

Course Description:

Furnish students with an overview of the different branches of philosophy (primarily western philosophy). In the process, the student will make the acquaintance of epistemology, metaphysics, logic, ethics, philosophy of religion and more. A major focus of the course: to remove the false mystique surrounding philosophy and to give the student a clear grounding in the essentials of the discipline.

Learning Outcomes:

- Demonstrate knowledge of the broad areas of philosophy.
- Identify the major problems of philosophy.
- Develop a firsthand familiarity with the history of western philosophy and of periods within that history.
- Develop an understanding of methodologies and styles of doing philosophy.

Weekly Lecture Plan:

Week 1	Overview of the history and areas of western philosophy. {"Philosophy begins and ends in wonder" - Aristotle and Whitehead}. From the pre-Socratic philosophers to the present day.
Week 2	Introduction to metaphysics - Plato and Aristotle. The parable of the cave and the theory of forms. Connections between Plato's metaphysics and political philosophy. Aristotle's metaphysics and political philosophy.
Week 3	Introduction to meta-ethics, 2 basic approaches: consequentialist and deontological. The utilitarian and Kant. Issues in cyber ethics.
Week 4	Learning team Presentations
Week 5	Cyber ethics continued. Introduction to epistemology. Rationalism and empiricism as 2 schools of thought that deal with the problem of knowledge. Descartes. Locke, Berkeley, Hume. Wittgenstein, Foucault and the unravelling of epistemology. Genealogy and sociology of knowledge replace epistemology.
Week 6	'Antiphilosophy' - the work of the later Wittgenstein, Foucault and Derrida
Week 7	Introduction to critical thinking and logic
Week 8	Philosophy of religion - A basic introduction. Selections from mystical texts including the Ashtavakra Gita, Rumi, select Christian and Gnostic mystics and buddhists writings

Week 9	An introduction to the philosophy of science. Karl Popper and Thomas Kuhn
Week 10	Learning team Presentations
Week 11	Philosophy of literature and aesthetics.
Week 12	Overview of social and political philosophy
Week 13	Wrap up

Assessment Plan:

Type of Evaluation	% Contribution in Grade
Learning Team Projects	20
Research Papers	20
Mid-Term	20
Class Attendance and Participation	10 (which will be marked only if you have a minimum 70% attendance including at least 5 ‘lunchbox philosophers’ sessions)
End-Sem	30

Textbook:

- Gaarder, Jostein - Sophie's World: A Novel about the History of Philosophy. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1994. Print.
- The heart of philosophy / by Jacob Needleman. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1983xii, 237 p.; 23 cm.
- A Brief History of Philosophy from Socrates to Derrida by Derek Johnston. Continuum International Publishing Group Ltd. (2006)