

Big Questions: Readings and Debate

Department: School of Foreign Languages and Literature

Date: May 8, 2024

Course Code	FORE110131				
Course Title	Big questions: readings and debate				
Credit	2	Credit Hours Per Week	2	Office hour	Friday 10-11am @ 515 Foreign Languages Building
Weeks per semester	18	Language of Instruction	English	Honors Course	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Course Type	<input type="checkbox"/> Core General Education Course <input type="checkbox"/> Specific General Education Course <input type="checkbox"/> Basic Course in General Discipline <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Others			2+X Major : <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Core Course <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Advanced Course Non 2+X Major : <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Compulsory Course <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Elective Course	
Course Objectives	To learn about classical theories and the development of political philosophy. To cultivate critical thinking, argumentative strategies and academic presentation ability. To develop incidental and implicit English acquisition in the exploration of academic subjects.				
Course Description	This course combines political philosophy and critical thinking and debate in English. It contains six modules: justice, order, prosperity, market, polity and civilization.				
Course Requirements: Passion in philosophy and basic fluency in English expression.					
Teaching Methods: Alternation of lecture and seminar. (Lecture on theoretical framework on even weeks, seminars on key issues, case studies and argumentative theory and practice on odd weeks.)					
Course Director's Academic Background: Jing He: Associate Professor, Ph. D Email: jinghe@fudan.edu.cn Deputy director of Public Speaking and Debate Center of Department of Foreign Languages and Literature of Fudan University Deputy director of Teacher and Teaching Development Center of Department of Foreign Languages and Literature of Fudan University Coach of Fudan English Debate Team Meritorious Trainer of Critical Thinking in China 2015 Runner-up of FLTRP Intercollegiate “Art of Public Speaking” Teaching Competition 2016 Frist Prize of National Critical Thinking Teaching Competition					

2017 Fudan Undergraduate Course Research and Reform Projects
 2017 Critical Thinking in English Argumentation as Honor Course of Fudan University
 2019 Critical Thinking in English Argumentation as Key Undergraduate Course of Shanghai Education Commission
 2021 Critical Thinking in English Argumentation as First-Tier Course of Shanghai Education Commission Publication
 Jing He, 2015, The Effects of an Argumentation and Debate Course on Students Impromptu English Speaking Competence: An Empirical Investigation [A], *English Teaching and Learning* [J] 39(3): 79-106. Taiwan: Airiti Press.
 Jing He, 2016, On the importance of Rules to Critical Thinking Education [A], *China Foreign Language Education* 9 (3): 20-28. Beijing: FLTRP.
 Robert Trapp, Jing He et al, 2016, *Building Global Relationships Through Debate*. Beijing: FLTRP.
 Qinqing Fan, Yan Sun, Jing He et al, 2021, *English Public Speaking and Debate*. Shanghai: East Normal University Press.

Instructor's Academic Background:

Jing He, same as above
 Gangsheng Bao, Professor at School of International Relations and Public Affairs, Fudan University, Ph.D. from Beijing University, Visiting Professor to Harvard University. Email: baogaosheng@hotmail.com

Major Academic Works

Gangsheng BAO, Change: The New Realities of Western Politics, Beijing: CITIC Press Corporation, 2024.
 Gangsheng BAO, Crises and Solutions: Reflections on Political Thought in Early China, Guilin: Guangxi Normal University Press, 2023.
 Gangsheng BAO, Political Evolution: From Ancient Times to Twenty-First Century, Shanghai: Shanghai Sanlian Bookstore Co., Ltd., 2023.
 Gangsheng BAO, Politics of Democratic Breakdown, London: Routledge, 2022.
 Gangsheng BAO, Logic of Democracy, Beijing: Social Science Literature Press, 2018.
 Gangsheng BAO, The Common Sense of Modern Politics, Beijing: Peking University Press, 2015 (Reprinted for 17 times, 130,000 copies sold).
 Gangsheng BAO, Politics of Democratic Breakdown, Beijing: The Commercial Press, 2014.

Members of Teaching Team

Name	Gender	Professional Title	Department	Responsibility
Gangsheng Bao	M	Professor	School of International Relations and Public Affairs, Fudan University	Lecture on theoretical framework

Course Schedule:

Week 1 Introduction: Theoretical framework for social and political philosophical problems.
 Critical thinking and argumentative strategies

Module 1 Justice

Readings: Sandel, M. J. (2010). *Justice: What's the right thing to do?* (Reprint). Farrar, Straus; Giroux. (Chapters 1-3, pp. 3-74)
 Week 2 Justice (Lecture by Bao)

1. What is justice: Socrates and Plato
2. Different theories of justice
3. Case study: Hurricane

Week 3 Justice (Seminar by He)

1. Argument components
 - Evidence
 - Reasoning
 - Claim
 2. Discussion: Which justice theory do you support?
 3. Discussion: Classical ethical dilemma: Richard Parker
- Motion: Taylor Swift deserves her billion dollar fortune/UBI.

Module 2 Order

Readings: Fukuyama, F. (2014). *Political order and political decay: from the industrial revolution to the globalization of democracy*. Profile Books. (Introduction, Chapters 1-2, pp. 3-51)

Week 4 Order (Lecture by Bao)

Three components of political system

1. Competent central administration
2. Rule of law
3. Accountability

Week 5 (Seminar by He)

1. Types of evidence and application
 - Narratives
 - Statistics
 - Testimony of experts
2. Discussion: Is there such a thing as too much democracy? The comparative importance of administration competence and democracy

Module 3 Prosperity

Readings: Robinson, J. A., & Acemoglu, D. (2012). *Why nations fail: The origins of power, prosperity and poverty*. New York: Random House. (Chapters 1-3, pp. 7-95)

Week 6 Prosperity (Lecture by Bao)

1. The divergence of power and political and economic models
2. The historical lessons from national prosperity and decay

Week 7 Prosperity (Seminar by He)

1. Logical reasoning
 - Induction
 - Deduction
2. One city two worlds: Case study of Tijuana

3. Motion: The rise of China is not to be feared.

Module 4 Liberty

Readings: Mill, J. S. (2010). *On Liberty*. Penguin Books. (Chapters 1-2, pp. 5-80)

Week 8 Liberty (Lecture by Bao)

1. The boundary between power and liberty
2. Why does the freedom of speech matters?
3. The limits to and principles of liberty

Week 9 Liberty (Seminar by He)

1. Different types of Statement
 - a) Fact
 - b) Value
 - c) Policy
2. Texas v. Johnson: How far should the free speech go?

Module 5 Polity

Readings: Levitsky, S., & Ziblatt, D. (2019). *How democracies die*. Crown. (Introduction, Chapters 1-3, pp. 1-71)

Week 10 Polity (Lecture by Bao)

1. The mechanism of modern polity
2. Populism and the crisis of modern democracy

Week 11 Polity (Seminar by He)

1. Argumentative structure for value motions
 - Subject
 - Criteria
 - Match-up of subject with criteria
2. The rise of Donald Trump and the reflections of American intellectual elites
3. Motion: Electoral college should be abolished.

Module 6 Civilization

Readings: Huntington, S. P. (1998). *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*. Simon & Schuster. (Chapters 1-3, pp. 19-78)

Week 12 Civilization (Lecture by Bao)

1. The end of cold war and the trend of world politics
2. Huntington's Civilization clash: views and logic
3. Criticism of Huntington's theory

Week 13 Civilization (Seminar by He)

1. Argumentative structure for policy motions
 - Status quo and contextualization
 - Definition of key concepts

Models

Justification, cost-benefit comparative (stakeholder analysis) and feasibility, etc.

2. Comparative analysis of impacts of Confucianism and Christianity
3. Motion: Clash of civilization is a self-actualizing hypothesis

Week 14 Review (Bao & He)

Week 15 Student speeches (Bao & He)

Week 16 Student speeches (Bao & He)

Class Discussion and Presentation Design

Representative of group discussion rotates among group members. Group discussion and group speech will gradually transform into inter-group debate.

Group Presentation: The whole class will be divided into 6 groups. Each group chooses one of the six modules in the syllabus and develop deep analysis and speech or debate on one suggested topic or a chapter in reference books. Speaking time for each person is 3-5 minutes. Please try to engage the class into Q&A or discussions, which do not account for the individual speaking time.

Grading & Evaluation

Class attendance 10%

Class participation and speeches 15%

Group presentation 25%

Final = Political philosophy thesis (25%) + Speech (25%) (both in English)

References

Sandel, M. J. (2010). *Justice: What's the right thing to do?* (Reprint). Farrar, Straus; Giroux.

Fukuyama, F. (2014). *Political order and political decay: from the industrial revolution to the globalization of democracy*. Profile Books.

Robinson, J. A., & Acemoglu, D. (2012). *Why nations fail: The origins of power, prosperity and poverty*. New York: Random House.

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