

Lingnan University
Department of Philosophy

Course Title	: Confucianism and the Modern World
Course Code	: PHI4361
Recommended Study Year	: 3 rd 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	: Programme Elective –Chinese Philosophy Profile
Prerequisite(s)	: 1.PHI2112 History of Chinese Philosophy: From Pre-Qin to Han 2.PHI2116 History of Chinese Philosophy: From Wei Jin to Ming
Co-requisite(s)	: N/A
Exclusion(s)	: N/A
Exemption Requirement(s)	: N/A

Brief Course Description

The political, economic, social and technological changes that have taken place over the last century have diminished the political, economic and social foundation of the Confucian system. Confucianism seems to have been reduced to being merely a theory or a doctrine without practical meaning, an old paradigm lacking influence on and relevance to modern life. In this course, we will consider how Confucianism can respond to the philosophical problems of modernity and how to revitalise Confucian values in the context of modern life. Our goal is to engage with Confucianism as a potentially live philosophy in the modern world.

Aims

1. To provide students an understanding of modernity and its problems;
2. To enable students to gain critical perspective on how Confucianism can respond to the philosophical problems of modernity;
3. To enable students to think about the role Confucianism might (or might not) be able to play a role as a philosophical resource in the modern world.

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. describe the main characteristics of modernity and its problem, (LO1)
2. evaluate Confucianism in the light of modernity, (LO2)
3. explain the relevance of Confucianism in modern life. (LO3)

Indicative Content

1. Weber on Modernity: rationalization and the disenchantment of the world
2. On the dark side of modernity: Habermas and Postmodernism
3. The rationality of tradition and the Confucian tradition
4. The Philosophical Development and Construction of Contemporary Neo-Confucianism
5. Reconstruction of the Confucian Inner Saintliness and Outer Kingliness
6. Liberal rights and Confucian Democracy
7. The Constitutional Republic and the Confucian community
8. Moral Autonomy, Civil liberties, and Confucianism
9. The Predicament of modern moral philosophy
10. Confucian ideas of Human Flourishing

11. Pluralism, relativism, and interaction between cultures: a Confucian response
12. Confucian Bioethics: Response to Moral Issues in the Modern World
13. Confucianism and Environmental Ethics

Teaching Method

Lectures and tutorial format

Measurement of Learning Outcomes

1. Students will give oral presentations on assigned readings. They are expected to summarize, paraphrase and respond critically to the arguments in these texts. (Corresponding to LO1, LO2 and LO3)
2. Students will write a philosophical essay, the topics of which correspond to the contents of the lectures. They are expected to present their interpretations and criticisms effectively. (Mainly corresponding to LO1 and LO2)
3. The examination will assess students' basic knowledge of theories of modernity and Confucianism. (Mainly corresponding to LO2 and LO3)

Assessment

30% Tutorial

30% Essay Writing

40% Final Examination

Required Readings

牟宗三，《中國哲學的特質》第六版，台北：學生書局，1980。

牟宗三，《道德的理想主義》，台北：學生書局，1987。

唐君毅，《中華人文與當今世界》，台北：學生書局，1975。

徐復觀，《儒家政治思想與民主自由人權》，台北：學生書局，1988。

李瑞全著《當代新儒學之哲學開拓》，台北：文津出版社，1993。

Supplementary Readings

J. Habermas, tran. Thomas McCarthy, *The Theory of Communicative Action I: Reason and the Rationalization of Society*, Boston: Beacon Press, 1984.

J. Habermas, tran. Thomas McCarthy, *The Theory of Communicative Action II: Lifeworld and System: A Critique of Functionalist Reason*, Boston: Beacon Press, 1987.

Jean-Francois Lyotard, tran. Geoff Bennington & Brian Massumi, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984.

Richard J. Bernstein ed. *Habermas and Modernity*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1985.

Raymond Geuss, *The Idea of a Critical Theory: Habermas & the Frankfurt School*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981

Hall, David L. and Ames, Roger T., *Thinking through Confucius*, Albany, New York: State University of New York, 1987

Elstein, David, *Democracy in Contemporary Confucian Philosophy*, New York: Routledge, 2015.

唐君毅，《人生之體驗》，台北：學生書局，1977年重印。

牟宗三，《政道與治道》，台北：學生書局，1987。

李瑞全，《儒學生命倫理學》，台北：鵝湖出版社，1999。

蔡仁厚，《中國哲學史》上、下，台北：學生書局，2009。

劉述先(編)，《當代儒學論集：傳統與創新》，台北：中央研究院中國文哲研究所籌備處，1995。

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. 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/>