

Lingnan University
Department of Philosophy

Course Title	: Ethics: The Chinese Tradition
Course Code	: PHI3232
Recommended Study Year	: 3 rd Year or 4 th Year
No. of Credits/Term	: 3
Mode of Tuition	: Lecture and tutorial
Class Contact Hours	: 2 hours Lecture/week; 1 hour Tutorial/week
Category in Major Programme	: Ethics and Political Philosophy Unit - Chinese Tradition Elective
Prerequisite(s)	: PHI1003 Ethics: East and West and PHI2112 History of Chinese Philosophy: From Pre-Qin to Han (Note: These prerequisites are waived for BAPAI Senior Year students.)
Co-requisite(s)	: N/A
Exclusion(s)	: N/A
Exemption Requirement(s)	: N/A

Brief Course Description

It is widely thought that the main concern of ethics in the Chinese tradition is how to establish a harmonious order for humans. However, this is only one of the aims of morality according to the Chinese ethical thoughts. There are many issues, apart from the one mentioned, that constitute the core problems of ethics: the question of human nature, the question of desire and the moral mind, the origin of goodness, the autonomy/heteronomy of the will, the highest moral achievement, objectification of morality, etc. This course is designed to study these themes in an issue-oriented approach, with Confucianism as its major object of examination.

Aims

This course aims

1. To study issues closely related to the problem of morality in the Chinese ethical tradition;
2. To examine the problem of morality in Chinese philosophy with regard to its central themes and approaches;
3. To consider the distinctive features of the Chinese tradition in ethics.

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the course, students are expected to understand the major issues and their resolutions in the Chinese ethical tradition (LO1). They are also expected to have reflected on their present living (LO2).

Indicative Content

1. Introduction
Ethics, moral philosophy and the concept of morality in Chinese philosophy
2. What is a good life
 - a. Internalism vs externalism
 - b. The status of norms and virtues
 - c. The resolution of moral conflicts
3. The moral agent
 - a. The empirical self and the transcendental self
 - b. Autonomous vs heteronomous morality
 - c. Moral subjectivity and moral objectification
 - d. The human nature
4. The concept of a whole person

- a. Moral values and non-moral values
 - b. The inborn inclination and attained character
 - c. The individual and the culture
- 5. Metaphysics and ethics
 - a. The principle of metaphysics and the principle of ethics
 - b. The origin of human nature
- 6. The moral pursuit
 - a. The moral goal
 - b. The highest moral achievement
 - c. Moral practice

Teaching Method

Lecture and tutorial

Measurement of Learning Outcomes

Assessment will be based on the presentation and performance in tutorials. Students are assessed according to their ability of demonstrating the understanding of the assigned readings and of giving a whole picture of the controversial topic (LO1). They are also required to write a term paper in which they will argue for or against a certain view concerning issues covered in this course from different perspectives (LO1). In the final examination, grades are based on the knowledge students earned and the depth of their reflections on issues discussed in the course. They should be able to apply the philosophical ideas to their present living (LO1; LO2).

Assessment

60% Continuous Assessment: 30% Term Paper; 30% Tutorial Performance

30% Final Examination

10% Attendance

Required Readings

徐復觀，《中國人性論史：先秦篇》，第六版，台北：台灣商務印書館，1982。

Roetz, H., *Confucian Ethics of the Axial Age*, Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1993.

黃慧英，《儒家倫理：體與用》，上海市：上海三聯書店，2005。

Supplementary Readings

牟宗三，《圓善論》，台北：學生書局，1985。

盧雪崑，《儒家的心性學與道德形上學》，台北：文津出版社，1991。

瀚平，《儒家心性與天道》，台北：基礎道德文教基金會，1991。

何淑靜，《孟、荀道德實踐理論之研究》，台北：文津，1988。

Shun, Kwong-loi, *Mencius: An Early Chinese Thought*, Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1997.

Williams, Bernard, *Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy*, Cambridge: Mass: Harvard University Press, 1982.

Hare, R.M., *Moral Thinking*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981.

楊祖漢，《儒家形上學與意志自由》；《再論儒家形上學與意志自由》

李明輝，《孟子與康德的自律倫理學》；《再論孟子的自律倫理學》

Important Notes

- (1) Students are expected to spend a total of 9 hours (i.e. 3 hours of class contact and 6 hours of personal study) per week to achieve the course learning outcomes.

- (2) Students shall be aware of the University regulations about dishonest practice in course work, tests and examinations, and the possible consequences as stipulated in the Regulations Governing University Examinations and Course Work. In particular, plagiarism, being a kind of dishonest practice, is “the presentation of another person’s work without proper acknowledgement of the source, including exact phrases, or summarised ideas, or even footnotes/citations, whether protected by copyright or not, as the student’s own work”. Students are required to strictly follow university regulations governing academic integrity and honesty.
- (3) Students are required to submit writing assignment(s) using Turnitin.
- (4) To enhance students’ understanding of plagiarism, a mini-course “Online Tutorial on Plagiarism Awareness” is available on <https://pla.ln.edu.hk/>.
- (5) Students must adhere to the University’s guidelines and practices when using Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools. The official documents “Guidelines for Using GAI Tools at Lingnan University” and “Best Practices for Ethical and Responsible Use of GAI Tools in Course Assessments” can be found here: <https://www.ln.edu.hk/tlc/generative-artificial-intelligence/gai-guidelines-best-practices>.