

## **General Educational Theory and Practice: Michael Sandel's Moral Reasoning 22 course in Harvard University's General Education as an Exemplar**

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### **Abstract**

Michael Sandel's Moral Reasoning 22 course in general education is one of the most successful courses at Harvard University, is viewed by millions, and should be an exemplar. The paper argues this position by way of literature review that includes reviewing Moral Reasoning 22's course syllabus, textbooks, videos, webs, Harvard general education reform reports, and related sources. The reasons for Moral Reasoning 22 as exemplar are as follows: The course corresponds to the thought of Harvard's general education, matches to four goals for General Education curriculum, has excellent curriculum design and pedagogy, and gets high prestige. The implications for general education are: Evaluate general educational course in an integrated way, encourage teachers to combine their academic interests and general educational ideals into a course, long-term commitment and frequently update on a course, bring teacher's professional passion into class, make good use of technology, learn from model, and good general educational courses could increase school's prestige.

**Keywords: General Education, Moral Reasoning, Michael Sandel**

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## I. Introduction

The great teacher offers great course that is the base line for successful general education (Harvard, 2007a, p.21). Michael J. Sandel(1953- ) is an exemplar not only in Harvard University, but also in the world. His general educational course "Moral Reasoning 22, Justice: A Journey of Moral Reasoning" has more than fifteen thousand Harvard students enrolled,<sup>1</sup> and millions people watched his whole semester free accessing course web videos which are widely discussed and translated into different languages. He implements Harvard's ideals of general education in his course and increases the university's prestige. His course could be an exemplar of general education in Harvard as well as in the world.

Harvard's general education initiated around 19 century, and the concepts of general education have many foster parents at that time (Harvard University, 2006). Until 1945, general education reform recommended three full-year general education courses to be taken by all students: one in humanities, one in social sciences, and one in science and mathematics (Harvard University, 1945, p.205, 213, 220). After this reform, general education at Harvard had a clearer figure than before. However, after couple of decades, general education got the problem gradually. "The chief problem was the multiplication of courses designated as satisfying the general education requirement." (Harvard University, 2006: 79) Derek Bok and Henry Rosovsky led a reform to Core Curriculum that focused on academic discipline approach. In Core Curriculum, "Students would eventually have to take courses in the five areas of the Core: Science, Literature and Arts, Historical Studies, Social Analysis and Moral Reasoning" (Xu, 2004). On 2007, Harvard has its latest reform that shifted Core Curriculum to Distribution Requirement General Education. Sandel's Moral Reasoning 22 course lasts decades from the Core to the latest reform.

Why is Sandel's general educational course, Moral Reasoning 22, so successful and how? The research reviews related bibliographies which include the three reforms of Harvard general education: General Education in Free Society in 1945, The Core Curriculum in 1979, and Report of the Task Force on General Education in 2007; 12 course videos; course textbooks; course websites; feedbacks from webs; and related web resources.

After reviewing literatures, the paper forms several dimensions to justify a successful general educational course: the dimension of reasons and goals of

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<sup>1</sup> Before the fall of 2009, Moral Reasoning 22 belonged to Harvard Core Curriculum; after that, this course has slight name changed to Ethical Reasoning 22 which fits the new general education requirement, but both course's main readings are the same and students entered the Harvard before 2009 still can count it to Core Curriculum requirement. Most of the paper's bibliographies base on Moral Reasoning 22, which are materials before 2009; therefore, the paper use Moral Reasoning 22 as a key term.

general education, subject area description, curriculum design, pedagogy, students' feedbacks, and social prestige. Moreover, paper synthesizes the ways how does Moral Reasoning 22 succeed. Finally, paper infers some implications for general education.

## **II. The reasons for Moral Reasoning 22 as an exemplar of general education**

The paper explores the reasons, the goals, the subject area description, curriculum, pedagogy, students' responses, and the prestige to justify Moral Reasoning 22 is an exemplar in Harvard's general education.

### **A. Correspond to Harvard's reasons for general education**

A Harvard education is a liberal education and general education is the public face of liberal education (Harvard, 2007: 1-3). The centerpiece of Harvard education is academic experience that includes the concentration, electives, and general education; but student organizations, the performing arts, athletics, and the life of the residential houses all also contribute to the intellectual, ethical, and personal growth of Harvard's undergraduates (Harvard, 2007: 2). General education is the place where students are brought to understand how everything that Harvard teaches in the arts and sciences relates to their lives and to the world that they will confront (Harvard, 2007: 3).

"The aim of a liberal education is to unsettle presumptions, to defamiliarize the familiar, to reveal what is going on beneath and behind appearances, to disorient young people and to help them to find ways to re-orient themselves." (Harvard University, 2007: 1-2) In Moral Reasoning 22 course, Michael Sandel frequently raises many unsettle issues to invite students sharing their familiar ideas, defending their positions, or being challenged by others. During this process, students defamiliarize their familiar prepositions, disorient their minds, and then re-orient themselves. Such as, Sandel concludes his first course lecture with "The philosophy teaches us and unsettles us by confronting us with what we already know. There's an irony the difficulty of this course consists in the fact that it teaches what you already know. It works by taking what we know from familiar unquestioned setting, and making it strange. That's how those examples worked...." (Sandel, 2005a)<sup>2</sup> that is a good footnote for general education's reasons in Harvard.

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<sup>2</sup> "In 2005, Boston's WGBH filmed all 24 "Justice" lectures in Sanders Theatre, editing them into a 12-hour series that skillfully captured the chemistry between Sandel and his students. The series aired on PBS in 2009 and was made available for free on a companion website, [www.justiceharvard.org](http://www.justiceharvard.org)." (Shebar, 2012: 4)

## **B. Match Harvard's four goals for general education curriculum**

There are four overarching goals in Harvard's general education: civic engagement; teach students to understand themselves as products of--and participants in-- traditions of art, ideas, and values; respond critically and constructively to change; and understanding the ethical dimensions of what they say and do.(Harvard University, 2007: 5-6) Moral Reasoning 22 responds these goals properly in certain degree respectively.

### **1. General education prepares students for civic engagement**

Harvard hopes general education encouraging students to become active and engaged citizens locally, nationally, and internationally. Sandel brings many popular civic issues into class for luring students to share their own positions publicly while others are guided by teacher to support or challenge these positions in a rational way. These issues include surrogate motherhood, human organ market, same-sex marriage, etc. The debates in class from students in different sex, ethnic, religions, rationalities, and positions radically or conservatively; they all contribute to practice civic engagement in a democratic forum positively. Harvard@Home mentioned: "Despite the size of the course, Sandel engages students in lively discussion on topics including affirmative action, income distribution, and same-sex marriage, showing that even the most hotly contested issues of the day can be the subject of reasoned moral argument."<sup>3</sup> Sandel supplied the students in the class the opportunities of preparation for civic engagement in the future.

### **2. General education teaches students to understand themselves as products of-and participants in-traditions of art, ideas, and values**

The idea in this goal claims a metaphysical preposition—embedded self. Sandel(2009k) echoed this position in his "The claims of community" class lecture where Sandel cited Alasdair MacIntyre's idea, "The contrast with the narrative view of the self is clear. For the story of my life is always embedded in the story of those communities from which I derive my identity" (MacIntyre, 1984: 221). And then Sandel leads students discussing the positions between atom-self of liberalism and embedded-self of communitarianism with some cases in life world, such as collective responsibility, self-decision, contemporary American could deny any responsibility for these Texas slavery upon black Americans, or a young German denies Nazis has no moral relevance to his relationship, etc. Students share their ideas and positions, while hear from

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<sup>3</sup> This citation retrieves from <http://athome.harvard.edu/programs/jmr/>

and debate to others. Eventually, they experience an in-depth understanding about the self, culture, and tradition.

### **3. General education prepares students to respond critically and constructively to change**

The world changed dramatically in recent decades no matter in knowledge, culture, values, or, especially, technology. Although Moral Reasoning 22 focuses on the moral and political issues, it still closely connects with good at using the newest technology in order to enhance students' learning and opens the course's influence to the world. Sandel opens his class lecture on the web, TV series, and radio; he creates course Facebook; and even simulating connects class with students in Japan, China, South Korea, India, and Brazil by the latest technology. Students experience the technology change in the real time class. Sandel said, "...takes the distance out of distance learning. Now we are able to invite the world in, actually invite them into the Harvard classroom, into Sanders Theatre. ... It makes technology an instrument of mutual learning."(Walsh, 2012, December) Sandel brings the technology change into students learning experience and welcome people in the world participate actively in the learning environment he created on the web which far different from traditional lecture in the class. Sandel responds to new technology constructively is a good model for the students to aware the change of new technology.

### **4. General education develops students' understanding of the ethical dimensions of what they say and do**

Sandel supplies the basic ethical knowledge such as Aristotle's eudemonia ethics, Kant's deontology, Mill's utilitarianism, John Rawls' justice theory, or MacIntyre's communitarianism; moreover, he leads students to share their different viewpoints with the considering of consequences and criticize others' views as well as reflectively thinking of their own. Students will see the deeply conflicts between different ethical viewpoints from cultural, religious, or socio-economic differences and reflect to their original ethical positions no matter reconfirmed or revised.

For examples, in Sandel's second lecture, putting the price tag on the life, he introduces Bentham's theory of maximize the utility, which is the common market logic in modern world. Then he invites students to discuss some cases, such as the Czech Republic Cigarette tax and Ford Pinto case with real tank exploring problem case (Sandel, 2005b). Students share different viewpoints, which either give reasons for tag price on life or disagree to the possible life price tag. Varied ideas encounter each other in a rational way that inspires the

thoughtful thinking in depth that will create a reflective stage where students nurture the capacity to grasp the ethical consequences for their standings. More other cases can be found in Sandel's class lectures(Sandel, 2005c, 2005d, 2005e, 2005f, 2005g, 2005h, 2005i, 2005j).

### **C. Complete the ethical reasoning subject area description**

From the fall of 2009, the new general education replaced the core curriculum at Harvard. There are eight categories in Harvard's general education: Aesthetic and Interpretive Understanding, Culture and Belief, Empirical Reasoning, Ethical Reasoning, Science of Living System, Science of the Physical Universe, Societies of the World, and The United States in the World (Harvard University, 2007:7). Whereas Core Curriculum includes Foreign Cultures, Historical Study, Literature and Arts, Moral Reasoning, Quantitative Reasoning, Science, and Social Analysis (Harvard University, 2008:21). Moral Reasoning shifts to Ethical Reasoning because verbally ethics tend to focus on acting a proper social role that emphasized on contemporary context, whereas moral focuses on personal morality that was emphasized in tradition. In the subject area description, Ethical Reasoning should:

- a. Teach how to reason about moral and political beliefs and practices, and how to deliberate and assess claims about ethical issues;
- b. examine competing conceptions and theories of ethical concepts such as the good life, obligation, rights, justice, liberty;
- c. teach students how to assess and weigh the reasons for and against adopting these various conceptions and theories;
- d. apply these conceptions and theories to concrete ethical dilemmas of the sort they will encounter in their lives, such as those that arise in medicine, law, business, politics, and daily life; and
- e. where practicable, acquaint students with value systems different from their own, such as those of different world religions or different historical periods and those expressed in different languages, or with empirical studies of moral life.(Harvard University, 2007a: 13-14; 2007b: 3)<sup>4</sup>

Moral Reasoning 22 course quite fits to the subject area descriptions. Sandel explains the reasoning of arguments from moral and political philosophers' theories such as Aristotle's Eudemonia for good life, Immanuel Kant's deontology about obligation, John Stuart Mill's harm principle to against authority violating people's rights or liberty, or John Rawls' Justice, which

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<sup>4</sup> Italicized words and alphabetic numbers in this quotation are added in the Final Legislation Establishing the Program in General Education which was voted and passed at the Regular Meeting of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences of Harvard University on Tuesday, May 15, 2007.

proclaims the principle for justice. Sandel raises the concrete cases or moral dilemmas such as human body organ market, “PGA Tour, Inc. v. Martin” law case, Motherhood for sale, hiring substitute to fight, or same-sex marriage. Sandel guides students to distinguish competing conceptions' differences and their meanings with consequences through traditional resources, other students' arguments, or personal experience and reflection. Through this process, Sandel nurtures students' ethical evaluation weighting system that involves different cultures, religions, language expression, and moral reasoning. Moral Reasoning 22 embraces almost all the elements of Ethical Reasoning subject area's description.

#### **D. Attractive curriculum design**

Moral Reasoning 22 is a half course at every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday morning from 11 to 12 which includes lectures and one weekly discussion session. Sandel plans the course not from chronological order of philosophical thoughts or from varied debate issues only; but combines both with an attractive way. As Sandel in his textbook mentioned, "...a guided journal in moral and political reflection that moves back and forth between philosophical writings and practical issues that illustrate competing conceptions of justice"(Sandel, 2007: Preface vii). Sandel interprets his intention with: “What I wanted students to see is that just beneath the surface of these debates lurk the Big Questions that have preoccupied great philosophers from Aristotle to Kant to Rawls” (Shebar, 2012: 4).

For example, Sandel initiates his first lecture: "This is a course about justice and we begin with a story."(Sandel, 2005a) This story is a famous trolley car dilemma: killing five workers on the main lane or killing one on the side track. The story grasps students' attention and challenges their minds. The course has designed for inviting students' varied viewpoints which correspond to different philosophical propositions. Sandel concludes students' competing viewpoints in revealing the function of philosophical thoughts that is inviting and provoking a new way of seeing that is an important goal in the aims of general education. Sandel designs deliberately the curriculum in which students volunteer playing an active role to share ideas and be inspired to search the answer from thoughts in suggested readings. The spiral-like curriculum could continuously extend to wide range of cases and theories. Those cases include: Does it is a fair salary for Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O Connor(\$200,000) and television's Judge Judy (\$25 million) basing on John Rawls' theory(Sandel, 2005h) or the case of Cheryl Hopwood was denied admission to a Texas law school was evaluated in Kant and Aristotle's justice theory.(Sandel, 2005i) The other example is using the purpose of marriage, such as Aristotle's theory, to evaluate same-sex marriage(Sandel, 2005l)



The requirements of Moral Reasoning 22 are two papers (6-7 pages and 20 percent course grade each) on topics to be assigned, final examination for 35 percent, section participation (including submission of two ungraded response papers of 1-2 pages) counts for 25 percent, and optional contribution to the Justice blog on the course website can also count to section participation. These requirements balance the textbook knowledge, essay expression, active participate in class learning, and extra involvement in course web that is encouraged.

Beside the textbooks, class lectures, and discussion sessions; course web is a very flexible extension for students because it provides lecture videos for rehearsing, beginner and advanced discussion guides in each lecture, hundreds discussion history records from the world in discussion topics, Q&A, feedback, and other related resources such as Sandel's related lectures in the world. Course web not only give students the chance to refine basic course requirements, but also open a door for students viewing the world, whereas anyone with interests about this course has the chance to participate in, too. This course brings students from Harvard toward the world, vice versa.

### **E. Excellent pedagogy**

It will be the amazing experience when one looks at students full of Sander theatre where Sandel leads students to defend or repudiate ideas to ideas. Sandel is just like a conductor to direct a concert, and students voluntarily express their ideas which mostly go to the directions Sandel intended. This is the part of reason why so many Harvard students eager to his class as Shebar(2012: 1) describes, "It's the dialectical rush of his teaching that students crave most." Although Sandel simply says, "Usually I teach by asking students questions"(Ehrlick, 2011), it is Sandel's trademark, "style of posing a universal moral question to engage students in discussions..."(Walsh, 2012, December). One will hardly feel bored or lonely in Sandel's class as Suneel K. Chakravorty says, "The dialogue is very engaging and one-on-one....The professor poses questions to the class, it is very interactive, and we feel involved."(Makarchev, 2007)

Moreover, observing from the chronological sequence of class, one will find that Sandel seals his position of debate in the beginning, until students equip ability to defend their own position or repudiate others'. Shebar(2012:2) said: "During the first several meetings, he's scrupulous about keeping his own views out of the discussion, choosing instead to guide students in an exploration of their own moral intuitions. Only toward the end of the semester, when students are well equipped to argue with him, does he begin to offer his perspective."



## **F. Positive students' responses**

Moral Reasoning 22 is several times being the most popular undergraduate course in Harvard, as the school news said: "After a hiatus last year, Moral Reasoning 22, 'Justice' is once again the most popular class at the College, boasting an enrollment of 1,115." (Makarchev, 2007) But don't worry about getting lost in this big class because student found "the course's size to be 'overwhelming', but not impersonal." (Makarchev, 2007) Students like to share their opinions in Sandel's class as Chelsea Link said: " 'Justice' was the only class at Harvard where I felt comfortable changing my mind, not just once, but a lot of times." (Shebar, 2012:2)

Students also like to voluntarily attend extra classes because "It's just exciting to have a new perspective in the room ... you can go to all these different places. We can hear how [students] feel, and whether they agree with us, or whether it's completely different. It's really cool." (Walsh, 2012, December) This extra class activity brings course from Harvard into the world--China, Japan, India, and Brazil. Students would like to attend this international course activity in which Harvard freshman Matt Sanders said, "he was happy to spend part of his day in the extra class to hear from fellow students in four time zones." (Walsh, 2012)

Not only positive feedbacks come from Harvard campus, but also those oversea students who watches Sandel course lecture on the web give positive feedback. A sophomore at Fudan University in Shanghai said, "The first time I watched 'Justice' online, I felt so strongly that I burst into tears...." (Shebra, 2012:4) Fudan undergrad Junjie Jiang mentioned, "In the midst of moral chaos, Professor Sandel is showing us a way out." (Shebra, 2012: 4) That is the image of Sandel and his Moral Ethical 22 course in students' minds.

## **G. Prestige beyond Harvard**

More than 15000 students have enrolled Moral Ethical 22 course in Harvard. Sandel got the Harvard-Radcliffe Phi Beta Kappa Teaching Prize in 1985. He was recognized by the American Political Science Association in 2008 for a career of excellence in teaching. (Shebar, 2012:4) The online course lectures were translated into different languages, posted in Youtube and other places, and viewed by millions people all over the world. Thousands people post their feedback on Moral Reasoning 22's course web and his course related book, *Justice: What's the Right Thing to Do?*, becomes New York Time's bestseller.

Sandel was invited to a TED talk, in television series on PBS, NHK (Japan), BBC Reith Lectures, and China Newsweek named him the most

influential foreign figure of 2010 in China.<sup>5</sup> He was invited to have his lectures in many countries, such as the biggest lecture in Seoul, Korea that draws 14,000 audiences to outdoor Amphitheater in 2012. He is like a super star overwhelming the world for public debate on justice.

### III. How does it succeed

After reviewing these successful achievements, one will wonder that how does Sandel's Moral Reasoning 22 succeed, and we would like to learn from it. The paper synthesizes following reasons.

#### A. Combine professional development in course teaching

Sandel initiated his academic career in political philosophy when he was in his last term at Brandeis University and got a Rhodes scholarship to study political philosophy at Oxford.(Shebar, 2012: 2) His PHD dissertation became his first famous book, *Liberalism and the Limits of Justice*, 1982, which Sandel argues the problems of John Rawls' *A Theory of Justice*, such as Rawls' theory bases on untenable metaphysics of the self(Sandel, 1998) . In *Democracy's Discontent*, 1998, Sandel criticizes American politics has lost his civic voice. In *Public Philosophy*, 2006, Sandel discusses moral and political issues, such as affirmative action, abortion, and gay rights and emphasizes citizenship, community, and civic virtue. In *Justice: What's the Right thing to Do?*, 2009, Sandel interprets his positions for debating cases in Moral Reasoning 22. In *What Money Can't Buy: The Moral Limits of Markets*, 2012, Sandel criticizes market logic taking over the moral logic in our daily life.

Compare to Moral Reasoning 22 course contents with Sandel's professional development, one will find both are corresponding to each other. Such as one of the course main readings is Rawls' *A Theory of Justice* and related arguments--MacIntyre's embedded-self vs. atom-self. One of important mission in Sandel's debating style class intends to nurture student being an active citizen to participate civic issues which is the main concern in *Democracy's Discontent*. In Sandel's lecture video Episode 9, Sandel discusses affirmative action for minority applicants; in Episode 12, Sandel talks about abortion and same-sex marriage; in Episode 10, Sandel claims the goal of community; and in Episode 5, Sandel leads discussion about the pro and con of free market exchange.

Sandel's academic main concerns mostly reveal in Moral Reasoning 22 course discussion issues and readings. Sandel combines his academic with his

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<sup>5</sup> For details please visit course website on <http://www.justiceharvard.org/>

teaching and become one of his way to have this successful course.

## **B. Long term commitment**

Sandel began teaching “Justice” at Harvard in 1980.(Shebar, 2012:4) Although the course have changed during this period, the main concerns keep in arguing justice in society. As Sandel said: "...my undergraduate course, ‘Justice’...I have taught at Harvard, on and off, for over 25 years.”(Sandel, 2007: Preface vii) Till 2013, it will be about 30 years for this course. During these years, many concepts have changed, however, Sandel keeps renew some of debating topics to fit society change, such white lie in Bill Clinton’s case, Judge Judy, Cheryl Hopwood denied by a law school’ suit case, etc. Sandel’s long-term commitment with renewing course materials is the other way to make this course success.

## **C. He teaches what he concerns**

When Sandel was a university-graduating senior, he felt his peer and age are lost: “We sense an emptiness in our age. The issues have changed; the moral and ideological debates are missing. ... Our attention has shifted from the shortage of good in the world to the shortage of goods.”(Shebar, 2012: 2) This disappointed feeling lasts till his old age. After thirty-five years, “Sandel is sounding the same themes in an America that has become, in his view, even emptier from a moral standpoint. Liberals, intent on remaining ‘value-neutral,’ have ceded questions of morality to the Christian right, and the results, says Sandel, have been disastrous. ‘It’s left a moral vacuum that has been filled by the most intolerant voices.’”(Shebar, 2012: 2)

Sandel tries to reveal this problem and leads people to deliberate it. Sandel said: “What I’m trying to do in the book, in the course, and in the online series is to provoke and invite not only students, but also the public, to address our disagreements in a way that takes on these big questions.”(Ehrlick, 2011, July) His latest concern is market logic: “Today, we often confuse market reasoning for moral reasoning. We fall into thinking that economic efficiency—getting goods to those with the greatest willingness and ability to pay for them—defines the common good. But this is a mistake.”(Sandel, 2012, September)

Sandel will continue inviting people to debate these big issues, as his ambition talk in “If he rules the world”: “I’d ban the use of an ungainly new verb that has become popular these days in the jargon of politicians, bankers, corporate executives, and policy analysts: ‘incentivize.’ Banning this verb might help us recover older, less economic ways of seeking the public good—deliberating, reasoning, persuading.”(Sandel, 2012, September)

Sandel completes his concern in his teaching and he succeeds.

#### **IV. Implications for general education**

The paper deduces the implications for general education from why's and how's reasons of the exemplar. However, we need to aware the country and student difference when we apply these implications to other universities because every country has her history, tradition, social and economic conditions and different students have different backgrounds and learning dispositions. Therefore, teachers need to absorb the essentials of implications and adapt into their own situations.

##### **A. Integrated way to evaluate a course in general education**

To evaluate a course in general education needs to consider the comprehensive dimensions in a coherent sequence because from theory to practice is one thing in different phrases and they need to be united closely to be examined. Therefore, evaluating a general education course needs to consider following dimensions: Does this course correspond to school's general educational rationale, does it match the goals of general education, does it complete the individual general education subject area expectations, does it have a good curriculum design with proper pedagogy, does student have positive feedbacks, and other supportive reasons. If a course could match more these dimensions in a more coherence way, it will be a better general education course.

##### **B. Encourage teachers to combine their academic interests and general educational ideals into a course**

A good general education course needs weaving a subject in breadth and in essential with an undergraduate friendly way. It will be quite impossible for teachers to help undergraduate students to comprehend a subject both in breadth and in essential if teachers do not master on this subject. However, the subject professional ability is only a necessary condition, not sufficient condition because some masters can teach specific area in depth but few undergraduate students could follow. If some teachers had to teach something or some subjects which are out of his academic interests, they probably could talk some general ideas about it but they hardly could reveal the essential wisdom in this subject. A good general educational course not only bases on profound and essential knowledge, but also includes matching as many as possible demands of the general educational theory and practice. To combine teacher's professional interests and general educational ideals will be the most possible way to form a good general education course.

### **C. Long term commitment and frequently update on a course**

Teaching is an art and it need time to master this labyrinth of the art. There are including understanding subject knowledge in breadth and depth, familiar with the ideas of general education, student's learning disposition, and the life world where teacher could bridge professional knowledge to student's wisdom. Moreover, the process is dynamic because life world keeps change all the time; students are different with quality, disposition, and dream year by year; the philosophy of general education renew in decades; professional knowledge improved or even paradigm shift, etc. Only long term commit in a general educational course could cumulate sufficient professional knowledge, comprehend the learning variables of students, echo the tone of general educational ideals, and connect to the contemporary changing world. Teacher limited teaching hours, focusing on few courses in one's profession, and three credit hours course instead of two credit hours course are better conditions for breeding an outstanding general educational course.

### **D. Bring teacher's professional concern and passion into class**

If you have seen Sandel's lecture in class, you will feel his passion for helping students rational debating the dilemmas which haunted Sandel in youth and still confuse others today. Sandel concerns Harvard students about having the ability to rational civic engagement and hopes people to build a better world together, as his ambition in "If I ruled the world" mentioned. Sandel teaches the thing he concerned most and wants to make his dream, a theory, true in the world, a practice. That is the reasons for his course full of passions which appears in Sandel's tone and gestures, and Sandel carries students' passion out to express their thoughts and hopes. It is an arena in which teacher's and students' passions are inspired to each other for having a better value judgment on social justice. This passion is beyond the Sanders Theatre in Harvard and it has spread into Japan, South Korea, China, Taiwan, India, Brazil, and the global village on the web. Everyone could see Sandel's passion on the web, be touched when one saw the full theatre students committed debating with a slim passionate teacher, and pass this passion around. Sandel's passion and concern makes this general education course great.

### **E. Make good use of technology**

Creating a course website could help students extend their learning from limited class hours to any time when students available. Moreover, the course website will give the committed students who have extra interests a chance to explore the course. The course website could invite people in the world to learn

and to share their ideas. Thus, the course website will benefit teacher, class students and others. The course website could have course syllabus, suggesting readings, requirements in detail, discussion and examination questions, class notes, Q&A session, discussion board, and class video that will be very welcomed if it is good enough to inspire student's mind.

## **F. Learn from model**

Sandel's outstanding Moral Reasoning 22 course is the first Harvard's course put on the web, and it is very popular in Harvard as well as in the world where thousands of students enrolled and millions of people viewed. It is a paradigm course and free for anyone. Therefore, many people re-edit videos with different language subtitles and post on the YouTube or other webs for easy accessing. These open sources supply us a convenient way to model from this exemplar into our own university classroom and become a possible way to create a qualified general education in a short time. Such as Tsinghua University in Beijing, "which now offers its own 'Justice' course modeled on Harvard's." (Shebra, 2012: 4)

Teachers could use Moral Reasoning 22 textbooks, debating issues, course consequences, pedagogy style, and course web structure in their general education courses at the beginning. Gradually, teachers can change some text readings, debating issues, and teaching styles to fit varied students' in different needs. Students need not waiting for decades to have qualified general education courses if teachers could find a good exemplar in their fields and actively learn from it.

## **G. Good general educational course could increase school's prestige**

Universities spend their limited budget in school propaganda, booklets, pops, or souvenirs to enhance school prestige. Faculties and staffs visit high schools frequently to sell themselves. Enhancing university's prestige for student's enrollment or other ends is an important mission and a heavy burden, too. Sandel's Moral Reasoning 22 is viewed by millions voluntarily and be invited by many countries, including Taiwan, for Sandel style lecture--inspiring debating social justice between teacher and students. Thousands and ten thousand people crowd in studio or outdoor theatre to listen, to learn what Sandel said. After Sandel's lecture, students probably have a dream to enroll Sandel's class one day. For university, if there are several outstanding general educational courses put on the web and those professors might popular be invited to high schools or others, it will multiply staffs and faculties' efforts for more student applications and enhancing school's prestige as Sandel did.

Sandel's Moral Reasoning 22 gives us a chance to understand what and

how an excellent general education course is and supply us a clear picture and amazing materials to learn from this exemplar.



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# 通識教育的理論與實踐：以邁克爾·桑德爾在哈佛大學通識教育中的道德推理22課程為典範

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## 摘要

邁克爾·桑德爾的「道德推理22」課程是哈佛大學最成功的通識課程之一，高達數百萬人看過，應可稱為通識課程的典範。本文透過文獻分析論證此一觀點，這些文獻包含「道德推理22」課程大綱、上課教科書、上課影片、課程網站、哈佛通識教育改革報告、及相關資料。「道德推理22」可成為典範的理由有：課程呼應哈佛通識教育的理念、符合四項通識教育課程的目標、卓越的課程設計與教學、及已獲崇高聲譽。對通識教育的啟示為：通識課程評量可採統整的方式、鼓勵教師結合專業旨趣與通識教育理想於一門課程中、長期投入一門課且與時並進、將教師專業熱忱帶入課堂中、善用科技、向典範學習、好的通識課程可提昇大學聲望。

**關鍵字：**通識教育、道德推理、邁克爾·桑德爾

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黃振豐助理教授畢業於國立臺灣師範大學教育學系博士班，目前任職於國立臺東大學教育學系。教授「教育哲學」、「德育原理」、「當代教育思潮」、「哲學名著導讀」、「當代倫理學探究」等相關課程。學術與研究興趣在於教育哲學、道德教育與通識教育。曾發表過「康德《論教育》中的管教觀」、「Aristotle《尼各馬科倫理學》中之幸福、德行與習慣觀對幼兒品德教育之蘊義」、「Alasdair MacIntyre之教學非實踐觀之爭論與評議」等文章。