



Birla Institute of Technology & Science, Pilani
Hyderabad Campus

First Semester 2019–2020

Course Handout, Part II

01.08.2019

In addition to Part I (General Handout for all courses appended to the time table), this portion gives further details about the course.

Course No.: HSS F235
Course Title: Introductory Philosophy
Instructor-in-charge: Dr. A. K. Jayesh

Scope and Objective:

The course aims to provide a critical introduction to some of the theories and issues that are central to the Western and Indian philosophical traditions. A few of the topics around which the course is structured include (1) the nature and purpose of philosophy, (2) metaphysics and epistemology, (3) scepticism and its philosophical value, (4) theories of cosmology, and (5) problems in contemporary philosophy. The course aims to inculcate in students the ability to determine the nature and worth of any philosophical position, and in the process, introduces them to the rigors and requirements of philosophical thinking.

Text Book:

Hales, Steven D., 2013. *This Is Philosophy: An Introduction*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.

Reference Books:

1. Audi, Robert, ed. 1999. *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy*. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
2. ———. 2011. *Epistemology: A Contemporary Introduction to the Theory of Knowledge*. 3rd ed. New York: Routledge.
3. Boundas, Constantin V., ed. 2007. *The Edinburgh Companion to Twentieth-Century Philosophies*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
4. Honderich, Ted, ed. 1995. *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy*. New York: Oxford University Press.
5. Loux, Michael J., and Thomas M. Crisp. 2017. *Metaphysics: A Contemporary Introduction*. 4th ed. New York: Routledge.
6. Perrett, Roy W. 2016. *An Introduction to Indian Philosophy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.



6. Popkin, Richard H., ed. 1999. *The Columbia History of Western Philosophy*. New York: Columbia University Press.

In addition to the sources mentioned above, students will be required to go through a number of articles made available at various points in the course.

Course Plan:

| Lecture Number | Learning Objectives | Topics to be Covered | Chapter in the Text Book |
|----------------|--|--|--------------------------|
| 1 | Understand the nature of the subject | Nature and purpose of philosophy; contemporary philosophy | Lecture |
| 2–8 | Understand and analyze theories of ethics | Overview of some philosophical theories and issues; divine command theory; egoism; moral relativism; utilitarianism; deontology; virtue ethics; metaphysics and ethics; contemporary problems. | TB: Ch. 1 and Ch. 2. |
| 9–15 | Understand, analyze, and appraise the notion of God | Faith; the attributes of God; why there is a God; why there is no God; God and metaphysics; theories of cosmology; contemporary problems. | TB: Ch. 3. |
| 16–22 | Discuss and analyze the notion of freedom | Free will and divine foreknowledge; free will and a regress of reasons for acting; free will and the dilemma argument; metaphysical issues; contemporary problems. | TB: Ch. 4. |
| 23–29 | Understand, analyze, and evaluate the notion of the self | The problem of difference and the problem of sameness; preliminary positions; the soul criterion; the physicalist criterion; the psychological criterion; the bundle theory; metaphysical issues; contemporary problems. | TB: Ch. 5. |
| 30–36 | Analyze and appraise the notion of the mind | Substance dualism; behaviorism; mind-brain identity theory; functionalism; metaphysical issues; contemporary problems. | TB: Ch. 6. |



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| 37–43 | Examine and evaluate the notion of knowledge | Epistemology; scepticism and its philosophical value; the value of truth; the value of evidence; the volume of evidence; sources of evidence; the nature of knowledge; the counterfeit detector. | TB: Ch. 7. |
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Evaluation Scheme: (100 marks)

| Component | Duration | Weighting (in %) | Date and Time | Nature of Component |
|--------------------|------------|------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Assignment 1 | NA | 15 | TBA | OB |
| Mid-Semester | 90 Minutes | 30 | 28/9, 3.30 -- 5.00 PM | CB |
| Assignment 2 | NA | 15 | TBA | OB |
| Comprehensive Exam | 3 Hours | 40 | 3/12 AN | CB |

Chamber Consultation Hours: To be announced in the class.

Notices: Notices, if any, will be displayed on the CMS.

Make-up Policy: Make-up component will be allowed provided there is credible documentary evidence to prove the authenticity of the case.

Academic Honesty and Integrity Policy:

Academic honesty and integrity are to be maintained by all the students throughout the semester and no type of academic dishonesty is acceptable.

A. K. Jayesh

INSTRUCTOR-IN-CHARGE

