HUMA 1001A   Foundational Text in the Humanities   Fall 2018

Title: **Aristotle ✕ Mencius - Learning the Basic Concepts of Logic & Rhetoric**

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Course Description:

Aristotle was the founder of formal logic and many other fields of knowledge; his theory of syllogism has had a great influence on the history of Western thought. Mencius 孟子 and Aristotle were contemporaries. Mencius is an argumentative yet ethical thinker; the book of *Mencius* provides us with logical and persuasive debates on virtues and human nature. For both Aristotle and Mencius, the logic of arguments and the art of rhetoric are the chief weapons in the service of truth. In this course, we explore:

(a) the basic concepts of logical thinking and the art of rhetoric, and

(b) the cultural and philosophical values exhibited and implicit in *Mencius* and Aristotle's logical works.

思辯是哲學的靈魂。高水平的思辯能力適用於不同的知識領域。提升思辯能力的關鍵之一是學好邏輯批判的思考。

亞里士多德是邏輯學的創始人，探討他對西方邏輯思想的貢獻，以及學習邏輯學的基礎部分以提升思辯能力，那是本課程的第一重點。孟子與亞里士多德同時代，在中國古代思想家之中，堪稱善辯第一，擅長應用比喻和類推從事論辯人性的問題；魚與熊掌、孺子入井等論說，已成不朽經典，學習他在論辯上的修辭技巧，能增強論述的說服力，那是本課程的另一重點。本課程以粵語教授，修讀者須閱讀以古代漢語撰寫之《孟子》原文。

Class Schedule:

Week 1: Introduction—What logic is? What rhetoric is?

1.1 Logic as a tool for reasoning

1.2 Rhetoric as the art of discourse

Week 2: The Intellectual Background of Aristotle's philosophy

1.1 Sophia—Socrates and the Sophists

1.2 Paradoxes—Epimenides and Zeno

Week 3&4: *Topics* —Aristotle on Logic and Language

1.1 Truth and Definitions

1.2 Sentences and Propositions

1.3 Ambiguity and Equivocation

1.4 Vagueness and Obscurity

QUIZ 1 held in class on Sept 26

Week 5&6: *Prior Analytics*—Aristotle on Syllogism

1.1 The Nature of Deductive Arguments

1.2 The Syllogisms Defined

1.3 The Square of Opposition

1.4 Venn Diagram and Rules Method

Week 7&8: Modern Logic—Propositional calculus

1.1 Validity and Argument Forms

1.2 Modus Ponens, Modus Tollens & Dilemma

1.3 Logical Connectives & True-table method

1.4 Reductio ad Absurdum & Short-cut Method

QUIZ 2 held in class on Oct 31

Week 9: *Sophistical Refutations*—Aristotle on Fallacies

1.1 What Fallacy is?

1.2 Linguistic vs Non-linguistic Fallacies

Week 10&11: A New Classification of Fallacies

1.1 Fallacies of Consistency, Relevancy and Sufficiency

1.2 Fallacies of Presumptions

Week 12: The Intellectual Background of Mencius' philosophy

1.1 Argumentation in Ancient China

1.2 Mencius and his opponents

Week 13: Mencius' Art of Rhetoric

1.1 Use of Reductio-ad-absurdum

1.2 Analogy and Thought Experiment

1.3 Methods of Refutation

Quiz 3 held in class on Nov 28

REFERENCE:

1. 楊伯峻注,《孟子譯注》,香港,中華書局,2004 年。

2. 袁保新著,《孟子三辨之學的歷史省察與現代詮釋》,臺灣,文津

出版社,1992 年。

3. Aristotle, *The Organon*, translated by E. Edghill & others, at the MIT classics archive, http://classics.mit.edu/Browse/browse-Aristotle.html

4. Jonathan Barnes, *Aristotle*, Oxford University Press, 1982.

5. Carlo Natali, *Aristotle: His life and School*, edited by D.S. Hutchinson, Princeton University Press, 2013.

6. Scott Schreiber, *Aristotle on False Reasoning*: *Language and the World in the Sophistical Refutations,* State University of New York Press, 2003.

Weekly readings are available in PDF under "course content" on CANVAS.

COURSE REQUIRMENTS:

3 Quizzes: 3 x 25%--- 75%
1 Writing Project (1,000 words):   --- 25%
Class attendance   --- 0%
Optional Tutorials   --- 0%

1. Class attendance
No compulsory attendance. It becomes your responsibility to make up the work you missed if you skip a class.

2. Quizzes
Quizzes include true /false, multiple choice and short answer questions. The questions will test your ability to apply concepts rather than the content you memorized.

3. Tutorials
Tutorials are optional. They are provided before a quiz. Time and venue will be announced later.

4. Writing Project
4.1 Students are required to work in pairs on the writing project.

4.2 The writing project should discuss on a specific type of fallacies. You must use at least three original examples to illustrate the chosen fallacy within 1,000 words. Three points will be deducted per day for late submission.

4.3 Your writing project will be evaluated on the basis of the clarity of language, the creativity of ideas, and the critical strength of the arguments presented.

PLAGIARISM:
The discovery of cheating on an in-class quiz or writing project will result in an automatic fail grade in the course, and the case will be reported to university administration.