

Akiko FRISCHHUT

Year: 2016
 Semester: Fall
 Faculty: International Liberal Arts
 Department: Basic Education
 Field: Interdisciplinary Studies
 Credit: 3.00
 Class time/day: Mon : 15:30 - 16:45 B201
 Wed : 15:30 - 16:45 B201
 E-mail: akiko.frischhut@aiu.ac.jp
 Office: A4-12
 Office hours:
 Notes:

Course description:

Comparative philosophy is a branch of philosophy which examines and contrasts different traditions in philosophy. This course is an exploration of several key philosophical issues and concepts in the context of several distinct cultures, past and present. Themes for the course include (but are not exhausted with) knowledge and rationality; alternative understandings of what is real and the question of cultural relativism; mind and self-hood; concepts of the good and the ideal society; human responsibility; the role and appreciation of works of art, experience, self & personal identity in Descartes, Locke and Indian philosophers; the concept of the Good in Ancient Greek and Chinese philosophies; themes in the Kyoto School of Philosophy and differences between Japanese and Western aesthetics.

Objectives:

- In this course, through the comparative studies we undertake, students will develop an appreciation and understanding of several major philosophical issues as they appear in several distinct cultural settings. And they will enhance their skills in critically and thoughtfully responding to such issues.
- Students will learn ways to uncover similarities and differences between different cultures and ultimately this means comparing views of the world, with special reference to philosophical and religious perspectives.
- Students will develop careful, thorough and precise ways of reading works in philosophy with attention to making clear comparisons between philosophers & philosophies. But the course aims for general understanding and so, is not only for students specializing in philosophy.
- Students will improve their logical and critical skills. They will come to see how arguments can be criticized and thus can come to be better understood.
- Students will come to see how the comparative study of philosophy can enrich their understanding of philosophies, religions and other aspects of various cultures as well.

Textbook(s):

ISBN: -
 Publisher: Honolulu : University of Hawai'i Press, 2002.
 Author: Thomas P. Kasulis
 Title: Intimacy or Integrity. Philosophy and Cultural Difference.

Reference books / other study materials:

Selected short readings will be made available at the beginning of the course.

Assessment:

- 1) Exams: There will be final exam consisting of short-answer and short essay questions. The final exam counts for 50% of the overall grade but may count more if you do especially well. The final exam will function to allow students to improve their final grade.
- 2) Papers: Students will write five very short critically and logically structured papers. Detailed instructions will be provided separately. Altogether, the papers will count 25% for the final grade and must be turned in on time.
- 3) Homework, class participation and presentations: Students are expected to do all readings on time and all assigned homework on time. They are expected to fully participate in class and to be prepared for each class, especially for discussions or presentations. Together these parts of the course will count for 25% of the grade.

Expected academic background:

Expected Academic Background:

This is a course for beginners: no prior background or courses in philosophy are required. A sincere interest is expected in learning about the place of philosophy in

human culture.

URL of syllabus or other information:

-

Policies & remarks:

Attendance and participation : All students are expected to attend and participate in all classes and complete all assigned work for the course on time. (See above also.)

Plagiarism or cheating : In accord with AIU policies and good practices in higher education, plagiarism or cheating on a paper, examination, test, or other assignment will result in the failure on that assignment as a minimum. Cases of plagiarism or cheating will be reported to the Dean of Academic Affairs for relevant action. Plagiarism is the taking of words or ideas of another person and presenting them as your own. It is acceptable to use someone else's words or ideas as long as you give the person or source proper credit. If you have doubts or questions about how to give credit to someone else in your own writing, please check with the course instructor or EAP faculty. Cheating is making use of any assistance on an examination, paper, assignment or other class project beyond what has been authorized by the instructor for the assignment. If you have any questions about what is acceptable, please ask.

Acts of Academic Dishonesty: In accord with AIU policies and good practices in higher education, acts of academic dishonesty such as plagiarism, cheating, forgery (on a paper, examination, test, or other assignment) will result in the failure of the course at a minimum. An act of academic dishonesty during the final examination or assignment in lieu of the final examination will result in failure of all courses registered in the relevant academic term. Cases of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Dean of Academic Affairs for relevant action.

Notes:

-

Class schedule:

1.week

Introduction to the relationships between philosophical orientation and culture. Seeing patterns by way of culture.

2.week

The Integrity Orientation. Integrity and external relations. Examples from Western philosophy.

3.week

Intimacy and Integrity orientations as worldviews. Fundamental differences in relation to knowledge, reasoning and concepts of what is real. Concepts of substance and essence in Descartes, Locke and Indian philosophers. Concepts of self.

4.week

First encounter with the Analects. "Introduction" from Disputers of the Tao: Philosophical Argumentation in Ancient China by A.C. Graham; section 2 of the "Comparative Ethics" entry by David Wong in the Stanford Encyclopedia (<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/comparphil-chiwes/>);

5.week

Exploring moral questions and ethical systems. What is the basis of values? How do we understand and evaluate art works. The concept of the Good and the real in Ancient Greek and in Chinese philosophies.

6.week

Intercultural conflicts understood from Integrity and Intimacy orientations. "Comparative Ethics" entry by David Wong in the Stanford Encyclopedia(for web address see above); "Where Charity Begins"

7.week

Approaches to Confucius. Books 11-20 of the Analects;"A Way without Crossroads" from Confucius—the Sacred as Secular by Herbert Fingarette; selections from Thinking Through Confucius, pp. 226-237, 307-313 by David L. Hall and Roger T. Ames (all the aforementioned readings are on e-reserve for the course); chapter 2 "The Context of Chinese Philosophy: Language and Theory of Language" and chapter 3 "Confucius:The Baseline" in A Daoist Theory of Chinese Thought by Chad Hansen.

8.week

The problem of Nihilism.
Nietzsche and the criticism of the traditional understanding of values.

9.week

Review / Mid- term Exam

10.week

The Concept of the Self: Self & world in Western philosophy & in Indian philosophy.

11.week

Aesthetic questions viewed from a European perspective and from an Asian perspective.

12.week

The Kyoto School. Western contributions to dialogue with the Kyoto School.

13.

Philosophy of Dogen Zenji

Moral psychology in the Mencius. Books IA & B, IIA, IIIA, IVA & B, VA, VIA10, VIA15, and VIIA& B in D.C. Lau translation of Mencius; section 3 of the “Comparative Ethics” entry by David Wong in the Stanford Encyclopedia; “The Virtue of Righteousness in Mencius” by Bryan Van Norden in Confucian Ethics

Review/ Final exams

AIU Academic Dishonesty Policy:

Acts of Academic Dishonesty: In accordance with AIU policies and good practices in higher education, acts of academic dishonesty such as plagiarism, cheating, forgery (on a paper, examination, test, or other assignment) will result in the failure of the course at a minimum. An act of academic dishonesty during the final examination or assignment in lieu of the final examination will result in failure of all courses registered in the relevant academic term.

Cases of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Dean of Academic Affairs for relevant action.

Marcin SCHROEDER

Year: 2016
 Semester: Fall
 Faculty: International Liberal Arts
 Department: Basic Education
 Field: Interdisciplinary Studies
 Credit: 3.00
 Class time/day: Mon : 17:00 - 18:15 B104
 Wed : 17:00 - 18:15 B104
 E-mail: mjs@aiu.ac.jp
 Office: A3-7
 Office hours: MW: 14:00-15:30
 Notes: Not open to students who have taken INF240.

Course description:

The course introduces students into the concepts and methods of information study analysis and management and acquaints them with a wide range of information related issues in a variety of contexts including the cultural and social role of information. The introduction into the concepts and methods of information science will provide a solid foundation for the more advanced future study in many possible areas of applications. The skills developed in the course together with the acquired conceptual framework will allow students to comprehend the literature of the disciplines in which information plays the central role (e.g. artificial intelligence complexity neuro-psychology genetics etc.) Classroom activities and discussions will give students an opportunity to test their competency in information analysis and to deepen their understanding of the subject. The course emphasizes an integrative role of information science in the study of various manifestations of information across a wide range of disciplines. The selection of specific topics related to information science which will be studied in the course will be discussed at the beginning of the course. Instructor expects students' involvement in the selection to make the course more interesting for everyone.

Objectives:

The objectives of this course can be viewed from the two perspectives. Since it is a course about information one of its objectives is to introduce students into the new discipline of information science. This means upon successful completion of the course students will acquire the conceptual framework of information studies including the concept of information with its diverse meanings the concepts of information processing communication computation measures of information etc. They will learn the rudiments of the methods used in studying phenomena and processes involving information in the disciplines such as theoretical computer science artificial intelligence psychology or cognitive science sociology of information economics of information etc. The course has also objectives going beyond the subject matter. Since information has multiple manifestations in practically all domains of human intellectual or practical activities the course presents the unified view of the central concept of information in the multiple contexts of its applications. Thus in the second perspective crucial for the Liberal Arts education the course is intended as a demonstration of the unity of intellectual inquiry across the physical sciences social sciences psychology and humanities. Students should acquire this view of intellectual inquiry and should be able to search for this unified perspective in their studies of other themes.

Textbook(s):

ISBN: -
 Publisher: -
 Author: -
 Title: -

Reference books / other study materials:

Information Science is a new discipline in the process of consolidation from the interdisciplinary studies with diverse methods and interests. There is no textbook which could meet the demands of the course. Instructor will prepare materials for classes either in the form of handouts, or in the form of information regarding appropriate sites on the internet.

For each topic studied in this course there are extensive literature resources with different levels of difficulty and different levels of necessary preparation. In the following there is a short list of readings which are easily comprehensible without any specific prior preparation and which are related to the content of classes. The mandatory readings will be announced and/or distributed in the classroom. Please ask the instructor about more advanced texts regarding topics of special interest for you if you want to expand your knowledge beyond the requirements of the course. The following is a sample of books which develop the themes of the course but which are optional. Tom Siegfried "The Bit and the Pendulum." Wiley New York 2000. John R. Pierce "An Introduction to Information Theory: Symbols Signals and Noise." 2nd rev. ed. Dover New York 1980. Simon Singh "The Cracking Codebook." Harper Collins London 2004. Arne Dietrich "Introduction to Consciousness." Pallgrave Macmillan New York 2007. Gary Marcus "The Birth of the Mind." Basic Books New York 2004. Roger Penrose "The Emperor's New Mind." Penguin New York 1991. Roger Penrose "Shadows of the Mind." Oxford University Press Oxford 1994. Wolfgang Hofkirchner (Ed.) "The Quest for a Unified Theory of Information." Gordon and Breach Amsterdam 1999. Roger R. Flynn "An Introduction to Information Science." Marcel Dekker New York 2000.

Assessment:

Student achievement of the course objectives is being measured in terms of student performance on the midterm test (40%) through the evaluation of contributions to class discussions and activities (20%) a major written assignment (20%) and its presentation in the class (20%). The actual percentages may be modified at the discussion of the course design on the first day of instruction.

Expected academic background:

There is no expected academic work at the college level preparing for the course. Although there will be frequent reference to the basic knowledge of several disciplines such as biology history psychology computer science physics each time instructor will make an introduction reviewing the high school knowledge necessary for understanding. Genuine interest in the matters related to information and willingness to participate in the discussion of these matters will be of higher importance than the prior academic preparation.

URL of syllabus or other information:

-

Policies & remarks:

Acts of cheating or other forms academic dishonesty will be dealt with harshly. Students may work together on their assignments or preparation for classes but every student must prepare individually and without help of others his/her assignments. Attendance in all classes is mandatory whether it is being checked by instructor or not. It is student's responsibility to submit all assignments by the announced deadlines.

Notes:

Generally, class sessions have format of lectures with frequent interactions between the instructor and students in form of questions and answers, with some regularly scheduled time for discussion in which all students are expected to participate. Students will have an opportunity to influence the proportion of time allocated for the topics considered in the course by asking questions regarding the issues of special interest for them. In the second part of the course, each student will select a topic for his or her own study going beyond what was done in the class (with approval and advice of the instructor). Based on this study, he or she will write a paper and will make a short presentation of this paper in the class. Instructor will explain his expectations regarding the size, format, and style of the paper. The general rule is that the volume of the paper is of secondary importance. Even short, but informative and interestingly written paper can get high evaluation, while a long paper inflated by multiple quotations, but without student's own analysis or other significant contributions may get lower grade. After each class, students are recommended to write a conspectus summarizing the content of the class with the focus on the definitions or descriptions of the concepts introduced, main questions asked and answers given to these questions. Although these entries to the journal will not be evaluated by the instructor, they will be of great value for students in their preparation for the next class.

Class schedule:

Week 1

Introduction - Explanation of the expectations from the side of the instructor and from the side of students. - Review and modification of the course plan based on the interests of students. - What is information Why is it so difficult to answer this question - Search for diverse manifestations of information across the academic disciplines and in everyday experience. - The relationship of the concept of information to other concepts such as knowledge communication etc.

Week 2

- The beginnings of information/communication studies: From Morse to Shannon. - How to measure transfer of information - From the telegraph to the limits of human perception. - The Magical Number Seven (Plus Minus Two).

Week 3

Other Origins: Cryptography - Codes and ciphers. - Deciphering forgotten scripts. - How to hide a message - How to send a message - The telegraphic message which involved the US in a world war. - Enigma - The case of Phil Zimmermann. What is more important: privacy of citizens or effective control of criminal activities

Week 4

Computers and Computer Information Processing - What is actually computer doing - History of computation from the abacus to Microsoft. - Analog and digital information. - Turing machines. - Computer architecture and design.

Week 5

Information is physical - The Second Law of Thermodynamics - Entropy - Maxwell's Demon. - Humans as "informavores." - Solar battery for the eco-system. - Can computer work without a source of energy - Quantum computer.

Week 6

Biological Information Systems – Genetics - DNA double helix and the inherited information - Evolution - From "monkey trial" to "Kitzmiller vs. Dover" - Emergence

Week 7

Biological Information Systems – Information networks in a living organism - Neural and hormonal transmission of information - Neurons synapses microtubules - Human brain - The mechanisms of sensory perception

Week 8

Consciousness and AI - What does it mean "thinking" - Can machine think - What does brain do? Models of cognitive processes. - Artificial neural networks

Week 9

AI and technological singularity, the future of AI

Week 10

Review and Midterm test

Week 11

Discussions on the subjects from the material covered in class

Week 12

Discussions of subjects selected by students

Week 13

Discussion: Search for connections between different forms of information

Week 14

Presentations of papers by students

Week 15

Revisions of the final version of the paper

AIU Academic Dishonesty Policy:

Acts of Academic Dishonesty: In accordance with AIU policies and good practices in higher education, acts of academic dishonesty such as plagiarism, cheating, forgery (on a paper, examination, test, or other assignment) will result in the failure of the course at a minimum.

An act of academic dishonesty during the final examination or assignment in lieu of the final examination will result in failure of all courses registered in the relevant academic term.

Cases of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Dean of Academic Affairs for relevant action.