

City University of Hong Kong
Course Syllabus

offered by Department of Public Policy
with effect from Semester B 2018/19

Part I Course Overview

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|---|---|
| Course Title: | Thinking Philosophically: Bridging the Gap between Arts and Sciences |
| Course Code: | GE1120 |
| Course Duration: | One Semester |
| Credit Units: | 3 |
| Level: | B1 |
| | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Arts and Humanities |
| Proposed Area: (for GE courses only) | <input type="checkbox"/> Study of Societies, Social and Business Organisations <input type="checkbox"/> Science and Technology |
| Medium of Instruction: | English |
| Medium of Assessment: | English |
| Prerequisites: (Course Code and Title) | None |
| Precursors: (Course Code and Title) | None |
| Equivalent Courses: (Course Code and Title) | generally none |
| Exclusive Courses: (Course Code and Title) | None |

Part II Course Details

1. Abstract

(A 150-word description about the course)

Higher education must prepare students to think critically and creatively across traditional boundaries of disciplines and also to navigate the interrelationships of different disciplines. Philosophy examines questions in every aspect of human life and its methods of analysis and problem solving apply to problems in every discipline. This course provides students with an interdisciplinary introduction to the study of philosophical issues pertaining to the study of social sciences, natural sciences and other humanities. Special emphasis is placed on developing critical thinking and writing skills, and enhance students' understanding of the key themes in philosophy and their significance from a cross-cultural perspective.

Learning activities include lecture, class discussion and debate, film screening, short quiz, group presentation and individual assignment. In lecture, students will be introduced to philosophical problems related to the study of social sciences, natural sciences and other humanities. Class discussion and debate, group presentation and individual assignment provide students with the opportunity to learn in an active and engaging manner.

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. | Explain a range of philosophical problems pertaining to the study of social sciences, natural sciences, and other humanities | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| 2. | Give an account of the methods and aims of philosophical analysis and its particular application to the problems related to the study of social science, natural science, and other humanities | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| 3. | Develop and demonstrate an interdisciplinary and cross-cultural mindset and demonstrate a sophisticated and sympathetic understanding of the value and depths of philosophical analysis | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| 4. | Apply philosophical analysis and problem solving techniques to construct solid arguments in response to interdisciplinary and cross-cultural problems and issues. | | | ✓ | ✓ |
| 5. | Appreciate how interdisciplinary and cross-cultural approaches can inform and improve traditional disciplines | | ✓ | ✓ | |

* If weighting is assigned to CILOs, they should add up to 100%.

100%

Please specify the alignment of CILOs to the Gateway Education Programme Intended Learning outcomes (PILOs) in Section A of Annex.

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 | |
| Lectures: | Introduction of basic concepts, theories, ideas, and arguments; examination of philosophical problems pertaining to the study of social sciences, natural sciences, and other humanities | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Class discussion and debate: | An opportunity for students to clarify and evaluate key concepts and arguments through exchange and interaction with others and offering and receiving peer review; an exercise for students to listen to and appreciate alternative views and arguments. | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Use of multi-media aids (films, news coverage, documentaries, online resources, etc.): | A means to provide narrative examples to highlight abstract philosophical problems, stimulate imaginative thinking and critical reflection. | ✓ | ✓ | | | | |
| In-class Exercise and Final Quiz: | Designed to test student's grasp of basic concepts and arguments. | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Group project and presentation: | Offers students a chance to work out well-argued and defensible positions of their own through a process of collaboration | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Individual essay (response paper): | Short, focused paper requiring students to concentrate on the systematic presentation of key ideas and sharp arguments based on their independent analysis. | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | |

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 | | |
| Continuous Assessment: 100 % | | | | | | | |
| Final quiz: Designed to test student's grasps of basic concepts and arguments. (To be held during the last week of the semester): | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | 40% | |
| Individual essay (800-1000 words): Short, focused paper requiring students to concentrate on the systematic presentation of key ideas and sharp arguments based on their independent analysis. | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | 20% | |
| Group presentation: Offers students a chance to work out well-argued and defensible positions of their own through a process of collaboration. | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | 20% | |
| In-class exercises: Short problem sets e.g. multiple choices questions designed to test student's grasp of basic concepts and arguments taught in the course | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | 20% | |
| Examination: 0 % (duration: , if applicable) | | | | | | | |

* The weightings should add up to 100%.

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. Final quiz | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to give direct and adequate answers to questions Critical and analytic skills to assess arguments and concepts learnt in the course Grasp of the subject matter dealt in the course | <p>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.</p> | <p>Evidence of grasp of subject, some evidence of critical capacity and analytic ability, reasonable understanding of issues; evidence of familiarity with literature.</p> | <p>Adequate understanding of the subject; ability to respond to simple problems.</p> | <p>Sufficient familiarity with the subject matter to enable the student to progress without failing.</p> | <p>Little evidence of familiarity with the subject matter; weakness in critical and analytic skills; limited or irrelevant use of literature.</p> |
| 2. Individual Essay | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to give direct and adequate answers to questions Critical and analytic skills to assess arguments and concepts learnt in the course Grasp of the subject matter dealt in the course | <p>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.</p> | <p>Evidence of grasp of subject, some evidence of critical capacity and analytic ability, reasonable understanding of issues; evidence of familiarity with literature.</p> | <p>Adequate understanding of the subject; ability to respond to simple problems.</p> | <p>Sufficient familiarity with the subject matter to enable the student to progress without failing.</p> | <p>Little evidence of familiarity with the subject matter; weakness in critical and analytic skills; limited or irrelevant use of literature.</p> |

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| 3. Group presentation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research skills to delineate and synthesize materials • Ability to give direct and adequate responses to challenges • Critical and analytic skills to assess arguments and concepts learnt in the course • Grasp of the subject matter dealt in the course | <p>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.</p> | <p>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.</p> | <p>Basic and adequate understanding of the subject; ability to respond to simple problems during discussion.</p> | <p>An acceptable level of familiarity with the subject matter and grasps of materials.</p> | <p>Little evidence of familiarity with the subject matter; weakness in critical and analytic skills; limited, or irrelevant use of literature.</p> |
| 4. In-class Exercises | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding and grasp of the concepts and arguments taught in the course | <p>Excellent understanding and grasp of the concepts and arguments taught in the course</p> | <p>Good understanding and grasp of the concepts and arguments taught in the course</p> | <p>Fair understanding and grasp of the concepts and arguments taught in the course</p> | <p>Some understanding and grasp of the concepts and arguments taught in the course</p> | <p>Little understanding and grasp of the concepts and arguments taught in the course</p> |

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.)

Philosophy of specific disciplines, including philosophy of science, philosophy of social science, philosophy of psychology, philosophy of computer science, environmental philosophy, social and political philosophy, philosophy of religion, philosophy of art, and so on.

Relationship between philosophy and other disciplines in humanities, social and natural sciences.

Philosophical significance of cross-cultural analysis in different disciplines.

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. Benton, Ted (2001), *Philosophy of Social Science: The Philosophical Foundations of Social Thought*, Hampshire: Palgrave
2. Burks, Arthur (1979), “Computer Science and Philosophy” in Current Research in *Current Research in Philosophy of Science*, edited by Peter D. Asquith and Henry E. Kyburg Jr., 399-420 East Lansing, Mich.: Philosophy of Science Association
3. Bynum, Terrell Ward, and James H. Moor (2000), *The Digital Phoenix: How Computers are Changing Philosophy*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers
4. Cohen, Elliot (2000), *Philosophers at Work: Issues and Practice of Philosophy*, New York: Harcourt College Publishers
5. Colburn, Timothy (2000), *Philosophy and Computer Science*, London: M.E. Sharpe
6. Floridi, Luciano (2003), *The Blackwell Guide to the Philosophy of Computing and Information*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers
7. Goldstein, Laurence (1990), *The Philosopher’s Habitat An Introduction to Investigations in, and Applications of, Modern Philosophy*, London: Routledge
8. Hansson, Sven Ove (2008), “Philosophy and Other Disciplines” *Metaphilosophy* Vol.39 No. 4-5 pp.472-483
9. Hollis, Martin (1994), *The Philosophy of Social Science: An Introduction*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
10. Jamieson, Dale (2001), *A Companion to Environmental Philosophy*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers
11. Klee, Robert (1997), *Introduction to the Philosophy of Science: Cutting Nature at its Seams*, New York: Oxford University Press
12. Kopelman, Loretta (1990), “What is Applied about ‘Applied’ Philosophy?” *Journal of Medicine and Philosophy* 15:199-218

13. Kymlicka, Will (1993), "Moral Philosophy and Public Policy: The Case of the New Reproductive Technologies" *Bioethics* 7:1-26
14. Martinch, A. P. (2001) *The Philosophy of Language*, New York: Oxford University Press
15. O'Hear, Anthony (2007), *Philosophy of Science*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
16. Peterson, Michael (2004) *Contemporary Debates in Philosophy of Religion*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers
17. Reichenback, Hans (1954), *The Rise of Scientific Philosophy*, Berkeley: University of California Press
18. Reidy, David (2007), *On the Philosophy of Law*, Belmont, CA: Wadsworth
19. Sharrock, Wes (2002), *Kuhn: Philosopher of Scientific Revolutions*. Malden, MA: Polity
20. Soames, Scott (2010), *Philosophy of Language*, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press
21. Sosa, Ernest (2008), *Interdisciplinary Core Philosophy*, Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers
22. Winch, Peter (1990), *The Idea of a Social Science and its Relation to Philosophy*, London: Routledge
23. Yeager, Leland (2001), *Ethics as Social Science: The Moral Philosophy of Social Cooperation*, Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar
24. Zimmerman, Michael (2001) *Environmental Philosophy: from Animal Rights to Radical Ecology*, Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall

Film and Documentaries

25. *Darwin's Dangerous Idea* (BBC, 2009)
26. *Eastern and Western Philosophy* (Culture Video, 2006)
27. *The Examined Life: An Introduction to Philosophy* (INTELECOM, 1998)
28. *The God Delusion Debate* (Fixed Point Foundation, 2007)
29. *Human Footprint* (National Geographic, 2008)
30. *Lord of the Flies* (MGH Home Entertainment, 2003)
31. *Judgment Day – Intelligent Design on Trial* (Nova, 2008)

2.2 Additional Readings

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

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| 1. | http://www.philosophersnet.com [The website of <i>The Philosophers' Magazine</i>] |
| 2. | http://www.philosophynow.org [The website of <i>Philosophy Now</i>] |

- A. Please specify the Gateway Education Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (PILOs) that the course is aligned to and relate them to the CILOs stated in Part II, Section 2 of this form:

| GE PILO | Please indicate which CILO(s) is/are related to this PILO, if any <i>(can be more than one CILOs in each PILO)</i> |
|---|--|
| PILO 1: Demonstrate the capacity for self-directed learning | CILOs 3-4 plus reading, in-class discussion, written assignment |
| PILO 2: Explain the basic methodologies and techniques of inquiry of the arts and humanities, social sciences, business, and science and technology | CILOs 1-2, 5 This course adopts an interdisciplinary approach to investigations in, and applications of philosophical analysis |
| PILO 3: Demonstrate critical thinking skills | CILOs 1-2, 4 Philosophical analysis involves critical thinking skills |
| PILO 4: Interpret information and numerical data | CILOs 1-2 Philosophical analysis of interdisciplinary problems require interpretation skills |
| PILO 5: Produce structured, well-organised and fluent text | CILO 4 plus written assignment and short quiz |
| PILO 6: Demonstrate effective oral communication skills | CILO 4 plus group presentation and in-class discussion |
| PILO 7: Demonstrate an ability to work effectively in a team | CILO 4 plus group presentation and in-class discussion |
| PILO 8: Recognise important characteristics of their own culture(s) and at least one other culture, and their impact on global issues | CILO 3 and 5 Investigations into social institutions should enhance understanding of one's own culture and other cultures |
| PILO 9: Value ethical and socially responsible actions | CILOs 1-2 The study of social science and the environment should develop appreciation of the value of ethical and socially responsible actions |
| PILO 10: Demonstrate the attitude and/or ability to accomplish discovery and/or innovation | CILOs 3-5 Philosophical analysis of interdisciplinary problems can generate new ideas |

GE course leaders should cover the mandatory PILOs for the GE area (Area 1: Arts and Humanities; Area 2: Study of Societies, Social and Business Organisations; Area 3: Science and Technology) for which they have classified their course; for quality assurance purposes, they are advised to carefully consider if it is beneficial to claim any coverage of additional PILOs. General advice would be to restrict PILOs to only the essential ones. (Please refer to the curricular mapping of GE programme: http://www.cityu.edu.hk/edge/ge/faculty/curricular_mapping.htm.)

- B. Please select an assessment task for collecting evidence of student achievement for quality assurance purposes. Please retain at least one sample of student achievement across a period of three years.

| Selected Assessment Task | Related CILO(s) | Related GE PILO(s) |
|--------------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| Group Presentation | 3-5 | 1,2,3,4,6,7,10 |