

HUM-479

Emotion and value II

Pé-Curto Alain Daniel

Cursus	Sem.	Type
Humanities and Social Sciences	MA2	Obl.

Language of teaching	English
Credits	3
Withdrawal Session	Unauthorized Summer
Semester	Spring
Exam	During the semester
Workload	90h
Weeks	14
Hours	3 weekly
Project	3 weekly
Number of positions	60

It is not allowed to withdraw from this subject after the registration deadline.

Remark

Une seule inscription à un cours SHS+MGT autorisée. En cas d'inscriptions multiples elles seront toutes supprimées sans notification.

Summary

In this Master's Project seminar, students prepare a high-quality article embodying the philosophical ideals of clarity, concision, and truth. They do so both in groups and individually. Students also defend the claim made in their article by delivering a professional talk.

Content**Emotion and Value II : Feeling, Goodness, and Building Oneself**

During Semester 1, we examined the role that emotions and values play in making our lives meaningful by focusing on life-defining moments such as transformative experiences and life's hard choices. The instructor introduced students to philosophy and the philosophical method. Moreover, the instructor presented strategies to deliver an effective presentation and to write a good, clear, and concise article. Students practiced writing and chairing a discussion through their assignments for Semester 1. The instructor and peers provided feedback on the students' writing assignments and on how they chaired and guided an in-class discussion.

In this Master's Project seminar, students will act on what they learned during Semester 1. Partly in groups and partly individually, students prepare a high-quality article implementing the plan set in their group abstract, group outline, and the personal addendum submitted at the end of Semester 1. Additionally, each group presents their work-in-progress to the rest of the class and defends the claim that they make in their article. Students receive feedback from both the instructor and their peers. Both the article and the presentation should convey professionalism and aim at the philosophical ideals of clarity, concision, and truth.

Like during Semester 1, a renowned expert in a field relevant to the topics of the course is expected to join us for a guest lecture.

Guest lecture: TBC

Keywords

Mind, self, transformation, transformative decision, personal choice, mental corruption, meaning, core preferences, preference aggregation, empathy for others, empathy for future selves.

Ethics, moral philosophy, value, values, core values, instrumental value, intrinsic value, final value, personal value, impersonal value, norms, incommensurability, incomparability, parity, normative powers.

Emotion, affect, mood, sentiments, valence, emotion appropriateness, being moved, being struck by value.

Learning Prerequisites

Required courses

Semester 1, *Emotion and Value I*, HUM-478

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, the student must be able to:

- Defend a claim or point of view effectively with arguments, including logical reasoning, counterexamples, and thought experiments in oral and written form.
- Write a paper instantiating the philosophical values of clarity and concision.
- Establish a reference list for an article in an accepted standard format.
- Detect flaws in argumentation, nonsense, and what Harry Frankfurt calls "bullshit".
- Develop effective examples to illustrate ideas.
- Guide and structure a discussion involving opposing views.
- Distinguish between philosophical/a priori questions and empirical/ a posteriori questions.
- Distinguish between philosophical/a priori and empirical/a posteriori argumentative strategies.
- Identify meaning (e.g., goals and missions) for individuals and organizations more effectively.
- Problem-solve in new and creative ways.
- Autonomously read and analyze complex text.

Teaching methods

The instructor publishes a supervision schedule at the beginning of Semester 2.

Each student remains part of the group formed during Semester 1. The groups resume work based on the group abstract and group outline submitted in Semester 1. The instructor offers advice on writing and presenting effectively, checks regularly on the progress of each group and provides feedback, points to additional references when necessary, and remains available throughout the supervised research hours.

By the end of Semester 2, each group submits a short, self-standing, high-quality article (maximum of 5* pages, all included).

In addition, each student will prepare a personal addendum to the article (maximum of 1* page). The addendum allows every student to complement the work submitted as a group with a personal contribution (e.g., by addressing something left out in the group work or by presenting an argument of their own). Importantly, the personal addendum may concur with or dissent from the views defended in the writing assignment prepared as a group. The personal addendum for Semester 2 may be a descendant of the personal addendum submitted during Semester 1 or not.

As students develop their articles and personal addenda, the instructor schedules group presentations. Each group presents their work-in-progress to the rest of the class during ca. 30* minutes. The instructor then chairs a questions-and-answers session of ca. 30* minutes.

Students should conceive of the article that they submit as the final version of a paper revised--if not rewritten entirely--numerous times to aim at clarity, concision, and truth. Similarly, they should prepare their presentation carefully, practice numerous times, and anticipate the questions and objections that might arise during the questions-and-answers sessions. Both the article and the talk should incorporate feedback previously received from the instructor and, when appropriate, from peers. Both the article and the talk should convey professionalism.

Expected student activities

ECTS 3 credits for Semester 2: ca. 75-90 hours workload (i.e., roughly 3 hours in the classroom and 3 hours outside the classroom)

Supervised group and individual research, in-class discussion, delivering a presentation, responding to questions and objections during the questions-and-answers sessions, asking questions and raising objections during the questions-and-answers sessions, and article writing.

Assessment methods

See Teaching methods for details on assignments.

(i) Master's Project: group article (maximum of 5* pages) with personal addendum (maximum of 1* page) due by the end of Semester 2 (60%).

This grade is attributed individually based on an assessment of the work submitted as a group and individually. The personal addendum is partly meant to ensure and check that all group members contribute fairly to the group work.

(ii) Group presentation with questions-and-answers session and class participation (40%).

This grade is attributed individually based on the group presentation and individual participation in (a) the group presentation, (b) the questions-and-answers session following the presentation, and (c) all other class discussions.

**The instructor may reasonably adapt the formats of the written assignments, group presentations, and questions-and-answers sessions depending on the needs of enrolled students.*

Supervision

Office hours	No
Assistants	No
Forum	No
Others	

A schedule of supervision will be published at the beginning of Semester 2.

You may contact the instructor in the following ways:

- (i) Primary method: during supervised research hours.
- (ii) Secondary method: by appointment in person or on Zoom/equivalent.
- (iii) For official and urgent matters: by email at alain.pecurto@epfl.ch.

Resources

Virtual desktop infrastructure (VDI)

No

Bibliography

The references provided here will be available at the library. They are **not** mandatory readings. However, they constitute excellent complements to the course materials. The list of mandatory readings will be published at the beginning of Semester 1.

If needed, additional pointers to references useful for the group and individual assignments will be communicated after groups are formed and topics selected.

(A) Three relatively short books on emotion, value, and transformative experience:

Deonna, J. A. & Teroni, F. 2012. *The Emotions: A Philosophical Introduction*. Abingdon, Oxon and New York: Routledge.

Orsi, F. 2015. *Value Theory*. London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic.

Paul, L. A. 2014. *Transformative Experience*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press.

(B) A short introduction to the philosophical method in general (not specific to the topics covered in the course).

Williamson, T. 2020. *Philosophical Method: A Very Short Introduction*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press.

(C) Two longer books on value, value relations, and hard choices:

Chang, R. 2014. *Making Comparisons Count*. Abingdon, Oxon and New York: Routledge.
Rønnow-Rasmussen, T. 2021. *The Value Gap*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Ressources en bibliothèque

- [DEONNA J. & F. TERONI \(2012\). The Emotions : a philosophical Introduction](#)
- [Orsi, F. 2015. Value Theory](#)
- [Paul, L. A. 2014. Transformative Experience](#)
- [Williamson, T. 2020. Philosophical Method: A Very Short Introduction](#)
- [Chang, R. 2014. Making Comparisons Count](#)
- [Rønnow-Rasmussen, T. 2021. The Value Gap](#)

Moodle Link

- <https://go.epfl.ch/HUM-479>