The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

Subject Description Form

Please read the notes at the end of the table carefully before completing the form.

Subject Code	APSS1A04
Subject Title	Understanding Ethics in Daily Life
Credit Value	3
Level	1

GUR Requirements Intended to Fulfill	This subject intends to fulfill the following requirement(s) :
	
	☐ **Healthy Lifestyle**
	☐ **AI and Data Analytics (AIDA)**
	☐ **Innovation and Entrepreneurship (IE)**
	☐ **Languages and Communication Requirement (LCR)**
	☐ **Leadership Education and Development (LEAD)**
	☐ **Service-Learning**
	☒ **Cluster-Area Requirement (CAR)**
	   ☒ Human Nature, Relations and Development [CAR A]
	   ☐ Science, Technology and Environment [CAR D]
	   ☐ Chinese History and Culture [CAR M]
	   ☐ Cultures, Organizations, Societies and Globalization [CAR N]
	☐ **China-Study Requirement**
	   ☐ Yes or ☒ No
	☐ **Writing and Reading Requirements**
	   ☐ English or ☐ Chinese

Pre-requisite / Co-requisite/ Exclusion	<u>Exclusion:</u> APSS2815 Ethics and Daily Life
Assessment Methods	

100% Continuous Assessment	Individual Assessment	Group Assessment
1. Quiz	20%	--
2. Participation	10%	--
3. Group Project	10%	10%
4. Term Paper	50%	--

- The grade is calculated according to the percentage assigned;

	• The completion and submission of all component assignments are required for passing the subject; and • Student must pass all component(s) if he/she is to pass the subject.
Objectives	This subject aims to help students have an elementary understanding of the significance of moral discussions in their daily lives and in their future professional practices. It also enables students to apply moral concepts and theories to moral problems that they face in the fast changing modern society.
Intended Learning Outcomes *(Note 1)*	Upon completion of the subject, students will be able to: (a) Familiarize themselves with the basic concepts and theories of morality; (b) Identify the current moral issues in the rapidly changing modern society; (c) employ critical thinking skills to make moral decisions in their workplace. Please explain how the stated learning outcomes relate to the following three essential features of GUR subjects: Literacy, Higher order thinking, and Life-long learning 1. Students will be required to do substantial readings to enable their better understanding on the various ethical concepts and issues. 2. They are expected to do group projects and submit written works which reflect their critical thinking abilities in dealing with the ethical issues in daily life. 3. They are also expected to develop in the future a self-motivated pursuit of an independent critical framework on daily life ethical issues.

Subject Synopsis/ Indicative Syllabus
 	
(Note 2)
	1. Introduction: What is ethics all about?
	
	2. Moral Theories: What are the criteria of Right and Wrong?
	   a) Utilitarianism
	   b) Kant and Deontological Ethics
	   c) Libertarianism and Natural Rights
	   d) Social Contract Theory
	   e) Virtue Ethics
	   f) Capabilities Approach
	
	3. Ethical Issues in Daily Life
	   a) Honesty and the varieties of dishonesty
	   b) Ethics in the workplace
	   c) Distributive justice & the morality of markets
	   d) Animal ethics
	   e) Environmental ethics & climate change ethics
	   f) Ethics, AI, and algorithmic Bias
	   g) Charity and effective altruism
	   h) Ethics of social media

Teaching/Learning Methodology *(Note 3)*	The subject will be taught via lectures. Audio and video materials will be used to engage students' interest in the subject. Students are expected to pay their efforts to explore moral issues through their group projects and individual papers, as well as to participate in class discussions on assigned topics.

Assessment Methods in Alignment with Intended Learning Outcomes

(Note 4)

Specific assessment methods/tasks	% weighting	Intended subject learning outcomes to be assessed (Please tick as appropriate)					
		a	b	c			
1. Quiz	20%	✓	✓	✓			
2. Participation	10%	✓	✓	✓			
3. Group Project	20%	✓	✓	✓			
4. Term Paper	50%	✓	✓	✓			
Total	100%						

The quiz is intended to test students' general knowledge of the facts and concepts concerning ethics, as well the basic understanding of moral theories and issues. This will require them to fulfill the literacy requirements set by (a), (b) and (c).

Students may also want to develop their own views on various ethical issues through discussion and collaboration with others. For this purpose, the group project is designed to let students apply the ethical concepts and theories to practical problems in society, which enhances both (a), (b) and (c).

The term paper is intended to provide students with an opportunity to study carefully various ethical theories and their applications to contemporary moral issues, and also to develop their original views of the good life and morality. This is expected to bring about both (a), (b) and (c), as far the students' personal views on the issues are concerned.

Student Study Effort Expected

Class contact:	
▪ Lecture	39 Hrs.
Other student study effort:	
▪ Personal Essay	10 Hrs.
▪ Group Project	10 Hrs.
▪ Quiz Preparation	10 Hrs.
▪ Self-studies	43 Hrs.
Total student study effort	112 Hrs.

Reading List and References

Essential

Sandel, M. (2009). *Justice: What's the Right Thing to Do?* Penguin.

	Supplementary
	Adams, C.J., Crary, A., and Gruen, L. (2023). *The Good It Promises, The Harm It Does: Critical Essays on Effective Altruism*. Oxford University Press.
	Almond, B. and D. Hill, eds. (1991). *Applied Philosophy: Moral and Metaphysics in Contemporary Debate*. London: Routledge.
	Anderson, E. (2019). *Private Government: How Employers Rule Our Lives (And Why We Don't Talk About It)*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
	Blackburn, S. (2003). *Ethics: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
	Broome, J. (2012). *Climate Matters: Ethics in a Warming World*. New York: Norton.
	Coeckelbergh, M. (2020). *AI Ethics*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
	Cohen, A. and C. Wellman, eds. (2005). *Contemporary Debates in Applied Ethics*. London: Blackwell.
	Frankfurt, H. (2005) *On Bullshit*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
	Jamieson, D. (2014). *Reason in a Dark Time: Why the Struggle Against Climate Change Failed—and What it Means for Our Future*. Oxford University Press.
	MacIntyre, A. (2007). *After Virtue* 3rd ed. Notre Dame: Notre Dame University Press.
	MacKinnon, B. (2012). *Ethics: Theory and Contemporary Issues*. 7th edition, Wadsworth Cengage Learning
	McGinn, C. (1992). *Moral Literacy or How to Do the Right Thing*. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company.
	Nelson, L. (2018). *Social Media and Morality: Losing Our Self Control*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
	Nussbaum, M. (2011). *Creating Capabilities: The Human Development Approach*. Belknap Harvard University Press.
	Nussbaum, M. (2022). *Justice for Animals: Our Collective Responsibility*. Simon & Schuster.
	Sandel, M. (2013). *What Money Can't Buy: The Moral Limits of Markets*. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux.
	Singer, P.(2011). *Practical Ethics 3rd ed.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Singer, P., eds. (1993). *A Companion to Ethics*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Singer, P. (2015). *The Most Good You Can Do: How Effective Altruism is Changing Ideas about Living Ethically*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Teichman, J. (1996). *Social Ethics: A Student's Guide*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Vallor, S. (2016). *Technology and the Virtues: A Philosophical Guide to a Future Worth Wanting*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Vallor, S. (2024). *The AI Mirror: How to Reclaim Our Humanity in an Age of Machine Thinking*. Oxford University Press.

Veltman, A. (2016). *Meaningful Work*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Young, I.M. (1990). *Justice and the Politics of Difference*. Princeton. University Press.

Note 1: Intended Learning Outcomes
Intended learning outcomes should state what students should be able to do or attain upon completion of the subject. Subject outcomes are expected to contribute to the attainment of the overall programme outcomes.

Note 2: Subject Synopsis/ Indicative Syllabus
The syllabus should adequately address the intended learning outcomes. At the same time over-crowding of the syllabus should be avoided.

Note 3: Teaching/Learning Methodology
This section should include a brief description of the teaching and learning methods to be employed to facilitate learning, and a justification of how the methods are aligned with the intended learning outcomes of the subject.

Note 4: Assessment Method
This section should include the assessment method(s) to be used and its relative weighting, and indicate which of the subject intended learning outcomes that each method purports to assess. It should also provide a brief explanation of the appropriateness of the assessment methods in assessing the intended learning outcomes.