ARTS3360

Philosophy Capstone: Examining Pivotal Texts

Term Three // 2020

Course Overview

Staff Contact Details

Convenors

Name	Email	Availability	Location	Phone
David Bronstein	d.bronstein@unsw.edu.au	Please contact via email.	Office: MB 344	9385 3669

Lecturers

Name	Email	Availability	Location	Phone
Karyn Lai	k.lai@unsw.edu.au	Please contact via email.	MB 326	

School Contact Information

School of Humanities and Languages

Location: School Office, Morven Brown Building, Level 2, 258

Opening Hours: Monday - Friday, 9am - 5pm

Phone: +61 2 9385 1681

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Course Details

Credit Points 6

Summary of the Course

In the capstone, you will consolidate your grasp of the discipline of philosophy by examining a pivotal text in the history of philosophy that (a) weighs in on the relation between the two main streams of the discipline (mind/metaphysics/epistemology and value theory); and (b) has been broadly influential upon contemporary philosophical debates and practices. The selected text may vary from semester to semester, but some representative examples would include: Spinoza's *Ethics*, Hume's *Treatise of Human Nature*, Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*. The selected text will be examined with respect to: its historical context; its integrity as a unified and systematic work; the independent power of its arguments; the implications of these arguments for other areas of humanistic inquiry; and the enduring influence of the text over contemporary debates and philosophical practice. The practical apprenticeship of the subject will be developed by introducing students to the variety of research practices of the discipline and encouraging students to reflect upon those practices in the development of a sustained and integrated research project. You will refine your skills for focused analytic writing that will serve you in a range of future career paths, both academic and non-academic.

Course Learning Outcomes

1. Explain the central doctrines of the source text for the course
2. Identify philosophical arguments (isolating premises, inferences, and conclusion) in the source text, and evaluate their soundness
3. Interpret the core claims of the source text, and assess their bearing on other areas of philosophy and humanistic inquiry
4. Debate the interpretation of the source text, and appraise competing interpretations
5. Conduct independent research in philosophy

Teaching Strategies

This course is designed to consolidate your grasp of the unity and breadth of philosophical inquiry through examining a text that has had a profound impact on contemporary philosophical practice. It is also designed to help you develop skills for independent philosophical inquiry and research. It will help you further develop your skills for clear, analytical writing, which will be of use in your future career (whether academic or non-academic). This course is taught as a seminar in a three-hour block. While some time will be devoted to lecture-style delivery, sessions will also regularly involve close hands-on work with the texts, group discussion, and both informal and organised debates.

Assessment

Assessment Tasks

Assessment task	Weight	Due Date	Student Learning Outcomes Assessed
Study Partner Discussion Forum Posts	10%	Not Applicable	1,2,3,4,5
Critical Reading Exercise	30%	09/10/2020 11:00 AM	1,2,3,4,5
Final Essay	60%	07/12/2020 11:00 PM	1,2,3,4,5

Assessment Details

Assessment 1: Study Partner Discussion Forum Posts

Start date: Not Applicable

Details:

Students are to meet with a study partner five times over the course of the term to discuss the source text, prior to our having discussed it as a class, and write a short post (50 to 75 words) for the discussion forum.

For each discussion forum post, both study partners receive a mark (each post out of 2%). Feedback via general discussion and responses on the discussion forum. Individual feedback available upon request.

Assessment 2: Critical Reading Exercise

Start date:

Details:

1200 word essay, critically analysing an argument in the source text prior to our having discussed it as a class, drawing on what students have learned so far about the text.

Feedback via individual comments and a mark.

Turnitin setting: This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students do not see Turnitin similarity reports.

Assessment 3: Final Essay

Start date:

Details:

3000 words. A focused research essay on a topic of the student's choosing, vetted by the instructor,

addressing an interpretive puzzle in the source text and demonstrating knowledge of its relevance to contemporary debates. Students will also present the essay in a workshop at the end of the term.

Feedback via written comments and a mark.

Turnitin setting: This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students do not see Turnitin similarity reports.

Attendance Requirements

Please note that lecture recordings are not available for this course. Students are strongly encouraged to attend all classes and contact the Course Authority to make alternative arrangements for classes missed.

Course Schedule

[View class timetable](#)

Timetable

Date	Type	Content
Week 1: 14 September - 18 September	Seminar	Wednesday: Introduction [no reading]
	Seminar	Friday: Topic: Aristotle: the structure of human action, happiness, and the human function Reading: *Nicomachean Ethics* I.1–7
Week 2: 21 September - 25 September	Seminar	Wednesday: Topic: Mencius: Human nature and the heart that cannot bear to see suffering Reading: *Mencius* 2A6, 7; 3A5
	Seminar	Friday: Topic: Aristotle: Happiness, virtue, and other goods Reading: *NE* I.8–13
Week 3: 28 September - 2 October	Seminar	Wednesday: Topic: Mencius: What comes naturally to humanity: Reading: *Mencius* 6A 6, 7
	Seminar	Friday: Topic: Aristotle: Happiness, virtue, and contemplation Reading: *NE* X.6–8
Week 4: 5 October - 9 October	Seminar	Wednesday: Topic: Mencius: Losing it: getting the priorities right

		Reading: *Mencius* A 8-10

	Seminar	Friday: Topic: Aristotle: Moral habituation Reading: *NE* II.1–4, X.9
	Assessment	Critical reading exercise, due Friday October 9th at 11:00am
Week 5: 12 October - 16 October	Seminar	Wednesday: Topic: Mencius: Delusion and reflection Reading: *Mencius* 6A 11-16
	Seminar	Friday: Review [no new reading]
Week 6: 19 October - 23 October	Seminar	No classes this week
Week 7: 26 October - 30 October	Seminar	Wednesday: Topic: Aristotle: The doctrine of the mean and the nature of moral virtue Reading: *NE* II.5–9
	Seminar	Friday: Topic: Mencius: Recovery: getting back on track Reading: *Mencius* 6A 18-20; 4A 1,2
Week 8: 2 November - 6 November	Seminar	Wednesday: Topic: Aristotle: Practical wisdom Reading: *NE* VI
	Seminar	Friday: Topic: Mencius: Moral resources for doing the right thing Reading: *Mencius* 6A 1-3; 6A 4
Week 9: 9 November - 13 November	Seminar	Wednesday: Topic: Aristotle: Friendship Reading: *NE* VIII
	Seminar	Friday: Topic: Mencius: Moral resources, internal and

		external
		Reading: Excavated texts from Guodian
Week 10: 16 November - 20 November	Seminar	Wednesday:
		Topic: Aristotle: Self-love
		Reading: *NE* IX
	Seminar	Friday:
		Review [no new reading]

Resources

Prescribed Resources

Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*. Translated by Terence Irwin. Hackett. [available at UNSW bookstore]

Mencius. Translated by Irene Bloom. Columbia University Press. [available at UNSW bookstore]

Other required readings available through Leganto -- look on Moodle for the link to Leganto.

Recommended Resources

Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy entires:

Aristotle: https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/aristotle/

Aristotle's ethics: https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/aristotle-ethics/

Mencius: https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/mencius/

Course Evaluation and Development

Please come talk to the course convenor about any issues having to do with course administration, and be sure to fill out your My Experience survey at the end -- all feedback is instrumental to developing and improving the course.

Submission of Assessment Tasks

Turnitin Submission

If you encounter a problem when attempting to submit your assignment through Turnitin, please telephone External Support on 9385 3331 or email them on externalteltsupport@unsw.edu.au . Support hours are 8:00am – 10:00pm on weekdays and 9:00am – 5:00pm on weekends (365 days a year). If you are unable to submit your assignment due to a fault with Turnitin you may apply for an extension, but you must retain your ticket number from External Support (along with any other relevant documents) to include as evidence to support your extension application. If you email External Support you will automatically receive a ticket number, but if you telephone you will need to specifically ask for one. Turnitin also provides updates on their system status on Twitter.

Generally, assessment tasks must be submitted electronically via either Turnitin or a Moodle assignment. In instances where this is not possible, it will be stated on your course's Moodle site with alternative submission details.

For information on how to submit assignments online via Moodle: https://student.unsw.edu.au/how-submit-assignment-moodle

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of others and presenting them as your own. It can take many forms, from deliberate cheating to accidentally copying from a source without acknowledgement.

UNSW groups plagiarism into the following categories:

Copying: using the same or very similar words to the original text or idea without acknowledging the source or using quotation marks. This also applies to images, art and design projects, as well as presentations where someone presents another's ideas or words without credit.

Inappropriate paraphrasing: Changing a few words and phrases while mostly retaining the original structure and/or progression of ideas of the original, and information without acknowledgement. This also applies in presentations where someone paraphrases another's ideas or words without credit and to piecing together quotes and paraphrases into a new whole, without appropriate referencing.

Collusion: working with others but passing off the work as a person's individual work. Collusion also includes providing your work to another student before the due date, or for the purpose of them plagiarising at any time, paying another person to perform an academic task, stealing or acquiring another person's academic work and copying it, offering to complete another person's work or seeking payment for completing academic work.

Inappropriate citation: Citing sources which have not been read, without acknowledging the "secondary" source from which knowledge of them has been obtained.

Duplication ("self-plagiarism"): submitting your own work, in whole or in part, where it has previously been prepared or submitted for another assessment or course at UNSW or another university.

Correct referencing practices:

- Paraphrasing, summarising, essay writing and time management
- Appropriate use of and attribution for a range of materials including text, images, formulae and concepts.

Individual assistance is available on request from The Learning Centre (http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au/). Students are also reminded that careful time management is an important part of study and one of the identified causes of plagiarism is poor time management. Students should allow sufficient time for research, drafting and proper referencing of sources in preparing all assessment items.

UNSW Library also has the ELISE tool available to assist you with your study at UNSW. ELISE is designed to introduce new students to studying at UNSW but it can also be a great refresher during your study.

Completing the ELISE tutorial and quiz will enable you to:

- analyse topics, plan responses and organise research for academic writing and other assessment tasks
- effectively and efficiently find appropriate information sources and evaluate relevance to your needs
- use and manage information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose
- better manage your time

- understand your rights and responsibilities as a student at UNSW
- be aware of plagiarism, copyright, UNSW Student Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use of UNSW ICT Resources Policy
- be aware of the standards of behaviour expected of everyone in the UNSW community
- locate services and information about UNSW and UNSW Library

Some of these areas will be familiar to you, others will be new. Gaining a solid understanding of all the related aspects of ELISE will help you make the most of your studies at UNSW.
http://subjectguides.library.unsw.edu.au/elise/aboutelise

Academic Information

For essential student information relating to:

- requests for extension;
- late submissions guidelines;
- review of marks;
- UNSW Health and Safety policies;
- examination procedures;
- special consideration in the event of illness or misadventure;
- student equity and disability;
- and other essential academic information, see

https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/current-students/academic-information/protocols-guidelines/

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Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Bedegal people who are the traditional custodians of the lands on which UNSW Kensington campus is located.