Lingnan University  
Department of Philosophy – MA in Practical Philosophy Programme

Course Title : Philosophy of Love  
Course Code : PHI509  
Recommended Study Year : -  
No. of Credits/Term : 3  
Mode of Tuition : Lecture and Tutorial  
Class Contact Hours : 2 hours lecture per week  
1 hour tutorial per week  
Category in Major Programme : Value Philosophy  
Prerequisite(s) : -  
Co-requisite(s) : -  
Exclusion(s) : -  
Exemption Requirement(s) : -

Brief Course Description
Since before Socrates, philosophers have had a keen interest in understanding the personal dimension of human relationships, a dimension which is essential to any sense of human flourishing. This course will look closely at different types of love in both the Western and Eastern traditions. Love comes in many varieties: parental love, filial devotion, fraternal attachment, friendship, eros, charity, etc. What is this thing, love, which they all have in common? What general properties does it have? Is there a duty to love every human being? Should we, or could we, be friends with every human being? Is friendship an expression of need or weakness, or is it something divine? These are just a sample of questions that will be raised and discussed in this course.

Aims
1. To understand the moral normative dimensions of human affectionate and sexual relationships.
2. To examine and compare ancient, modern, and contemporary philosophical investigations of love in its various forms.
3. To explore possible relationship between love and a certain conception of the ultimate meaning of human life.

Learning Outcomes
After taking this course, students will have a deeper and more well-rounded understanding of what makes love, in its various forms, distinct as compared with other kinds of human emotions, and of the possible connections between love and normative things such as morality or meaning of life.

Indicative Content
1. Historical changes of what is meant by Eros (i.e., erotic love between persons) in the West beginning with its Platonic conception
2. The concept of Agape (i.e., the love of God, charity, “Christian love”. A focus will be on a particular view of Søren Kierkegaard.)
3. Confucian doctrine of Ren-Ai and its impact on the outlook of Chinese ethical life
4. Buddhist doctrine of mercy and salvation
5. Sex, commitment, and marriage
6. Parental love and filial devotion
7. Friendship and fraternal attachment
8. Sexual morality, homosexuality, pornography
9. Connections between beauty, sublime, and love

Teaching Method
Lecturing and seminar discussions (& reading reports)
Measurement of Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of the course students should demonstrate their levels of the above-mentioned understanding in their term papers as well as in tutorial presentations and discussions.

1. They are expected to compare ancient, modern, and contemporary philosophical investigations of love in its various forms.
2. They are expected to criticize and evaluate different philosophical approaches and investigation in various shot assignment. Also they will be able to distinguish and compare love with other kind of human emotions.
3. They are expected to explain, describe and discuss the possible relationship between love and a certain conception of the ultimate meaning of life in presentations.

Assessment
100% continuous assessment

Required Readings

Supplementary Readings
Encyclopedia of love & sex: a comprehensive guide to the physiology of sex, the art of loving, and the psychology of love, New York : Crescent Books, 1984.

Chinese Readings
唐君毅：《人生的體驗》，臺北，學生，1979 年
唐君毅:《愛情之福音》，臺北正中書局，95 年五版
唐君毅:《致廷光書》，臺北，學生書局，1984
傳統先:《哲學與人生》，台灣水牛出版社，1987 年
羅秉祥:《生死男女》，香港，突破，1997 年
劉小楓:《沉重的肉身》，香港，牛津大學，1998 年
羅素:《幸福之路》，北京，文化藝術，1998 年
羅蘭・巴特:《戀人絮語》，臺北桂冠，94 年
佛洛姆:《愛的藝術》，臺北志文新潮文庫，85 年
海倫・費雪:《愛慾》，北京時報文化，98 年
約翰・基爾:《男女大不同》，臺北桂冠，97 年
柏拉圖:《饗宴篇》，台灣協志工業，75 年
米蘭・昆德拉:《生命中不能承受之輕》，台北時報文化，96 年
曹雪芹:《紅樓夢》，北京中華書局，66 年