

Teaching Core Texts

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Wing-hung Wong • Julie Chiu
Associate Program Directors
General Education Foundation, CUHK

Teaching Core Texts

🌸 **UGD2411 Classics for Today:**
In Search of Good Life and Good Society

🌸 **UGB2412 Science in Classics:**
Exploring the Universe and Life

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🌸 **UGD2411** Classics for Today:
In Search of **Good Life** and **Good Society**

🌸 **UGB2412** Science in Classics:
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Teaching Core Texts

🌸 UGD2411 Classics for Today:

In Search of Good Life and Good Society

...Humanities

...Social sciences

🌸 UGB2412 Science in Classics:

Exploring the Universe and Life

...Natural sciences

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Division of Knowledge according to Tang Jun-yi

■ Three Branches

❖ Humanities

❖ Social Sciences

❖ Natural Sciences

■ All knowledge is rooted in **human** existence.

■ The search for knowledge cannot be **value** free.

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Common Goal

■ *Self-actualization*

■ The *self-awareness* of **human as human**

■ Development of an *authentic self*
through the **cultivation** of **moral** virtues

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Four Areas

- A. Chinese Cultural Heritage
 - B. Nature, Science, and Technology
 - C. Society and Culture
 - D. Self and Humanity
-
- The two Foundation Courses prepares for:
 - Existing GE program
 - Vigorous academic studies: high-level reading, thinking and writing

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Teaching Core Texts

- **Classics** / Great books

- Columbia U model

- Chung Chi College's vision of Liberal Education

- Great conversations of *great* minds (Ted de Bary)

- ...about perennial human concerns

- ...engaging students in humanistic reflections on ethical issues & moral values

- Small-class, seminar-based

- text-based → issue-based

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Seminar-based

- A journey of self and joint **discovery**
- Great **Dialogue**:
 - Great mind & great mind
 - Tradition & tradition
 - Discipline & discipline
 - Student & Text
 - Student & student
 - Group & group: same syllabus, same pace

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Methodology

- Raising essential **questions**
- **Structuring** for cross-referencing & progressive exploration
- Controlling the **number** of classics

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UGB2412 Science in Classics

❖ Exploring the Universe and Life



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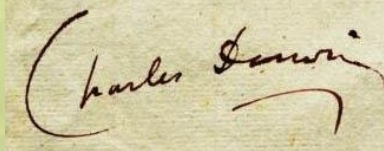


I. Exploring the Physical Universe

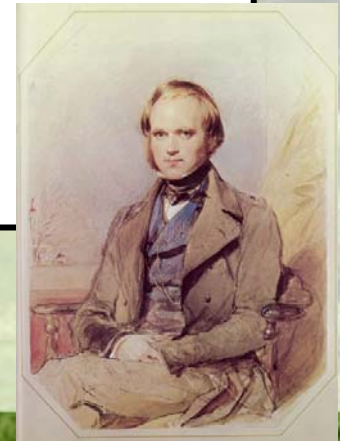
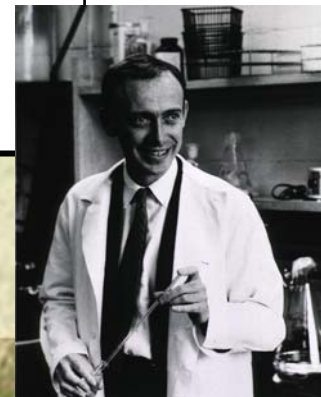
<i>Core questions</i>	<i>Readings</i>	<i>Answer</i>
What is truth?	Plato , <i>Republic</i> Book VII: The allegory of the cave	Mere phenomena are not truth. The truth is something <i>behind</i> the <i>phenomena</i> .
How to find scientific truth?	Galileo Galilei , <i>Dialogues Concerning Two Sciences</i>	by <i>experiment</i> and <i>reason</i> ⇒ Should we use human subjects in sci. experiments?
How to express scientific truth?	Isaac Newton , <i>Principia</i>	by <i>mathematics</i>
What truth do we know ?	Steven Weinberg , <i>The First Three Minutes</i>	the <i>expansion</i> of the <i>universe</i>

II. Exploring the World of Life

<i>Core questions</i>	<i>Readings</i>	<i>Answer</i>
What are the <i>laws</i> of life?	Charles Darwin, <i>The Origin of Species</i>	<i>natural selection</i> ⇒ Does Darwin's theory give us a meaning of life?
What is the <i>code</i> of life?	James D. Watson, <i>DNA: The Secret of Life</i>	<i>DNA</i> ⇒ Are we by fate ordained?
How to <i>manipulate life</i> and what will result? --An example.	James D. Watson, <i>DNA: The Secret of Life</i>	<i>medicine</i>

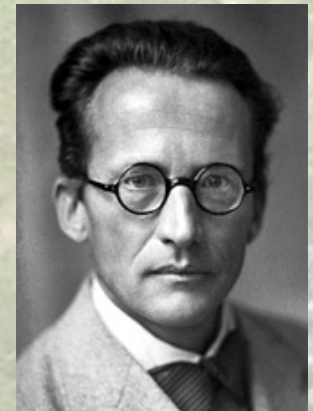


Charles Darwin



III. Understanding

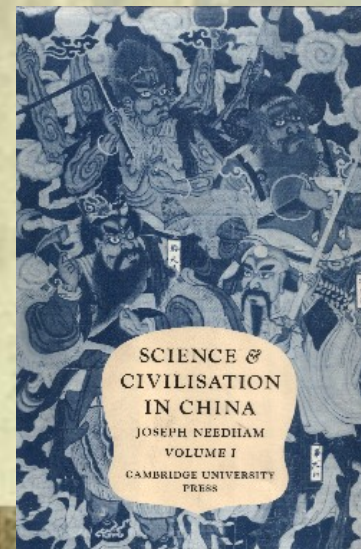
Human Understanding



<i>Core questions</i>	<i>Readings</i>	<i>Answer</i>
What is human <i>mind</i> ?	Erwin Schrödinger , <i>Mind and Matter</i>	--- ↔ Dehumanization?
Limitations of human <i>language</i> ?	Max Born , "Symbol and Reality", <i>Universitas</i> Vol. 7, No. 4, 337-353 (1965).	---
Limitations of <i>logic</i> ?	Roger Penrose , <i>The Emperor's New Mind</i>	<i>Gödel's theorem</i>

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<i>Core questions</i>	<i>Readings</i>	<i>Answer</i>
What do Chinese know about Nature?	Joseph Needham , <i>The Shorter Science and Civilisation in China</i>	Yin 陰 and Yang 陽, five elements 五行
What do Chinese know about Nature?	Joseph Needham , <i>Science and Civilisation in China</i>	<i>I Ching</i> 易經
Western culture vs. Chinese culture?	Joseph Needham , <i>Science and Civilisation in China</i> 錢穆：《中國文化叢談》	---



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UGD2411 Classics for Today

❖ In Search of Good Life and Good Society

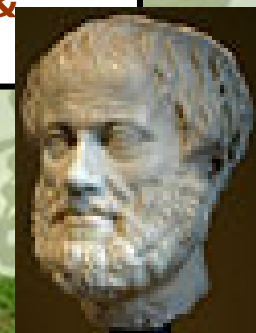
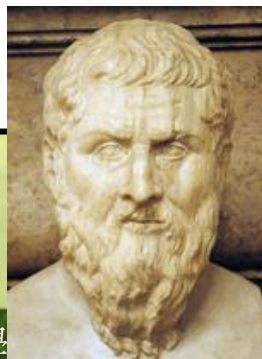
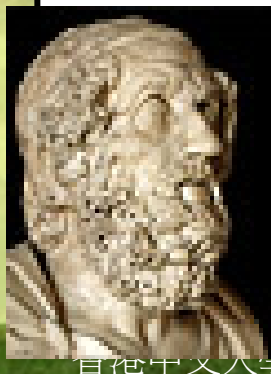


通識

I. Self: Identity & Needs



<i>Core questions</i>	<i>Readings</i>	<i>Issues</i>
<p>How do we construct our <i>identity</i>?</p>	<p>Homer <i>The Odyssey</i> (Bks 1, 4, 5, 10, 11, 13, 16, 19, 21, 23)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Journey & transformation</i> -The place of <i>family</i> -Do <i>heroes</i> grow?
<p>What is <i>love</i>? Why <i>love</i>?</p>	<p>Plato <i>The Symposium</i> (whole)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Pursuit of <i>Wholeness</i> -Pursuit of <i>Beauty, Goodness & Truth</i>
<p>What is <i>friendship</i>? Why <i>friendship</i>?</p>	<p>Aristotle <i>The Nichomachean Ethics</i> (Bks 1, 8, 9, 10)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -<i>True friendship</i>: reciprocal, enduring virtuous, self-similar -Pursuit of <i>Reason & human excellence</i>



I. Self: Virtues & Values







<i>Core questions</i>	<i>Readings</i>	<i>Issues</i>
<p>What is the <i>basis for</i> familial and social <i>rites</i>?</p> <p>What <i>moral virtues</i> should individuals and rulers cultivate?</p>	<p>Confucius <i>The Analects</i> (Selections)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -benevolence & righteousness -filial piety & friendship -the use of learning -empathy
<p>What are the problems of <i>common views & values</i> about life and society?</p> <p>How to attain <i>inner peace</i> and <i>social harmony</i>?</p>	<p>Laozi <i>Dao De Jing</i> (Selections)</p> <p>Zhuangzi <i>Zhuangzi</i> (Selections)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -the futility of good look, talents, learning, culture, etc. -acquiring true wisdom & transcendence



I. Self: Relating to God, "Self," & Others



Core questions	Readings	
<p>What are our <i>limitations</i>? How do we <i>relate to God</i> and <i>to each other</i>?</p> <p>How to gain <i>redemption</i>?</p>	<p>The Old Testament <i>Genesis 1-3; Job</i></p> <p>The New Testament <i>Matthew</i></p> 	<p>-Pursuit of immortality and knowledge</p> <p>-Gender roles</p> <p>-Benevolence and humility</p>
<p>How to see <i>reality</i> as it is?</p> <p>How to attain <i>inner peace & social harmony</i>?</p>	  <p>The Heart Sutra (whole)</p>	<p>-Emptiness: impermanence & inter-being</p> <p>-Meditating for inner peace</p>
<p>How do we <i>relate to God</i> and <i>to each other</i>?</p> <p>What are God's laws on <i>worldly matters</i>?</p>	<p>The Koran (Surah 2)</p> 	<p>-Honoring & fighting for God</p> <p>-Marital & commercial laws</p> <p>-Minding the weak</p>

II. Society: Self-interest, Individual Freedom, & Common Good



<i>Core questions</i>	<i>Readings</i>	<i>Issues</i>
<p>What are the <i>ideal</i> qualities for a <i>king</i> and the <i>officials</i>?</p> <p>What role should <i>education</i> play?</p>	<p>Huang Zongxi <i>Waiting for the Dawn</i> (Bks 1-3, 5)</p> 	<p>-Pursuit of <i>common good</i> by suppressing <i>self-interest</i></p> <p>-The <i>college as critic</i> of government</p>
<p>What are the <i>bases</i> for a <i>sovereignty</i>?</p> <p>What is the place of <i>religion</i> in a sovereign state?</p>	 <p>Rousseau <i>The Social Contract</i> (Bk 1; Ch. 8 of Bk 4)</p>	<p>-<i>Freedom</i> as the core of humanity</p> <p>-<i>Secular government</i> with <i>religious toleration</i></p>
<p>How does <i>division of labour</i> benefit an economy?</p> <p>How to <i>sustain</i> and <i>expand</i> such benefits?</p>	<p>Adam Smith <i>The Wealth of Nations</i> (Bk 1: selections)</p>  	<p>-Pursuit of <i>self-interest</i> for <i>common good</i></p> <p>-<i>wage, labour, capital</i></p>

Dialogue: **within the course** (Classics for Today)

- Friendship
- Family
- Self-interest & government intervention
- Ontological starting point
 - Aristotle: Reason
 - Confucius: Benevolence & Righteousness
 - *Genesis*: Use of language
 - Rousseau: Freedom
 - Smith: Propensity to truck, barter and trade

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Dialogue: **between 2 courses**

■ Echoes

- Component parts...ethical reflections
- Approach
- Text

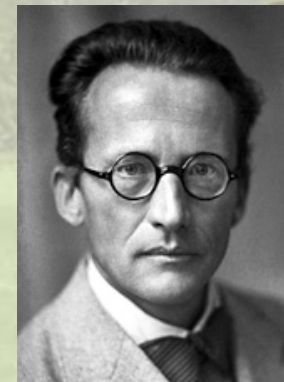
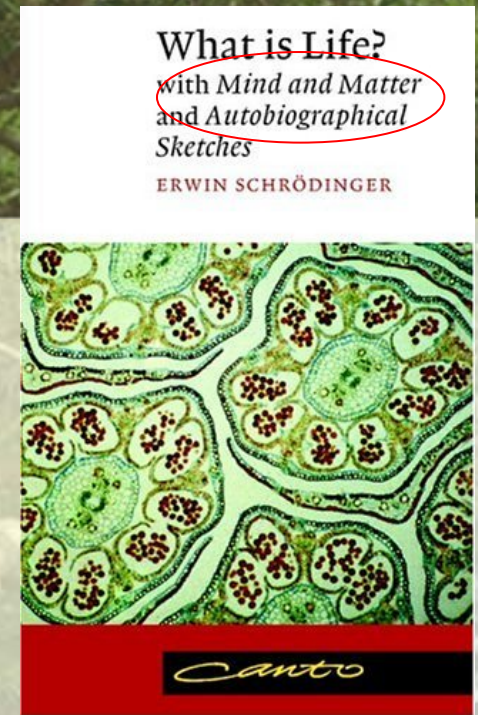
■ Dialogue

- Limitations
- *Hubris*
- Predestination (DNA/God) vs. Free will
- Stupidization

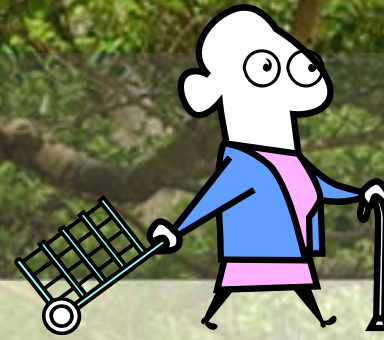
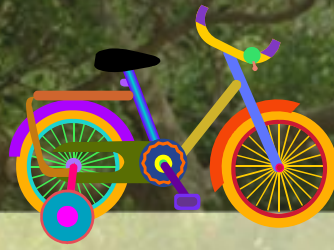
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From Erwin Schrödinger to Adam Smith

- 1933 Nobel Laureate in Physics
- *Mind and Matter* (Chs 1-2)



1887-1961



- **Repetitive actions** always fade from the domain of consciousness: *e.g., cycling, typing, walking*
- Nearly become **reflex actions** until there are **changes**, *e.g., injury*
- **Evolution**: variations in a species in response to external changes.
- Schrödinger suggested:
 - *no external changes, no evolution* of the human mind
 - therefore: repetition leads to “**stupidization**”

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Chapter 2

[T]he **increasing mechanization** and 'stupidization' of most manufacturing processes involve the serious danger of a general **degeneration of our organ of intelligence**. The more the chances in life of the clever and of the unresponsive worker are equalled out by the **repression of handicraft** and the **spreading of tedious and boring work on the assembly line**, the more will a **good brain, clever hands and a sharp eye become superfluous**. Indeed the **unintelligent man**, who naturally finds it easier to submit to the boring toil, will be favoured; he is likely to find it **easier to thrive, to settle down and to beget offspring**.

There is no method...

...except to be

...very

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