Lingnan University 嶺南大學 香港 Hong Kong
Department of Philosophy

Philosophy Departmental Seminar

Conceptual Engineering as a response to Negative Experimental Philosophy

Conceptual engineering is an increasingly popular philosophical program that offers an alternative to the traditional view of philosophy as centered on conceptual analysis. Rather than aiming to describe our current concepts, conceptual engineers aim to improve those concepts in order to better suit our aims and purposes. While there is now a wealth of literature on the nature and benefits of conceptual engineering, there is surprisingly little work connecting conceptual engineering to the other major movement in recent metaphilosophical debate – experimental philosophy. In this talk, I'll argue that the adoption of conceptual engineering as a core philosophical method provides a promising reply to the methodological criticisms pressed by 'negative' experimental philosophers. Conceptual engineering fundamentally involves a license to reject current classificatory judgments; it allows pragmatic reasoning to trump our immediate judgments on philosophical cases. As such, it reduces reliance on the sorts of 'intuitive' mental states that negative experimentalists criticize. The adoption of conceptual engineering will not fully eliminate reliance on 'intuitive' judgment - no methodology possibly could, nor would it be desirable to do so. However, I'll argue that the judgments that are most likely to be dismissed during a conceptual engineering exercise are exactly those that experimental findings suggest to be the most epistemically defective.

Speaker: Professor Jennifer NADO *(The University of Hong Kong)*

Venue

LKK203

Meeting ID: **983 1951 5823**
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2 November 2026
(Monday)

4:45 – 6:15 pm
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All are welcome!