills.
3. **Compare Korean philosophy with Chinese and Western traditions**, identifying points of convergence, divergence, and mutual inspiration.
4. **Apply comparative philosophical methods** to contemporary issues and cultural phenomena,

articulating their relevance to modern philosophical inquiry.

5. **Engage constructively in seminar discussions**, demonstrating listening, questioning, and collaborative interpretive skills.

Topics

Concept Clustering as Philosophical Methodology

Conceptual-Historical Approach to Comparative Philosophy

Experiential Syncretism as Innovative Movement

Uri, Plural Singular Subjectivity and Inter-Relational Self

Public Emotions and Korean Democracy

Learning activities

Each week's class consists of a lecture and a tutorial. Reflection materials are provided weekly in the form of text or video, and students are encouraged to read or watch them in advance and prepare for the discussion before coming to class.

Assessment scheme as prescribed on CUSIS (revise if necessary)

Task nature	***Description***	***Weight***
Essays	A well-researched philosophical paper based on careful reading of assigned texts. Students are expected to refine their argument and writing style based on feedback received after submitting their proposal.	50%
Reflection Notes	Weekly reflection notes on the readings (or online contents) and class discussions. Reflection notes are expected to demonstrate comprehension, critical insight, and personal engagement with the materials.	20%
Presentation	One individual presentation and one group presentation demonstrating comprehension of the assigned materials and engagement with philosophical arguments.	20%
Participation & Attendance	Active participation in class discussions and consistent attendance. • One point will be deducted for each unexcused absence. • Five or more unexcused absences result in no credit for this category. • Late submission penalty: half-letter grade (e.g., A → A-, A- → B+) deducted per day.	10%

Remarks on Assessment Scheme (if any)

Students are required to submit and present a proposal before submitting their final essays. While the nature of the assignment remains unchanged, each detail may be adjusted depending on the number of students and their academic progress.

Grade Descriptor

Please refer to: http://phil.arts.cuhk.edu.hk/~phidept/UG/Grade_descriptors.pdf

Recommended learning resources

In Search for the Origins of Korean Philosophy (SOKP)

EKP1: Modernity and the Emergence of Korean Philosophy (EKP1)

EKP2: Formation of Korean Neo-Confucianism (EKP2)

How to understand our emotions (Seongho1)

Korean Music, A Philosophical Exploration (KMPE)

* Reading lists and PDFs supplied via Blackboard

Course schedule

Week	***Date***	***Topics and Reading***[PDFs supplied via Blackboard]	***Teaching Mode***	***Tutorials***
W1	Jan 5	Orientation: Korean Philosophy from a Comparative Philosophical Perspective	In-campus	Introduction
W2	Jan 12	Conceptual-Historical Approach to Comparative Philosophy	In-campus	Reflection & Discussion 1
W3	Jan 19	Concept Clustering as Philosophical Methodology in East Asia	In-campus	Reflection & Discussion 2
W4	Jan 26	*Exchange Session: Contemporary Transformations of Central Concepts in East Asian Philosophy*	In-campus	*Exchange Activities*
W5	Feb 2	Korean Philosophy as a Methodological Framework	In-campus	Reflection & Discussion 3
W6	Feb 9	Formation of Korean Identity in East Asian Cultural Sphere	In-campus	Reflection & Discussion 4
W7	**Feb 16**	Lunar New Year Vacation		
W8	Feb 23	Philosophizing and Innovation through Experiential Syncretism	In-campus	Reflection & Discussion 5
W9	Mar 2	Reading Week		
W10	Mar 9	**Perennial Questions, Various Paths to Answer**	Online	Presentation & Discussion 1
W11	Mar 16	**Philosophical Debates in Korean Confucianism**	Online	Presentation & Discussion 2
W12	Mar 23	**Contemporary Korean Philosophy 1: *Uri***	Online	Presentation & Discussion 3
W13	Mar 30	**Contemporary Korean Philosophy 2: *Public Emotions***	Online	Presentation & Discussion 4
W14	**Apr 6**	Easter Monday		
W15	Apr 13	Closing Lecture and Comprehensive Discussion	In-campus	Moving forward

Details of course website

We will use Blackboard for this course. Lecture notes and information on assignments and papers will be posted on the website.

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

Teacher	https://www.phil.arts.cuhk.edu.hk/web/academic/park-so-jeong/
Name:	Park, So-Jeong
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TA	
Name:	TBA
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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.