City University of Hong Kong
Course Syllabus

offered by Department of Public Policy
with effect from Semester A 2017/2018

Part I   Course Overview

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

**Medium of
Assessment:**   English

Prerequisites:
(Course Code and Title)   Nil

Precursors:
(Course Code and Title)   Nil

Equivalent Courses:
(Course Code and Title)   Nil

Exclusive Courses:
(Course Code and Title)   Nil

Part II   Course Details

1.   **Abstract**

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

2.   **Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)**
(CILOs state what the student is expected to be able to do at the end of the course according to a given standard of performance.)

No.	CILOs	Weighting (if applicable)	Discovery-enriched curriculum related learning outcomes (please tick where appropriate)		
			A1	*A2*	*A3*
1.	Understand the basic questions of ethics and political philosophy		x	x	x
2.	Understand the seven major ethical and political philosophers in early China: Kongzi, Mengzi, Xunzi, Laozi, Zhuangzi, Mozi, and Han Feizi		x	x	
3.	Understand the key ideas and concepts employed by these major philosophers and how they relate to each other.		x	x	
4.	Form independent judgments on the concepts, theories, and approaches covered in this course.		x	x	x
5.	Construct rational and persuasive arguments to justify their views.		x	x	x
6.	Enhance communication skills.			x	
		100%			

A1:   Attitude
Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.
A2:   Ability
Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to self-life problems.
A3:   *Accomplishments*
Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

3. Teaching and Learning Activities (TLAs)
(TLAs designed to facilitate students' achievement of the CILOs.)

TLA	Brief Description	CILO No.						Hours/week (if applicable)
		1	2	3	4	5	6	
Lectures	Lectures on course material	x	x	x	x	x		3
Tutorial participation and group presentations	Discussions of course material	x	x	x	x	x	x	3
Individual essays	Essays designed so that students demonstrate their understanding of the course material and how to integrate Chinese moral and political philosophers with contemporary issues in political and ethical thought.	x	x	x	x	x	x	3
Readings	Reading primary texts from Chinese moral and political philosophers.	x	x	x	x	x		3

4. Assessment Tasks/Activities (ATs)
(ATs are designed to assess how well the students achieve the CILOs.)

Assessment Tasks/Activities	CILO No.						Weighting	Remarks
	1	2	3	4	5	6		
Continuous Assessment: 100%								
Classroom participation/presentations	x	x	x	x	x	x	20%	
Individual essays	x	x	x	x	x	x	40%	
Final Quiz (Duration: 2 hours)	x	x	x	x	x	x	40%	
							100%	

5. Assessment Rubrics

(Grading of student achievements is based on student performance in assessment tasks/activities with the following rubrics.)

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B, B-)	Fair (C+, C, C-)	Marginal (D)	Failure (F)
1. Participation in in-class discussions and presentations.	Knowledge (50%); Critical analysis (50%)	Strong evidence of original thinking; good organisation, capacity to analyse and synthesise; superior grasp of subject matter; evidence of extensive knowledge base.	Evidence of grasp of subject, some evidence of critical capacity and analytic ability; reasonable understanding of issues; evidence of familiarity with literature.	Student who is profiting from the university experience; understanding of the subject; ability to develop solutions to simple problems in the material.	Sufficient familiarity with the subject matter to enable the student to progress without repeating the course.	Little evidence of familiarity with the subject matter; weakness in critical and analytic skills; limited or irrelevant use of literature.
2. Individual Essay	Knowledge (50%); Critical analysis (50%)	The ability to delineate materials; the use of relevant and stimulating materials; good and creative organization of materials; ability to conduct in-class discussion; capability in responding to questions derived from alternative perspectives; clear evidence of superior critical analysis and synthesis; excellent grasp of subject matter; evidence of in-depth knowledge.	The use of materials largely relevant to the topic; indications of good grasp of subject; some evidence of critical capacity and analytic ability, reasonable understanding of issues; evidence of familiarity with literature; good ability to initiate dialogues with other students.	Basic and adequate understanding of the subject; ability to respond to simple problems during discussion.	An acceptable level of familiarity with the subject matter and grasps of materials.	Little evidence of familiarity with the subject matter; weakness in critical and analytic skills; limited, or irrelevant use of literature.

3. Final Quiz	Knowledge (50%); Critical analysis (50%)	Ability to respond to questions directly, creatively and precisely; strong evidence of original thinking; good organization, capacity to analyse and synthesize; superior grasp of subject matter; evidence of extensive knowledge base.	Evidence of grasp of subject, some evidence of critical capacity and analytic ability, reasonable understanding of issues; evidence of familiarity with literature.	Adequate understanding of the subject; ability to respond to simple problems.	Sufficient familiarity with the subject matter to enable the student to progress without failing.	Little evidence of familiarity with the subject matter; weakness in critical and analytic skills; limited, or irrelevant use of literature.

Part III   Other Information (more details can be provided separately in the teaching plan)

1. **Keyword Syllabus**
   (An indication of the key topics of the course.)

   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.

2. **Reading List**
2.1 **Compulsory Readings**
   (Compulsory readings can include books, book chapters, or journal/magazine articles. There are also collections of e-books, e-journals available from the CityU Library.)

   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

2.2 **Additional Readings**
   (Additional references for students to learn to expand their knowledge about the subject.)

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

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