

THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
CCHU9090 THE LOVE WE GIVE AND THE LIES WE TELL: THE ETHICS OF RELATIONSHIPS
COURSE OUTLINE

Semester 2, 2022-2023

Lectures: Wednesdays, 12:30-2:20 PM in Rayson Huang Theatre

Tutorials: Sign-up in class Moodle

Course Description

From dating apps to family life, Instagram to the workplace, we all want to have good relationships and live a good life. What does that look like in the modern world? Everyday life is complex, and we are often presented with relationships, situations, and technologies that ask us to make compromises, whether we know it or not. This course looks at some of these everyday ethical questions through the lens of different scales of human relationships. It will equip students with ethical frameworks through which to view these relationships, enabling them to identify and develop their own values to navigate them. It will examine five key relationships through cross-cultural perspectives: (1) with oneself—including self-care, self-forgiveness, and conscience; (2) with friendship and dating; (3) with one's immediate community—including family and professional life; (4) the larger society in which one lives—including social media and the politics of respect; and (5) with the transcendence of mystery, the divine, and the sacred—including urban space and the ecological other with which we participate.

Offering Department:

Hong Kong Institute for the Humanities and Social Sciences

Course Co-ordinator:

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Tutorial sign-up

Please sign up in Moodle. Tutorial attendance is mandatory. **Tutorial sign-up begins January 18, 2023 (Wednesday) and closes at 2:30pm, January 25, 2023 (Wednesday)**. As tutorial sign-up is operated on a first-come-first-serve basis, you are advised to make your choice as soon as possible. The first tutorial session starts on **February 2, 2023 (Thursday)**. Please contact tutor if you encounter difficulties with signing up a timeslot. In your email, please attach your current timetable. We will consider your application according to availability of vacant seats in particular groups.

1. Study Load

Activities	Number of hours
Lectures	24
Tutorials	8
Reading / Self-study	36
Assessment: Essay / Report writing	36
Assessment: Presentation (incl preparation)	6
Assessment: In-class assessments	12
Total:	122

2. Course Learning Outcomes and Alignment with Common Core Programme Learning Outcomes

Course Learning Outcomes – On completing the course, students will be able to:		Alignment with Common Core Programme Learning Outcome(s)
1.	Identify important ethical questions present in everyday life and relationships; describe, compare, and evaluate a range of possible answers to those questions.	CC PLO(s): 1, 2, 3

2.	Articulate one's own set of personal values/ethical commitments and how they apply to one's current and future relationships, including personal, professional, and broader social relationships.	CC PLO(s): 1, 3, 4
3.	Independently apply relevant new advances in knowledge to one's personal ethical framework by means of analysis, critical evaluation, and personal reflection.	CC PLO(s): 2, 4

3. Assessment Tasks

100% coursework (i.e. no centrally timetabled end-of-semester examination)

Assessment Method	Details of Assignment	Weighting	Alignment with Course Learning Outcomes
Tutorial participation	Tutorial participation and discussion of assignments focused on the required readings.	10	CLOs: 1, 2, 3, 4
In-class discussion	Students are required to read the assigned readings before the lectures and submit two discussion questions based on the readings.	10	CLOs: 1, 2, 3, 4
Reflective writing	Students will create a blog or journal to record their reflections concerning each major class (i.e., classes 2-11). The focus will be on how the content of that class applies to their own life.	30	CLOs: 1, 2, 3, 4
In-class presentation	3-minute oral presentation reflecting student's personal values/ethical commitments and how they apply to their relationship of choice (e.g., friendship, romance, professional, etc.).	20	CLOs: 1, 2, 3, 4

Final essay	A 1500-word max. essay outlining a personal code of conduct for life as well as one's 5-yr, 10-yr, and lifetime goals for the character traits they want to develop and the person they want to become.	30	CLOs: 1, 2, 3, 4
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4. Class Schedule

Week	Date	Lecture topic	Mon Tutorial Dates	Tues Tutorial Dates	Wed Tutorial Dates	Thurs Tutorial Dates	Fri Tutorial Dates
1	Jan 18	Introduction					
2	Jan 23-28	<i>Lunar New Year</i>					
3	Feb 1	Self-love, self-forgiveness, self-care		Feb 7		Feb 2	
4	Feb 8	Conscience: developing and relating to one's own values		Feb 14		Feb 9	
	Feb 15	The morality of friendship		Feb 21		Feb 16	
5	Feb 22	Love and romantic relationships		Feb 28		Feb 23	
6	Mar 1	The ethics of family relationships		Mar 14		Mar 2	
	Mar 6-11	<i>Reading Week</i>					
7	Mar 15	Ruthlessness and integrity in the workplace		Mar 21		Mar 16*	
8	Mar 22	The meaning and value of respect in society		Mar 28		Mar 23	
9	Mar 29	Navigating interpersonal relationships on social media		Apr 4		Mar 30	
10	Apr 12	The concept of sacredness and the moral limits of the marketplace		Apr 18		Apr 13	
11	Apr 19	Transcendence in art, relationships, and urban space		Apr 25		Apr 20	
12	Apr 26	Conclusion: developing one's own relationship ethics					
13	May 2-5	Tutorial Presentations Week		May 2		May 4	
	May 8	Short essay due May 8 before 4:00pm					

* **Note:** There will be a total of 11 tutorial classes.

** **Note:** Mar 16 is a university holiday, so groups that would otherwise meet on that day will agree on an alternative meeting time for that week with their tutor, after tutorials begin.

5. Course Content, Topics and Required Readings

Required reading may be added as the course progresses, so make sure to pay attention to announcements. Reading marked with an asterisk below (*) indicates recommended reading, which is not strictly required but may be incorporated into lectures and class discussion.

Class 1: Introduction [Jan. 18]

Goldstein, R. (2019). "The Role of Intuition in Philosophy: Full Interview." *The Institute of Art and Ideas*:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kSFHoiW6_5M.

Nussbaum, Martha (1993). "Non-Relative Virtues: An Aristotelian Approach." *The Quality of Life*. Edited by Martha Nussbaum and Amartya Sen. New York: Oxford University Press. [Sections 1-3 = pp. 242-50]

*Shun, K.-L. and David Wong (2004). *Confucian Ethics: A Comparative Study of Self, Autonomy, and Community*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. ["Introduction"]

*Annas, J. (2011). *Intelligent Virtue*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. [Chapter 1: "Virtue, Character, and Disposition"]

*Skorupski, John (2006). *Why Read Mill Today?* Abingdon: Routledge. [Selections from Chapter 2 "The Good for Human Beings"]

*Mill, J.S. (1877). *Utilitarianism*. London: Longman, Greens, and Co. [Selections from Chapter 2 "What Utilitarianism Is"]

*Kant, I. *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*. [Part I]

Class 2: Self-Love, Self-Forgiveness, Self-Care [Feb. 1]

Aurelius, M. *Meditations*. [Book IV]

Gilbert, Paul and Lydia Woodyat. "An Evolutionary Approach to Shame-Based Self-Criticism, Self-Forgiveness, and Compassion." *Handbook of the Psychology of Self-Forgiveness*. Edited by Lydia Woodyat, Everett Worthington, Michael Wenzel, and Brandon Griffin. Cham: Springer, 2017.

*Seneca (1928). "On Firmness." *Moral Essays Volume 1*. Translated by John Basore. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

*Dillon, Robin (2001). "Self-Forgiveness and Self-Respect". *Ethics* 112:1: 53-83.

*Szablowinski, Z. (2018). "Self-Forgiveness and Forgiveness". *The Heythrop Journal* 53:4: 678-89.

*Peterson, J. (2018). *12 Rules for Life*. Toronto: Penguin Random House. [Selections from Chap. 6 "Set Your House in Perfect Order Before You Criticize the World"]

Class 3: Conscience: developing and relating to one's own values [Feb. 8]

Zisi. *The Doctrine of the Mean*. [Chap. 1]

Butler, Joseph (2006). "Fifteen Sermons Preached at the Rolls Chapel." *Complete Works*. Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press. [Chap. 1-3]

Nietzsche, F. *On The Genealogy of Morals*. [Selections from Second Essay]

- *Ivanhoe, Philip (2002). *Ethics in the Confucian Tradition: The Thought of Mengzi and Wang Yangming 2nd Ed.* Hackett: Indianapolis, 2002. [Chap. 6 “Sagehood”]
- *Kant, I. *The Metaphysics of Morals*. [Selections]
- *Freud, Sigmund (2017). *Civilization and Its Discontents*. New York: Norton. [Chap. 7]
- **The Lives of Others* (*Das Leben der Anderen*, 2006 film).

Class 4: Let’s just be friends... what does that mean anyway?: On the morality of friendship [Feb. 15]

Confucius. *Analects*. [Selections from Books I and XVI]
 Aristotle. *The Nicomachean Ethics*. [1155a-1157b5]

- *Tiwald, Justin (2020). “Shared Ends: Kant and Dai Zhen on the Ethical Value of Mutually Fulfilling Relationships”. *Journal of Confucian Philosophy and Culture* 33 (February): 105-137.
- *Cooper, John (1977). “Friendship and the Good in Aristotle”. *Philosophical Review* 86: 290–315.
- *Freedman, M. (1989). “Friendship and Moral Growth”. *The Journal of Value Inquiry* 23: 3-13.
- *Aelred of Rievaulx (2010). *Spiritual Friendship*. Translated by Lawrence Braceland. Collegeville, MN: Order of St Benedict.
- **How I Met Your Mother*. From Netflix. [S1.E15 “Game Night”]

Class 5: Love, sex, and Socrates: what does philosophy have to do with dating? [Feb. 22]

***with Guest Speaker TBC**

- Plato. *Symposium*. [200a-e – 211a-b]
 Lewis, C.S. *The Four Loves*. [Chap. 5 “Eros”]
 Klinenberg, A and Aziz Ansari (2015). *Modern Romance*. New York: Penguin. [Selections from Chap. 4 “Choice and Options”]
- *De Sousa, Ronald (2015). *Love: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. [Chap. 1: “Puzzles” and Chap. 3: “Desire”]

Class 6: The ethics of family relationships [Mar. 1]

***with Guest Speaker Prof. Michael Puett, Professor of Chinese History and Anthropology, Harvard University**

- Xunzi et. al. (2014). *Xunzi: The Complete Text*. Es. Eric Hutton et. al. Princeton: Princeton University Press. [Chap. 29 “The Way To Be a Son”]
 Puett, M. and Christine Gross-Loh (2016). *The Path: What Chinese Philosophers Can Teach Us About the Good Life*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 2016. [Chap. 3 “On Relationships: Confucius and ‘As If’ Rituals”]
- *Feracioli, L. (2020). “Ethics and the Family”. From *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, www.rep.routledge.com, 2020.
 - **Modern Family*. From Netflix. [S1.E1 “Introducing the Family”]

Class 7: What would you do for success?: Ruthlessness and integrity in the workplace [Mar. 15]

Machiavelli, N. *The Prince*. [Chap. XV-XVIII]

Nagel, T. (1978). *Public and Private Morality*. Ed. Stuart Hampshire. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. [Chap. 4: “Ruthlessness in Public Life”]
Love, Death, and Robots. From Netflix. [S3.E2 “Bad Travelling”]

*Arendt, Hannah (2003). *Responsibility and Judgment*. New York: Schocken Books. [pp. 17-48]

*Young, Iris Marion (2011). *Responsibility for Justice*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. [Chap. 3: “Guilt versus Responsibility: A Reading and Partial Critique of Hannah Arendt”]

Class 8: ... sit down, be humble: The meaning and value of respect in society [Mar. 22]

Everything Everywhere All at Once (2022 film)

Wawrytko, S. (1982). *Philosophy East and West* 32:3. [pp. 237-57 “Confucius and Kant: The Ethics of Respect”]

*Taylor, C. (2003). *The Malaise of Modernity*. Toronto: House of Anansi Press. [Chap. 5: “The Need for Recognition” – the entire book is relevant!]

*Berger, P. (1983). *Revisions: Changing Perspectives in Moral Philosophy*. Eds. Stanley Hauerwas and Alasdair MacIntyre. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press. [Chap. 10 “On the Obsolescence of the Concept of Honor”]

*Benedict, Ruth (2006). *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword: Patterns of Japanese Culture*. Boston: Mariner. [Chap. 8: “Clearing One’s Name”]

Class 9: Navigating interpersonal relationships on social media [Mar. 29]

Tosi, J. and Brandon Warmke (2020). *Grandstanding: The Use and Abuse of Moral Talk*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. [Chap. 3 “Grandstanding: A Field Guide”]

Hang-Wong, P. (2012). “Dao, Harmony and Personhood: Towards a Confucian Ethics of Technology”. *Philosophy and Technology* 25: 67-86.
[Selections]

**Black Mirror*. From Netflix. [S3.E1 “Nosedive”]

*Sherry Turkle, S. (2012). *Connected, But Alone?* (TED Talk). From https://www.ted.com/talks/sherry_turkle_connected_but_alone.

Class 10: Nothing is sacred: On the concept of sacredness and the moral limits of the marketplace [Apr. 12]

Haidt, J. (2012). *The Righteous Mind*. New York: Penguin. [Selections from Chap. 7 “The Moral Foundations of Politics”]

Sandel, M. (2013). *What Money Can’t Buy: The Moral Limits of Markets*. New York: Farrar, Strauss, and Giroux. [Chap. 3 “How Markets Crowd Out Morals”]

*Mill, J.S. *On Liberty*. [Selections from Chap. 2 concerning the harm principle]

*Elfers, E. (2022). “Alienation, Commodification, and Commercialization: A Feminist Critique of Commercial Surrogacy Agreements Through the Lens of Labour Exploitation and U.S. Organ Donation Law”. *Hastings Journal on Gender and the Law* 33(2): 151-186.

Class 11: Je ne sais quoi: Transcendence in art, relationships, and lived space [Apr. 19]

***with guest Speaker Prof. Christopher Webster, Faculty of Architecture, The University of Hong Kong**

Chōmei, K. N. *Hojoki*. [Selections]

Theodore, W. et. al. (2001). *Sources of Japanese Tradition*. Vol. I (2nd Ed.) New York: Columbia University Press. [Selections from Chap. 16 “The Vocabulary of Japanese Aesthetics”]

Wirzba, N. (2021). *This Sacred Life: Humanity’s Place in a Wounded World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. [Chap. 5 “Why Sacred Anything?”]

Berry, W. *How to Be a Poet*. From <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poetrymagazine/poems/41087/how-to-be-a-poet>.

**Tree of Life* (2011 film).

*Heidegger, M. (1971). “Building Dwelling Thinking.” *Poetry Language Thought*. Translated by Albert Hofstadter. New York: Harper Collins.

Class 12: Conclusion: Loneliness, hope, and final essay guidelines [Apr. 26]

Setiya, K. (2022). *Life is Hard*. New York: Penguin. [Chap. 2 “Loneliness”]

*Rickles, D. (2022). *Life is Short*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. [Chap. 5 “Project Me”]

*Seneca (2006). “On the Shortness of Life.” *Moral Essays Volume II*. Translated by John Basore. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

6. Recommended Readings

See readings with asterisk (*) above. Further readings may be recommended as the course progresses.

7. Recommended Websites

Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy: <https://plato.stanford.edu>

Internet Encyclopaedia of Philosophy: <https://iep.utm.edu>

8. Further Resources

The 4Cs of Critical Thinking: a brief introduction to critical thinking by Dr. Jonathan Johnson (see Moodle for the slides).

If you are struggling with relationships or life do reach out for help. The university has resources that can help you, the below are a good start. And don’t hesitate to speak with your TA; while they are not counsellors they can help point you in the right direction.

CEDARS: <https://www.cedars.hku.hk>

HKU Counselling and Psychological Services: <https://www.cedars.hku.hk/cope?p=78> ; phone: 3917 8388 ; email: cedars-cope@hku.hk (can call or email to make an appointment)

8. Course Level Grade Descriptors

Tutorial Participation, in-class discussions and reflective writing assignments

	Grade A	Grade B	Grade C	Grade D	Grade F
Intellectual Contribution	Consistently demonstrates a thorough understanding of, and engages constructively with, all course material (assigned readings, issues, concepts). Invariably provides insightful analyses, raises critical points, and advances and deepens group discussion.	Mostly, demonstrates a good understanding of, and engages constructively with course material. Frequently provides helpful points or asks questions that advance and deepen group discussion.	Demonstrates a basic understanding of most of the course material and engages with it, though not always successfully. Sometimes makes positive contributions that advance group discussion.	Demonstrates a basic understanding of some of the course material and engages with it. Occasionally makes contributions that advance group discussion. Contributions sometimes add little.	Student does not attend tutorial. Or if student does attend, he or she demonstrates little or no understanding of course material, lacks engagement with it, or makes little or no effort to contribute to group discussion.

Group Discussion Skills	Participates actively and constructively all the time. Consistently appreciates others' contribution and engages with their ideas sensitively. Plays an active role in moving discussion forward.	Participates actively most of the time. Generally appreciates others' contribution and engages with their ideas sensitively. Plays a supportive role in discussion.	Participates most of the time but sometimes requires prompting. Attempt to appreciate others' contribution and to engage with their ideas sensitively, with some success. Plays a positive role in discussion.	Participates some of the time when prompted. Makes some attempt to appreciate others' contribution and to engage with their ideas sensitively, though only with limited success. Generally, plays a passive role in discussion.	Little or no engagement/participation in group discussion even with prompting. Shows no appreciation of others' knowledge and skills. Fails to engage with others' ideas. Plays a passive or negative role in discussion.
Communication of Ideas	Ideas are clearly and fluently articulated at all times.	Ideas are clearly articulated most of the time, with occasional lack of clarity.	Meaning is clear most of the time even though the student has some difficulty in articulating ideas.	Meaning is clear some of the time. Student has difficulty in articulating ideas.	Student has serious difficulty in articulating ideas, and the meaning is rarely clear.

Video Report or Final Essay

	Grade A	Grade B	Grade C	Grade D	Grade F
Addressing the Task	Identifies and addresses clearly the main question(s) and the subsidiary, embedded, or implicit aspects, addressing their relationships to each other.	Identifies and addresses the main question(s) and most of the subsidiary, embedded or implicit aspects.	Identifies and addresses the main question(s) and some of the subsidiary, embedded or implicit aspects.	Identifies part of the main question(s) and a few of the subsidiary, embedded, or implicit aspects but only addresses them partially.	Lacks an understanding of what the question requires or responds inappropriately or tangentially to the task or topic.
Intellectual Engagement with Concepts, Theories or Issues	Writings consistently demonstrate informed, thoughtful and sustained intellectual engagement with a broad range of relevant concepts, theories and issues. Theoretical ideas are applied to lived experience appropriately and insightfully. Viewpoints are always clearly articulated, meticulously supported and from multiple perspectives.	Writings mostly demonstrate informed and thoughtful intellectual engagement with a broad range of relevant concepts, theories and issues. Theoretical ideas are applied to lived experience mostly appropriately and at times insightfully. Viewpoints are in the main clearly articulated, well supported and from multiple perspectives.	Writings mostly indicate informed intellectual engagement with concepts, theories and issues but not always with sufficient depth, breadth or understanding. Applies theoretical ideas to lived experience but sometimes inappropriately or tenuously. Viewpoints are in the main clearly articulated but are not always sufficiently supported or from multiple perspectives.	Writings indicate some intellectual engagement with concepts, theories or issues but mostly at a superficial level. Writings are largely descriptive or anecdotal but do indicate some attempt to apply theoretical ideas to lived experience. Viewpoints are offered but tend to be poorly articulated, insufficiently supported and from a single perspective.	Writings reveal an absence of intellectual engagement with concepts, theories or issues. Writings are irrelevant or superficial. No attempt to link concepts and theories with lived experience. Viewpoints are poorly articulated and unsupported or supported with seriously flawed arguments.

Personal Development	Develops extensive and highly perceptive self-understandings from reflective writings. Consistently demonstrates a willingness and ability to subject own beliefs, values and behaviours to critical scrutiny and an openness to change.	Develops perceptive self-understandings from reflective writings. Demonstrates a willingness and ability to subject own beliefs, values and behaviours to critical scrutiny and an openness to change.	Develops some perceptive self-understandings from reflective writings. Generally disposed to scrutinizing own beliefs, values and behaviours but not always in a sufficiently critical manner. Shows some openness to change.	Develops some limited self-understandings from reflective writings. Shows willingness to examine own beliefs, values and behaviours but mostly without sufficient questioning of them. Occasionally, shows openness to change.	No evidence of the development of self-understanding from the reflective writings. Unwilling or unable to scrutinize own beliefs, values and behaviours. Shows no openness to change.
Mechanics	The language contains very few, if any, errors in grammar and vocabulary. If slips are present, the meaning is still clear.	The language is generally accurate but contains a few systematic errors in complex grammar and vocabulary.	The language is mostly accurate, and errors, when they occur, are mainly in complex grammar and vocabulary. Errors are distracting but the overall meaning is still intelligible.	The language is sufficient for meaning to be understood with effort. However, the language contains frequent errors in simple and complex grammar and vocabulary that are distracting.	Errors in language and vocabulary are so frequent and distracting that the essay is largely incomprehensible.

Notes:

1. The above grade descriptors are intended to serve as reference materials for the adoption/adaptation by teachers of Common Core courses.
2. Teachers are encouraged to use the full range of the grades, i.e. A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D and F.
3. Weightings can be assigned to the categories to suit particular courses as necessary.

Summary of what to expect for assignments:

Two Discussion Questions:

Students are required to read the assigned readings before the lectures and submit two discussion questions based on the readings. The discussion questions for each class are to be submitted to your tutor via Moodle by noon the Monday before that week's lecture. Your tutor's email will be on the syllabus in case you have any issues with that. That means that, while tutorial sign up is open till next Wednesday, you will need to sign up for a tutorial group before then to submit your questions (to your tutor) on time. The first pair of questions (re: Self-love, self-forgiveness, self-care) are due Monday 30th January at noon. It also means that you should do at least some of the reading for that week by Monday, to help you develop good questions. You can also ask more general questions you might have, e.g., based on things you've heard outside of class, but doing the reading will help you to develop good ones. There is a hard deadline for this, any questions submitted after that time (e.g., at 12:01 on Monday) will be considered late and will be marked as zero.

Reflective Writing:

*Students will create a 200-word max. blog or journal to record their reflections concerning each major class (i.e., classes 2-11). The focus will be on how the content of that class applies to their own life. Each of these reflective writing assignments is due in the first 5 minutes of the corresponding tutorial. If you choose to write a journal, submit your journal entry to your tutor in person in hard copy; if you choose to create a blog, your online publication date must be timestamped prior to the corresponding tutorial. Each blog or journal entry will be marked out of 10 points: 5 points are for **adequate** completion of the assignment; 5 points are for quality of content. There is also a hard deadline for this, any assignments submitted after that time (e.g., after the first 5 minutes of the corresponding tutorial) will be considered late and will be marked as zero. To receive full marks for this assignment you need to do two things: (a) define and describe one of the key concepts or ideas from that class (for example, for class 9 you might describe Tosi and Warmke's idea of grandstanding); and (b) consider how this idea might apply to your own life (for class 9 you might describe cases in which you or others in your life have engaged in forms of grandstanding, what that looked like, what the consequences were, and whether or how you will do that in the future).*

In-Class Presentation:

3-minute oral presentation reflecting student's personal values/ethical commitments and how they apply to their relationship of choice (e.g., friendship, romance, professional, etc.). Prepare a 3-minute presentation providing an ethical analysis of your relationship of choice. Make sure to (i) draw from ideas presented in the course; (ii) include three things that have impacted the way you view this relationship as a result of the course; and (iii) one thing that you will do different in the next three months as a result of the course. You are encouraged to describe your view of this relationship before the course started and your view of it now; what has changed?

Final Essay:

A 1500-word essay outlining a personal code of conduct for life as well as one's 5-year, 10-year, and lifetime goals for the character traits they want to develop and the person they want to become. Further instructions for this will be provided in the final class.