

Philosophy and Political Thought 2

Common Syllabus, 2019

Last updated: 8 January 2019¹

Lectures: 9:25 a.m.-10:20 a.m. on Mondays, Performance Hall

Course facilitator: Matthew Walker (matthew.walker@yale-nus.edu.sg)

In PPT 1, we saw how various intellectual traditions developed some basic alternatives to some fundamental questions. In PPT 2, we will explore how later thinkers refine, challenge, replace, and revive some of these options in novel ways and in new contexts.

Starting with the Buddhist monk Śāntideva, whose ideas offer a bridge from PPT 1, the module moves from questions about self, world, and knowledge (Ibn Tufayl, Zhu Xi, Descartes, Annambhatta), to reflections on gender, the state, and individuality (Marinella, Huang Zongxi, Hobbes, Mill), to various efforts to rethink older traditions in modern contexts (Nietzsche, the May 4th movement, Gandhi, Arendt). Some questions we'll consider include:

- What is the world and what is our place in it?
- What can we know and how can we know it?
- How is knowledge related to acting well?
- What is a state and what is its proper purpose?
- What is the relation between governing and the interests or rights of the governed?

These questions identify threads that run through the course.

Along the way, we will learn to be better thinkers: to read closely, to appreciate historical context, to pose helpful questions, to develop sensitive interpretations, to evaluate arguments. We will learn to be better discussants: to listen attentively, to speak thoughtfully, and to converse with the aim of understanding rather than impressing. And we will learn to be good writers: to express ourselves with clarity, concision, and precision.

Assignments:

The *common assessment* is shared by all PPT seminars and sums to 65% of your final grade. It comprises three papers, which are respectively worth 15%, 20%, and 25% of your final grade. Lecture attendance amounts to 5% of your final grade.

The *seminar assessment* is determined by your PPT instructor and sums to 35% of your final grade.

¹ This syllabus is the collaborative creation of the Philosophy and Political Thought instructors.

Policies:

You are required to attend – *and to be punctual for* – all lectures and seminars. For seminar, you will be permitted one unexcused absence without penalty. Further absences for a good reason will be excused by your seminar instructor, in consultation with your Assistant Dean. Students should indicate their attendance at lecture by submitting paper tokens to their respective seminar instructors by the start of each lecture. To receive full attendance credit, students must submit tokens by 9:25 a.m. Late tokens will receive a grade penalty.

Late writing assignments will be marked down by 1/3 of a letter grade each day they are late (e.g., A- to B+, B+ to B).

Academic honesty is required, as detailed in the Student Handbook. We recommend that you avoid all external sources, such as outside philosophy texts or Wikipedia, unless explicitly instructed otherwise. Furthermore, we are aware that you have all received detailed instruction about the nature of plagiarism and the consequences of committing it. So please submit nothing but your best attempt to think through the material on your own. In particular, you must cite not only all direct quotations from any source, but additionally *all ideas paraphrased from any source*. Also, be sure to include an acknowledgments section citing all intellectual influences, including the relevant PPT instructor(s) and your classmates. *Any plagiarized work will automatically be brought to the attention of a college-wide disciplinary committee.*

All required texts are listed below. These texts come in many different translations and editions. *If you do not have the version of the text that we will be using, then you will have a difficult time in seminar discussion.* Consult the ISBNs for the correct version.

Śāntideva, *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, translated by Kate Crosby and Andrew Skilton, Oxford World Classics (Oxford University Press, 2008), ISBN 978-019954043

Ibn Tufayl, *Hayy Ibn Yaqzān*, translated by Lenn Evan Goodman (University of Chicago Press, 2009), ISBN 978-0226303109

René Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy with Selections from the Objections and Replies*, 2nd edition, edited by John Cottingham, Cambridge Texts in the History of Philosophy (Cambridge University Press, 2017), ISBN 978-1107665736

Lucrezia Marinella, *The Nobility and Excellence of Women and the Defects and Vices of Men*, translated by Anne Dunhill (University of Chicago Press, 1999), ISBN 978-0226505466

Huang Tsung-Hsi (Huang Zongxi), *Waiting for the Dawn: A Plan for the Prince*, translated by Wm. Theodore de Bary (Columbia University Press, 1993), ISBN 978-0231080972

Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals and Ecce Homo*, translated by Walter Kaufmann (Vintage Press, 1989), ISBN 978-0679724629

Mohandas K. Gandhi, *“Hind Swaraj” and Other Writings*, edited by Anthony J. Parel (Cambridge University Press, 2009), ISBN 978-0521146029

Texts on Canvas (under “E-Reserve Readings”):

Zhu Xi, *Categorized Conversations*, in *Readings in Later Chinese Philosophy*, edited by Justin Tiwald and Bryan W. Van Norden (Hackett Publishing Company, 2014), pp. 168–184.

Wang Yangming, *A Record for Practice* in *Readings in Later Chinese Philosophy*, edited by Justin Tiwald and Bryan W. Van Norden (Hackett Publishing Company, 2014), pp. 266–268.

Annambhaṭṭa, *Tarkasaṃgraha* or *A Primer on Reasoning*, selections with supplementary materials edited by Malcolm Keating.

Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, edited by Edwin Curley (Hackett Publishing Company, 1994), Introduction and chs. 11 [selections], 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 29, and 30 (pp. 3–5, 57–58, 74–100, 106–118, and 210–233).

John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty*, Chapters 1, 2 [selections], 3, and 4.

Liang Qichao, “On Rights Consciousness,” in *The Chinese Human Rights Reader*, edited and translated by Stephen Angle and Marina Svensson (M.E. Sharpe, 2001), pp. 5–15.

Chen Duxiu, “The Constitution and Confucianism,” in *The Chinese Human Rights Reader*, edited and translated by Stephen Angle and Marina Svensson (M.E. Sharpe, 2001), pp. 67–74.

He-Yin Zhen, “On the Question of Women’s Liberation,” in *The Birth of Chinese Feminism*, edited and translated by Lydia H. Liu, Rebecca E. Karl, and Dorothy Ko (Columbia University Press, 2013), pp. 53–71.

Hannah Arendt, “Thinking and Moral Considerations: A Lecture,” *Social Research* 38 (1971), pp. 417–446.

Reading schedule

Week 1, Starting 14 January. Lecturer: Simon Duffy
Śāntideva, *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, 1–3, 5 (*verses 1–24, 47–54*), 6 (*1–49, 67–78*), and 8 (*90–103*)

Week 2, Starting 21 January. Lecturer: Andrew Bailey
Ibn Tufayl, *Hayy Ibn Yaqzān*, pp. 95–166

Week 3, Starting 28 January. Lecturer: Bryan Van Norden
Zhu Xi, *Categorized Conversations*, in *Readings in Later Chinese Philosophy*, pp. 168–184; Wang Yangming, *A Record for Practice*, in *Readings in Later Chinese Philosophy*, pp. 266–268 (Canvas)

Week 4, Starting 4 February. Lecturer: Malcolm Keating
Annambhaṭṭa, *Tarkasaṃgraha* or *A Primer on Reasoning* (Canvas)

Saturday, 9 February: First paper due at 11:59 PM.

Week 5, Starting 11 February. Lecturer: Cathay Liu
René Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy* 1-2

Week 6, Starting 18 February. Lecturer: Matthew Walker
Lucrezia Marinella, *The Nobility and Excellence of Women and the Defects and Vices of Men*
Part I

Week 7, Starting 4 March. Lecturer: Luke O’Sullivan
Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Intro. and chs. 11 [selections], 13, 14, and 15 for Monday;
chs. 17, 18, 29, and 30 for Thursday (Canvas)

Week 8, Starting 11 March. Lecturer: Elton Chan
Huang Zongxi. *Waiting for the Dawn*, pp. 89–114, 159–160, 165–169

Week 9, Starting 18 March. Lecturer: Koh Tsin Yen
J.S. Mill, *On Liberty*, chs. 1, 2 [selections], 3, and 4 (Canvas)

Saturday, 23 March: Second paper due at 11:59 PM.

Week 10, Starting 25 March. Lecturer: Andrew Bailey
Friedrich Nietzsche *Genealogy of Morals*, Preface, Essay 1, and Essay 2

Week 11, Starting 1 April. Lecturer: Bjorn Gomes
Liang Qichao, “On Rights Consciousness” (Canvas); Chen Duxiu, “The Constitution
and Confucianism” (Canvas); He-Yin Zhen, “On the Question of Women’s
Liberation” (Canvas)

Week 12, Starting 8 April. Lecturer: Malcolm Keating
M.K. Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj*, pp. 1–123

Week 13, Starting 15 April. Lecturer: Robin Zheng
Hannah Arendt, “Thinking and Moral Considerations: A Lecture” (Canvas)

Monday, 29 April: Third paper due at 11:59 PM

PPT Writing Goals
Last updated April 2018

SKILLS TO CULTIVATE IN PPT COMMON ESSAYS		
<i>Semester 1</i>		
Paper 1	Careful reading, interpretation: what is the author saying, and how?	600-900 words; 15%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading charitably • Identifying assumptions; unpacking metaphors • Understanding voicing (who is saying what) • Using quotations and paraphrasing 	
Paper 2	Analysing a passage or argument; beginning evaluation	900-1200 words; 20%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying evidence and argument structures • Appreciating what makes an argument a weak or a strong one, a good or bad one • Considering whether we've been given good reason to believe a claim, and what the best reason is 	
Paper 3	Rendering judgment: arguing that an author's position or argument is a good/plausible or bad/implausible one	1200-1500 words; 25%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stating an argument, raising an objection to claims or to transitions between claims • Considering and evaluating possible replies • Elaborating sympathetically on the views of a thinker (for instance, in the face of possible objections) • Considering different interpretations of a passage and defending one of them 	

For Semester 2, see p. 2

<i>Semester 2</i>		
Paper 4	Reading synoptically	600-900 words with leeway; 15%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying aims of sections and of texts as a whole Relating local claims and arguments to these larger aims 	
Paper 5	Evaluating passages/arguments in relation to global aims	900-1200 words with leeway; 20%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raising an objection to a local claim or argument, explaining the objection's larger significance, and considering possible replies to the objection Appreciating ways of making local concessions that preserve more central claims of a text Attending to dialectical structure and voice – who says what and for what purpose 	
Paper 6	Developing one's own ideas: intellectual creativity and ambition	1200-1500 words with leeway; 25%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Putting thinkers in dialogue with each other. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stating one thinker's problem and another's solution Stating one thinker's theory and repurposing another thinker's ideas into an objection Putting two thinkers into debate and adjudicating it Reconciling apparently incompatible views <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Putting another's ideas to novel uses. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drawing novel conclusions from a theory Significantly extending or modifying a thinker's argument Applying a theory to a novel context <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing a substantial line of argument. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stating a thinker's argument, making objections to that argument, considering possible replies to those objections, and assessing the broader significance of the disagreement. Stating an argument of one's own, objecting to that argument, considering possible replies, and assessing the broader significance of the disagreement. 	