

# GE1109: VALUES AND JUSTICE IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD

---

## Effective Term

Semester B 2025/26

## Part I Course Overview

### Course Title

Values and Justice in the Contemporary World

### Subject Code

GE - Gateway Education

### Course Number

1109

### Academic Unit

Public and International Affairs (PIA)

### College/School

College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CH)

### Course Duration

One Semester

### Credit Units

3

### Level

B1, B2, B3, B4 - Bachelor's Degree

### GE Area (Primary)

Area 1 - Arts and Humanities

### Medium of Instruction

English

### Medium of Assessment

English

### Prerequisites

Nil

### Precursors

Nil

### Equivalent Courses

Nil

### Exclusive Courses

Nil

## Part II Course Details

### Abstract

This course aims to examining major issues related to values and justice in the contemporary world. Students will be exposed to fundamental concepts such as justice, the political, power, equality, fairness and consequences. It is an attempt to heighten students' awareness of different theoretical perspectives on important ethical and political issues with the aid of rational arguments. Upon completion of this course, students should be able to form informed and reasoned positions in relation to ethical issues from both the local and global contexts.

### Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs	Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	Distinguish normative issues from non-normative issues in the contemporary world with the aid of philosophical analysis.	x	x	x
2	Identify and explain the ethical implications of issues of the contemporary world with reference to concepts such as power, the political, morality, justice, fairness and so on.	x	x	x
3	Apply major ethical theories such as Consequentialism, Deontology and virtue ethics to analyse contemporary issues related to values and justice.	x	x	x
4	Develop and demonstrate an open mindset, moral sensibility and multiple points of view.	x	x	x
5	Construct philosophical arguments based on critical thinking and rational judgment.	x	x	x

#### 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 real-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.

### Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

LTAs	Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)	
1	Lectures	Introduction of basic concepts, theories, ideas, and arguments; examination of philosophical issues arising from reflections on the human condition and the nature of human existence.	1, 2, 3, 4	2-3

2	Class discussion	Prior to the lecture, the lecturers will post a list of study questions. Students shall consult the reading questions as they read the assigned chapter. During the lecture, the lecturers will randomly select students to answer these questions.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	0.5-1
3	Group presentation	Offers students a chance to work out well-argued and defensible positions of their own through a process of collaboration.	4, 5	0.5 hour per group
4	Term paper	Short, focused papers requiring students to concentrate on the systematic presentation of key ideas and sharp arguments based on their independent analysis.	1, 2, 3, 5	N.A
5	Oral Assessment	To acquire and develop independent thinking, to critically apply ethical concepts and theory to real life situations with special focus on justice and value, to evaluate the theories learned in light of the actual social experiences in the contemporary world, to empower his/herself with analytical skills and moral reasoning	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	Approximately 12 minutes per student.

**Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)**

	ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("-" for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?
1	Class participation	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	20	-	Yes
2	Group presentation (25 minutes max.)	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	20	-	No
3	Term paper (approximately 1000 words)	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	35	-	No
4	Oral Assessment	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	25	-	No

**Continuous Assessment (%)**

100

**Examination (%)**

0

## Assessment Rubrics (AR)

### Assessment Task

#### 1. Class participation

##### Criterion

- offer quality ideas and ask appropriate questions
- engage others in class discussions
- critically examine the accuracy and relevance of statements made
- identifies and summarize main points

##### Excellent (A+, A, A-)

The ability to offer quality ideas and ask appropriate questions on a regular basis; actively engage others in class discussions by inviting their comments; constructively challenge the accuracy and relevance of statements made; effectively identifies and summarizes main points

##### Good (B+, B, B-)

Sufficient contribution by offering ideas and asking questions on a regular basis; often engages others in class discussions by inviting their comments; attempts to challenge the accuracy and relevance of statements made; sometimes identifies and summarizes main points

##### Fair (C+, C, C-)

Occasionally contributes to class activities by offering ideas and asking questions; sometimes engages others in class discussions; sometimes understands main points; sometimes identifies and summarizes some of the main points

##### Marginal (D)

A little contribution to class activities, seldom invite comment/opinions from other students; poor demonstrates little understanding of main points; seldom identifies or summarizes main points

##### Failure (F)

Fails to contribute to class activities; fails to invite comments/opinions from other students; demonstrates little understanding of main points; does not identify or summarize main points

---

### Assessment Task

#### 2. Group presentation

##### Criterion

- Structure of the paper- Logical flow of argument/ Clarity in reasoning
- Demonstrating the ability to explain relevant ideas using one' s own words
- Ability to understand and respond to Objections

##### Excellent (A+, A, A-)

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.

##### Good (B+, B, B-)

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.

##### Fair (C+, C, C-)

Basic and adequate understanding of the subject; ability to respond to simple problems during discussion.

**Marginal (D)**

An acceptable level of familiarity with the subject matter and grasps of materials.

**Failure (F)**

Little evidence of familiarity with the subject matter; weakness in critical and analytic skills; limited, or irrelevant use of literature.

---

**Assessment Task**

3. Term paper

**Criterion**

- Structure of the paper- Logical flow of argument/ Clarity in reasoning
- Demonstrating the ability to explain relevant ideas using one's own words
- Ability to understand and respond to Objections

**Excellent (A+, A, A-)**

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.

**Good (B+, B, B-)**

Evidence of grasp of subject, some evidence of critical capacity and analytic ability, reasonable understanding of issues; evidence of familiarity with literature.

**Fair (C+, C, C-)**

Adequate understanding of the subject; ability to respond to simple problems.

**Marginal (D)**

Sufficient familiarity with the subject matter to enable the student to progress without failing.

**Failure (F)**

Little evidence of familiarity with the subject matter; weakness in critical and analytic skills; limited, or irrelevant use of literature.

---

**Assessment Task**

4. Oral Assessment

**Criterion**

- Understanding of ethical theories and concepts
- Quality of argument for position
- Ability to respond well to questions and objections

**Excellent (A+, A, A-)**

Answers are comprehensive, accurate and complete; key ideas are clearly stated, explained, and well supported; well organized, coherently developed, and easy to follow

**Good (B+, B, B-)**

Answers are accurate and complete; key points are stated and supported; organization of ideas is mostly clear and easy to follow

**Fair (C+, C, C-)**

Answers are not comprehensive or completely stated; key points are addressed, but not well supported; inadequate organization of ideas or development; structure of the answer is not easy to follow

**Marginal (D)**

Answers are partial or incomplete. Key points are not clear. Question not adequately answered; organization and structure of ideas presented detract from the answer

**Failure (F)**

Unacceptable content or fail to give answer; unclear structure; difficult to understand what the student's position is

**Part III Other Information****Keyword Syllabus**

Philosophical analysis; normative vs. descriptive; ethical reasoning; social issues; rights; liberty; justice; equality; community; fairness; consent; autonomy; political obligation; civil disobedience; democracy; sexual morality; decency; discrimination; gender; race; education; trade; economic development; globalization; the media; free speech; money; business; technology; science; liberalism; Consequentialism; Deontology; virtue ethics; social contract theories; eudaimonia; pornography; compensated dating; drug abuse; human organ trade; animal welfare; animal rights

**Reading List****Compulsory Readings**

	Title
1	Sandel, Michael (2010), Justice: What's The Right Thing To Do? New York City, N.Y.: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
2	Jeremy Bentham, Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation, 1789.
3	John Stuart Mill, On Liberty, 1859.
4	Robert Nozick, Anarchy, State, Utopia, 1974.
5	Immanuel Kant, Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals.
6	John Rawls, A Theory of Justice, Harvard University Press.
7	Aristotle, The Politics.

**Additional Readings**

	Title
1	<a href="http://www.cp1897.com.hk/product_info.php?BookId=9789868271265">http://www.cp1897.com.hk/product_info.php?BookId=9789868271265</a> [Chinese translation]
2	<a href="http://www.justiceharvard.org/">http://www.justiceharvard.org/</a> [The website of Harvard University's Justice with Michael Sandel]

**Annex (for GE courses only)**

**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:**

Please indicate which CILO(s) is/are related to this PILO, if any (can be more than one CILOs in each PILO)

**PILO 1: Demonstrate the capacity for self-directed learning**

3, 4, 5

**PILO 2: Explain the basic methodologies and techniques of inquiry of the arts and humanities, social sciences, business, and science and technology**

2, 3

**PILO 3: Demonstrate critical thinking skills**

2, 3

**PILO 8: Recognise important characteristics of their own culture(s) and at least one other culture, and their impact on global issues**

1, 2, 3

**PILO 9: Value ethical and socially responsible actions**

2, 3, 5

**PILO 10: Demonstrate the attitude and/or ability to accomplish discovery and/or innovation**

1, 2, 3, 5

**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**

Term Paper Designed to test student' s grasps of basic concepts and their ability to construct arguments. (Due towards the end of the semester)