Lingnan University
Department of Philosophy – MA in Practical Philosophy Programme

Course Title: Schopenhauer’s and Nietzsche’s Philosophy of Life
Course Code: PHI519
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: Traditions and Practical Wisdom
Prerequisite(s): -
Co-requisite(s): -
Exclusion(s): -
Exemption Requirement(s): -

Brief Course Description
This course introduces the philosophies of two so-called “life-philosophers”, Schopenhauer and Nietzsche. It discusses the metaphysical, epistemological, ethical and aesthetic aspects of their thought and their significance for subsequent 20th century ideas like existentialism and postmodernism. The main ideas of Schopenhauer such as the metaphysics of the Will and his aesthetics will be introduced, as will Nietzsche’s “teachings” such the “Apollo-Dionysus” duality, “eternal recurrence”, “the will to power”, “overman”, “nihilism”, etc.

Aims
This course aims at (i) introducing the main ideas of Schopenhauer like the metaphysics of the Will and his aesthetics; (ii) introducing Nietzsche’s “teachings” like the “Apollo-Dionysus” duality, “eternal recurrence”, “the will to power”, “overman”, “nihilism”, etc., (iii) familiarizing students with Nietzsche’s method of philosophizing by intensive reading of two central texts The Birth of Tragedy and The Genealogy of Morals, and selective reading of his other writings.

Learning Outcomes
On successful completion of the course, student will:
1. acquire basic knowledge about Schopenhauer’s and Nietzsche’s philosophy;
2. have a critical perspective about their philosophical arguments;
3. see the relevance of their philosophy for the real life.

Indicative Content
1. Schopenhauer’s solution of the Kantian problem of “thing-in-itself”;
2. The development of Schopenhauer’s philosophy of Will and its distinction from the world of Representation.
3. Schopenhauer’s pessimistic philosophy of life, his aesthetics;
4. The philosophical significance of the Greek culture (esp. Homer and tragedy) on Nietzsche;
5. The significance of The Birth of Tragedy in Nietzsche’s aesthetics, metaphysics and philosophy of life;
6. Nietzsche’s critique of ethics in The Genealogy of Morals and the idea of Nihilism;
7. “God is dead”, “Overman”, “The Will to Power”, “Eternal Recurrence”.

Teaching Method
Lecture and tutorial presentation on particular topics, e.g. Schopenhauer’s philosophy of music.

Measurement of Learning Outcomes
1. Students will give an individual or group presentation on the assigned topic based upon Nietzsche’s or Schopenhauer’s philosophy. They are expected to show their clarity in explicating either both of these philosophers’ philosophy of life.
2. Student will engage in discussion or debate in tutorials. They are expected to show their criticism and appreciation towards both of these philosophers.

3. Students will write a term-end paper and expected to demonstrate their understanding of the these philosophers' philosophy and their philosophical usage of certain vocabularies.

**Assessment**
40% Tutorial, 60% Term Paper

**Required Readings**

**Main Texts**


**Introductory**

Young, Julian *Schopenhauer* (London; New York : Routledge, 2005)


**Supplementary Readings**

**Schopenhauer**


*On the Fourfold Root of the Principle of Sufficient Reason* tr. E F. J. Payne (La Salle, Ill. : Open Court, 1974)

**Nietzsche**


*The Birth of Tragedy and The Genealogy of Morals* tr. F. Golffing (New York : Doubleday, 1956)


**On Schopenhauer**

Neeley, G. Steven *Schopenhauer: A Consistent Reading* (Lewiston, N.Y.: E. Mellen Press, 2003)

**On Nietzsche**


Löwith, Karl *Nietzsche's Philosophy of the Eternal Recurrence of the Same* tr. J. H. Lomax (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997)

