

City University of Hong Kong

**Information on a Taught Postgraduate Course
offered by Department of Public Policy
with effect from Semester B in 2014 / 2015**

Part I

Course Title: Ethics and Political Philosophy of China

Course Code: POL 5709

Course Duration: One Semester

Credit Units: 3

Level: P5

Medium of Instruction: English

Prerequisites: Nil

Precursors: Nil

Equivalent Courses: Nil

Exclusive Courses: Nil

Part II

Course Aims

This course aims to

- Develop an understanding of the questions and concerns of ethics and political philosophy
- Develop an awareness of the intellectual resources and reasoning patterns provide by a variety of ethicists and political philosophers in early China
- Develop critical reasoning skills allowing for analysis and evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of these various ethical and political philosophies
- Develop skills in formulating rational arguments, in systematic organization of ideas, and in effective oral and written communication

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

(State what the student is expected to be able to do at the end of the course accoring to a given standard of performance.)

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

No.	CILOs	Weighting (if applicable)
1.	Understand the basic questions of ethics and political philosophy	
2.	Understand the seven major ethical and political philosophers in early China: Kongzi, Mengzi, Xunzi, Laozi, Zhuangzi, Mozi, and Han Feizi	
3.	Understand the key ideas and concepts employed by these major philosophers and how they relate to each other.	
4.	Form independent judgments on the concepts, theories, and approaches covered in this course.	
5.	Construct rational and persuasive arguments to justify their views.	
6.	Enhance communication skills.	

Teaching and Learning Activities (TLAs)

(Indicative of likely activities and tasks designed to facilitate students' achievement of the CILOs. Final details will be provided to students in their first week of attendance in this course.)

CILO No.	TLAs	Hours/week (if applicable)
CILO 1-5	Lectures	3
All	Tutorial participation and group presentations	3
All	Individual essays	3
CILO 1-5	Readings	3

Assessment Tasks/Activities

(Indicative of likely activities and tasks designed to assess how well the students achieve the CILOs. Final details will be provided to students in their first week of attendance in this course.)

CILO No.	Type of Assessment Tasks/Activities	Weighting (if applicable)	Remarks
All	Classroom participation/presentations	20%	
All	Individual essays	50%	
All	Final Quiz (Duration: 2 hours)	30%	

Grading of Student Achievement: Refer to Grading of Courses in the Academic Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Degrees.

Letter Grade	Grading criteria in relation to CILOs
A+ A A-	Excellent demonstration of knowledge and skills required for original and creative research and very high quality of critical thinking, review of literature, analysis and evaluation, written communication, and creative findings.
B+ B B-	Good demonstration of knowledge and skills required for original and creative research and good quality of critical thinking, review of literature, analysis and evaluation, written communication, and creative findings.
C+ C C-	Adequate demonstration of knowledge and skills required for original and creative research and average effort and ability to think critically, review literature, analyze and evaluate material, communicate, and discover creative findings.
D	Limited demonstration of knowledge and skills require for original and creative research. Superficial understanding of the research process, inadequate literature review, insufficient effort to analyse and evaluate material, poor quality written communication, and little creative findings.
F	Almost no standard of being able to recognise, explain and compare distinct theoretical approaches to cross-national studies, policy transfer and learning. Almost no demonstration of critical ability to interpret data and argument.

Part III

Keyword Syllabus

Ethics, political philosophy, morality, political thought, Confucianism, Daoism, Mohism, Legalism, Confucius, Mencius, Kongzi, Mengzi, Xunzi, Laozi, Zhuangzi, Mozi, Han Feizi, virtue theory, utilitarianism, moral rules, state consequentialism, state, utility, benefit, government, bureaucracy, paternalism, privacy, public, private, justification, good life.

Detailed Syllabus

1. Introduction and Historical Background: Before Confucius
2. Confucius on Ritual, Benevolence, and Virtue
3. Confucius on Social and Political Organization
4. Mozi: Moral Psychology, Moral Judgment, and Consequentialism: Critiquing Confucius
5. Mencius: Human Nature, Intuitionism, and the Cultivation of Virtue
6. Laozi: At One With the Way: Cultivation as the Return to the Natural
7. Zhuangzi: Anti-Rationalism and Skepticism in Ethics and Political Thought
8. Xunzi on Human Nature, Moral Agency, and the Development of Virtues
9. Xunzi's Vision of Social and Political Organization
10. Han Fei's Negative Project: a Criticism of Morality in the Political Sphere
11. Han Fei's Positive Project: Human Nature, the Dao and Political Organization

Recommended Reading

Text(s)

- Selections of primary texts in translation from major ethical and political philosophers in early China including:
 - *Analects* 論語
 - *Mengzi* 孟子
 - *Xunzi* 荀子
 - *Laozi* 老子
 - *Zhuangzi* 莊子
 - *Mozi* 墨子
 - *Han Feizi* 韓非子

- Selections of secondary literature from contemporary scholars examining early Chinese ethics and political philosophy.