

Sample of a Course Syllabus Using Texts to Describe How Learning Outcomes Match with their Associated Assessment Tasks

Course Title	: <i>The Four Books</i> and Chinese Intellectual Tradition 《四書》與中國士人傳統
Course Code	: CLB9012
Recommended Study Year	: Any
No. of Credits/Term	: 3
Mode of Tuition	: Lecture-tutorial mode
Class Contact Hours	: 2-hour lecture per week 1-hour tutorial per week
Category	: Humanities and the Arts Cluster in Core Curriculum
Prerequisite	: Nil
Co-requisite	: Nil
Exclusion	: Nil
Exemption Requirement	: Nil

Brief Course Description:

This course introduces students to the basic concepts of Confucian humanism contained in the four great Confucian texts—*The Four Books*—and examines the formation and transformation of Chinese intellectual tradition. It provides students with an in-depth study of selected passages from *The Analects of Confucius* (*Lunyu*), *Mencius* (*Mengzi*), *The Great Learning* (*Daxue*), as well as *The Doctrine of the Mean* (*Zhongyong*).

Aims:

This course aims at exploring a more authentic understanding of Confucian humanism (compared to traditional and contemporary interpretations) through close reading and critical analysis of *The Four Books*. It also aims at reassessing the relevance of Confucian humanism to the present-day world. As a result, the students will be better equipped ethically to face the challenging world.

Learning Outcomes (LOs):

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Describe the development of Confucian thought;
2. Explain the fundamentals of Confucian humanism;
3. Analyze and critically evaluate the important issues surrounding *The Four Books*;
4. Apply Confucian humanist principles to a selection of modern-day issues and problems.

Indicative Contents:

- 1) The lives of Confucius and Mencius 孔子、孟子生平簡介
- 2) The importance of the Si Meng Confucian School in the development of early Confucianism 思孟學派與早期儒學
- 3) The compilation and transmission of *The Four Books* 《論語》、《孟子》、《大學》、《中庸》的成書及其流傳
- 4) Zhu Xi's (1130—1200) commentary on *The Four Books* and its place in Chinese intellectual history 朱熹《四書章句集注》及其學術地位
- 5) A critical study of the traditional and contemporary interpretations of *The Analects of Confucius* 傳統與當代《論語》詮釋平議
- 6) Selected readings of *The Four Books* 《四書》選讀

- 7) The core values of Confucian humanism contained in *The Four Books* 《四書》所見儒家人文精神的核心價值
- 8) *The Four Books* and imperial examination 《四書》與科舉
- 9) The relationship of *The Four Books* with the formation and transformation of Chinese intellectual tradition 《四書》與中國士人傳統
- 10) The role Chinese intellectual tradition can play in the modern society 中國士人傳統在現代社會可扮演的角色
- 11) The relevance of Confucian humanism to our daily life and its contribution in dealing with contemporary problems 儒家人文精神的現代意義

Teaching Method:

2 hours of lecture and 1 hour of tutorial per week. During the lectures, selected masterpieces of *The Four Books* will be introduced and analyzed. Student presentation, discussion and report-submission will take place during the tutorial.

Students are required to give presentations on assigned topics in the tutorials. They have to interpret, analyze and evaluate the topics using a variety of critical perspectives learnt in the lectures. They should demonstrate a breadth of knowledge of the fundamentals of Confucian humanism. After the presentation, they also need to lead the discussion on their presented topic.¹

A sample topic: Explain what Confucius meant by saying: “Only women and underlings are difficult to deal with: be friendly, and they become insolent; be distant, and they resent it.” (*The Analects of Confucius* 17.25) Analyze and critically discuss the causes of discrepancy between Confucius’s intended meaning and scholars’ interpretations (both traditional and contemporary).

At the end of the term, students have to submit for assessment a final report on their presentation. They are expected to demonstrate evidence of a revision process by incorporating in their final reports comments and feedbacks from teachers and group-mates.²

The examination comprises essay-type questions that measure students’ knowledge of the development of Confucian thought, their understanding of the basic concepts of Confucian humanism, as well as their ability to critically analyze selected passages from *The Four Books* and related topics. Case studies may also be used to assess students’ ability to apply learnt concepts to realistic situations.³

A sample question: *Ren* has been regarded as the supreme Confucian value since ancient times. Explain what Confucius meant by *ren* in *The Analects of Confucius* and why it became the cornerstone of Chinese humanism. Analyze and critically discuss the potential contribution of *ren* to resolving social conflicts in Hong Kong.

Measurement of Learning Outcomes:

Students’ ability to describe Confucian thought and explain the fundamentals of Confucian humanism will be assessed in tutorial presentations that require interpretation, analysis and evaluation of relevant topics using a variety of critical perspectives presented in the lectures. (LO1, LO2)

Students’ ability to analyze and critically evaluate the important issues surrounding The Four Books and apply Confucian humanist principles to a selection of modern-day issues and problems will be assessed in final reports that will review tutorial presentations including

feedback received from instructor and peers, and place the presentations in a wider context. (LO3, LO4)

Students' comprehension of Confucian thought, important issues surrounding The Four Books and the modern day applicability of Confucian humanist principles will be assessed in examination comprises essay-type questions will focus on a comprehensive case that addressed each learning outcome. (LO1, LO2, LO3, LO4)

Assessment:

Examination: 50%

Continuous assessment: 50% (Tutorial presentation 20%, Final report 30%)

Essential Readings:

朱熹：《四書集註》，香港：太平書局，1964年。

朱熹：《四書章句集注》，北京：中華書局，1983年。

許倬雲：《知識分子：歷史與未來》，桂林：廣西師範大學出版社，2011年。

錢穆：《四書釋義》，臺北：中華文化出版事業委員會，1953年。

Supplementary Readings:

杜維明：《現代精神與儒家傳統》，北京：三聯書店，1997年。

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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/>.

Sample of a Course Syllabus Using Matrix to Match Learning Outcomes with their Associated Assessment Tasks

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Measurement of Learning Outcomes:

Learning Outcome	Assessment Method		
	Tutorial presentation ¹	Final report ²	Examination ³
Students will be able to describe the development of Confucian thought	X	X	X
Students will be able to explain the fundamentals of Confucian humanism	X	X	X
Students will be able to analyze and critically evaluate the important issues surrounding <i>The Four Books</i>	X	X	X
Students will be able to apply	X	X	X

Confucian humanist principles to a selection of modern-day issues and problems			
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Assessment:

Examination: 50%

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Essential Readings:

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