The Chinese University of Hong Kong
2022/23 2nd semester
PHIL1413 Philosophies of Life 人生哲學
Course Outline

Instructor: Dr. Kwok Pak Nin, Samson
Time: Monday 13:30-16:15
Venue: LSK 212

Course overview:

This course aims to help students understand important theories and ideas in philosophies of life, and learn how to use these ideas and theories in thinking and analyzing contemporary social, ethical and political problems in our everyday life. Topics to be discussed include: Food, Sexuality, Emotion, Rationality, Liberty, Equality, Morality, Well-Being, Suffering, Meaning of Life, and Death.

Learning outcomes:

1. Be familiar with the main ideas and theories in philosophy of life.
2. Understand the contemporary practical issues in our life.
3. Demonstrate the/an ability to analyze life issues and defend their own views.
4. Acquire skills in argumentative discussion and in writing about the debate on real-life issues.

Learning activities and workload:

1. **Lecture**: 3 hours each week.
2. **Reading**: 2-3 hours per week. Student are required to read the reading material assigned.

Assessment:

Task nature	Description	Weight
Discussion	In class presentation & discussion	25%
Quiz	Two short Take Home Quizzes	40%
Paper	Term-end research paper	35%

Grade Descriptors:

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

Details of course website:

Lecture notes and information on assignments will be posted on the Blackboard Learn website.

Course schedule:

Week	Date	Discussion	Lecture
1	Jan 9	Introduction	Food
2	Jan 16	Roger J. H. King, "Eating Well: Thinking Ethically About Food"	Sexuality
3	Jan 23	***Lunar New Year Holiday***	
4	Jan 30	Elizabeth Brake, "Is "Loving More" Better? The Values of Polyamory"	Emotion
5	Feb 6	Jenefer Robinson, "Emotion: Biological Fact or Social Construction?"	Rationality
6	Feb 13	Stephen Ellis, "The Varieties of Instrumental Rationality"	Liberty
7	Feb 20	Isaiah Berlin, "Two Concepts of Liberty"	Equality
8	Feb 27	Derek Parfit, "Equality and Priority"	Morality
9	Mar 6	***Reading Week*** **Take home Quiz 1**	
10	Mar 13	Kai Nielsen, "Why Should I Be Moral? Revisited"	Well-Being
11	Mar 20	Shelly Kagan, "Me and my life"	Suffering
12	Mar 27	Havi Carel and Ian James Kidd, "Suffering as Transformative Experience"	Meaning of Life
13	Apr 3	Susan Wolf, "Meaningfulness: A Third Dimension of the Good Life"	Death
14	Apr 10	***Public holiday***	
15	Apr 17	Thomas Nagel, "Death" **Take home Quiz 2**	Q&A

Recommended learning resources:

Bernard Williams. *Moral Luck:Philosophical Papers 1973-1980*. Cambridge University Press, 1981.

Christopher Belshaw. *10 Good Questions About Life And Death*. Wiley-Blackwell, 2005.

David Bain, Michael Brady and Jennifer Corns (Eds.). *Philosophy of Suffering-Metaphysics, Value, And Normativity*. Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2020.

David Benatar (Ed.). *Life, Death, and Meaning: Key Philosophical Readings,* Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2016.

David Kaplan (Ed.). *The Philosophy of Food*. University of California Press, 2012.

Derek Parfit. *Reasons and Persons*. Oxford University Press, 1984.

Fritz Allhoff and Dave Monroe (Eds.). *Food & Philosophy-Eat, Think, and Be Merry*. Blackwell

Publishing, 2007.

Guy Fletcher. *The Routledge Handbook of the Philosophy of Well-Being.* Routledge, 2015.

Isaiah berlin. *Four Essays on Liberty*, Oxford University Press, 1969.

Jenefer Robinson. *Deeper than Reason-Emotion and Its Role in Literature, Music, and Art*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2005.

Julian Young. *The Death of God and the Meaning of Life*. London & New York: Routledge, 2003.

Raja Halwani, Alan Soble, Sarah Hoffman and Jacob M. Held (Eds.). *The Philosophy of Sex-Contemporary Readings.* Rowman & Littlefield Publishing, 2017.

Robert C. Solomon (Ed.). *Thinking about Feeling-Contemporary Philosophers on Emotions*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2004.

Thomas Nagel. *Mortal Questions*. Cambridge University Press, 1979.

Feedback for evaluation:

1. Students are strongly encouraged to provide feedback on the course via email or meetings with lecturer.
2. Students evaluate the course through a survey and written comments at the end of the term as well as via regular feedback between teacher and students. This information is highly valued and is used to revise teaching methods, tasks, and content.

Contact:

Lecturer	
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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.