

Introduction to Philosophy: The Big Picture

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Introduction to Philosophy: The Big Picture

This course will take you on an exciting adventure that covers more than 2,500 years of history! Along the way, you'll run into some very strange characters. For example, you'll read about a man who hung out on street corners, barefoot and dirty, pestering everyone he met with questions.

You'll learn about another eccentric who climbed inside a stove to think about whether he existed. Despite their odd behavior, these and other philosophers of the Western world are among the most brilliant and influential thinkers of all time. As you learn about these great thinkers, you'll come to see how and where many of the most fundamental ideas of Western Civilization originated. You'll also get a chance to ask yourself some of the same questions these great thinkers pondered. By the time you've "closed the book" on this course, you will better understand yourself and the world around you...from atoms to outer space...and everything in between.

COURSE METHODOLOGY

- This is an inquiry-based course. Students will generate knowledge through online readings, asynchronous discussions with students and their instructor, interactions with online tutorials, and online and hands-on simulations.
- The instructor will act as a guide, a facilitator, an events planner, and a resource advisor. He/she will always be available through course message.
- The student must actively construct and acquire knowledge by being intrinsically motivated to succeed. To succeed, students must participate and complete all readings and activities. This course requires the student's active participation.
- Both formal and informal assessment methods will be used in the course. Informal assessment will include an evaluation of the quality and timeliness of participation in class activities. Formal assessment may include multiple-choice quizzes, tests, discussion board participation, and written assignments. A final exam will be given at the end of the course.

COURSE PARTICIPATION OBJECTIVES

This course for which you are registered is a college preparatory, academically rigorous course that covers an entire semester's worth of material. As such, it is important that you adhere to the following guidelines as you manage your time and commit to successfully completing all required coursework:

1. The requirements for this course are equivalent to completion of minimum of 90+ hours of class instruction at a traditional on-site high school
2. Assignments must be submitted for each unit as they are completed so that the teacher may review and assess your performance. Do not hold your work, you must submit each unit's homework as it is completed, demonstrating weekly assignment completions
3. You must log in regularly to your course to demonstrate continued participation, and completion of all course requirements, including assignments, assessments and discussion forums
4. You must complete your individual work and any incident of suspected cheating, plagiarism or collaboration on assignments violates the academic integrity expectations outlined at the time of your enrollment and can result in failure of the course or further action as deemed appropriate

Citizenship

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a responsible manner that reflects sound ethics, honor, and good citizenship. It is the student's responsibility to maintain academic honesty and integrity and to manifest their commitment to the goals of NUVHS through their conduct and behavior. Students are expected to abide by all NUVHS policies and regulations. Any form of academic dishonesty, or inappropriate conduct by students or applicants may result in penalties ranging from warning to dismissal, as deemed appropriate by NUVHS.

Communication

Throughout this course students will need to be in close contact with their instructor and fellow students. Students are expected to communicate via course message and electronic discussion boards. Therefore, students should plan on checking their course messages at least three times a week and participate in the discussion boards during the weeks they are live.

Instructors strongly encourage and welcome open communication. Clear, consistent, and proactive communication will ensure a successful experience in this course. It is the student's responsibility to notify the instructor immediately if and when a personal situation occurs that affects his/her performance in this class. Being proactive with communication will result in a quick solution to any problems that may occur.

COURSE OUTLINE

Unit 1: The World of Wonder

Philosophy means love of wisdom. Philosophers seek wisdom by pondering fundamental questions, such as “Who am I?” “What do I really know about the world?” “How should I behave?” The process of trying to answer the questions is more important than the answers. It involves analyzing arguments and using imagination and reason to come up with new ideas.

The rewards of philosophy are great. Doing philosophy can help you think and communicate clearly and logically. It can also help you answer some of life’s most basic and important questions. Few other subjects can enrich your life as much as philosophy can.

Learning Objectives

- Define philosophy.
- Describe what philosophers study.
- Identify questions that philosophers ask.
- Explain what it means to do philosophy.
- State what philosophy can do for you.

Activities

Unit 1 Text Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 1 Online Lab Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 1 Discussion Assignment 1	Discussion	5 points
Unit 1 Discussion Assignment 2	Discussion	5 points
Unit 1 Quiz	Quiz	15 points

Unit 2: From Mythology to Philosophy

Western philosophy began in ancient Greece. It developed out of Greek myths about gods and heroes. The myths provided supernatural answers to life's basic questions. However, after the myths were recorded for the first time, people started to doubt them and to look elsewhere for answers. The earliest philosophers looked to nature for answers and relied on reason instead of belief. They thought that basic substances or natural principles could explain everything in the universe. Their ideas and methods were the beginning not only of Western philosophy but of Western science as well.

Learning Objectives

- Explain why myth has been called the “cradle of philosophy.”
- Describe how Western philosophy first began in ancient Greece.
- List some of the questions that the earliest philosophers pondered.
- Identify pre-Socratic philosophers and state how they answered the questions.
- Explain how the earliest philosophers laid the foundations for science.

Activities

Unit 2 Text Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 2 Online Lab Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 2 Discussion Assignment 1	Discussion	5 points
Unit 2 Discussion Assignment 2	Discussion	5 points
Unit 2 Quiz	Quiz	15 points

Unit 3: Classical Philosophy: Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle

The pre-Socratic philosophers of ancient Greece were followed by three of the most important philosophers of all time: Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. All three lived in Athens, Greece, between 470 and 322 BC, during a time called the classical period.

While the pre-Socratic philosophers had focused on nature, Socrates and his student Plato were concerned mainly with human behavior and human society. Plato's student Aristotle was interested in nature as well as human behavior and society—and in virtually everything else. These three philosophers were among the greatest thinkers of Western civilization, and they influenced the direction of Western philosophy and science for hundreds of years.

Learning Objectives

- Give an overview of the classical period of ancient Greece.
- Describe Socrates' life and the Socratic method.
- Outline the events of Plato's life and his main ideas.
- Summarize Aristotle's life and his major contributions.

Activities

Unit 3 Text Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 3 Online Lab Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 3 Discussion Assignment 1	Discussion	5 points
Unit 3 Discussion Assignment 2	Discussion	5 points
Unit 3 Quiz	Quiz	15 points

Unit 4: Hellenistic Philosophy: How can Humans be Happy?

The Hellenistic period of ancient Greece lasted from 323 to 146 BC. During this period, philosophy came to be seen as a practical subject, with the goal of helping people achieve peace of mind and happiness. Four major approaches to philosophy began or became popular during the Hellenistic period: cynicism, Epicureanism, stoicism, and skepticism.

The cynics thought that happiness depends only on a life of virtue, which is achieved by having and desiring nothing.

The Epicureans believed that happiness comes from seeking pleasure and avoiding pain. The stoics thought that resigning oneself to one's fate and putting up with hardship is the only way to be happy. The skeptics believed that happiness comes from accepting that nothing can be known for certain and not caring what is true.

Learning Objectives

- State the general aims of Hellenistic philosophy.
- Describe the philosophy of cynicism.
- List the ideas of the Epicureans.
- Describe stoic philosophy.
- Identify the basic views of the skeptics.

Activities

Unit 4 Text Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 4 Online Lab Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 4 Discussion Assignment 1	Discussion	5 points
Unit 4 Discussion Assignment 2	Discussion	5 points
Unit 4 Quiz	Quiz	15 points

Unit 4: Hellenistic Philosophy: How can Humans be Happy? (Continued)

Midterm Exam Objectives

- Review information acquired and mastered from this course up to this point.
- Take a course exam based on material from the first four units in this course (Note: You will be able to open this exam only one time.)

Midterm Exam Activities

Midterm Discussion	Discussion	5 points
Midterm Exam	Exam	50 points

Unit 5: Christianity and Philosophy in the Middle Ages

Ancient Greek philosophy remained popular in Europe during the first few centuries AD, when the Roman Empire was at its peak. Then, in the 400s AD, the Roman Empire collapsed, and Christianity spread to dominate Europe. The Catholic Church controlled virtually all thought and learning for the next 1000 years. In fact, it controlled virtually all aspects of people’s lives. During this period, which is known as the Middle Ages, the only philosophers were men of the church.

Three of the most influential were Augustine, Anselm, and Thomas Aquinas. All were priests or bishops of the Catholic Church, and all were named saints after their death for their contributions to Christian doctrine. Their religious beliefs influenced the questions they asked and the assumptions they made. Through them, Christianity shaped the course of Western philosophy for a 1000 years.

Learning Objectives

- Describe the rise of Christianity in Medieval Europe.
- List the main influences on philosophy during the Middle Ages.
- Explain how Saint Augustine defended the Catholic Church.
- Describe the scholastic philosophy of Saint Anselm.
- Identify the contributions of Saint Thomas Aquinas.

Activities

Unit 5 Text Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 5 Online Lab Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 5 Discussion Assignment 1	Discussion	5 points
Unit 5 Discussion Assignment 2	Discussion	5 points
Unit 5 Quiz	Quiz	15 points

Unit 6: The Rise of Modern Western Philosophy

The period from about 1400 to 1600 in Europe is called the Renaissance. During the Renaissance, philosophy returned to its roots in ancient Greece. Over the two centuries that followed the Renaissance, most European philosophers fell into two opposing camps regarding the correct path to true knowledge. Some philosophers, including René Descartes and Benedict Spinoza, were rationalists. They thought that true knowledge comes from looking inward and using reason to arrive at ideas about the world. Other philosophers, such as John Locke and David Hume, were empiricists. They thought that true knowledge comes from looking outward and using the senses to experience the world. Both approaches converged toward the end of the 1700s with the philosophy of Immanuel Kant, who thought we use both reason and experience to learn about the world.

Learning Objectives

- Outline major changes that occurred in Europe from 1400 to 1800.
- Identify influences on Renaissance philosophers such as Erasmus.
- Describe the rationalist philosophies of Descartes and Spinoza.
- Describe the empiricist philosophies of Locke and Hume.
- Explain how Kant combined rationalism and empiricism.

Activities

Unit 6 Text Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 6 Online Lab Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 6 Discussion Assignment 1	Discussion	5 points
Unit 6 Discussion Assignment 2	Discussion	5 points
Unit 6 Quiz	Quiz	15 points

Unit 7: Western Philosophy in the Nineteenth Century

Several different approaches to philosophy arose in Europe during the 1800s. It all began with the ideas of a German philosopher named Georg Hegel. Hegel developed an extreme version of Kant's idealism. He had many followers, but other philosophers reacted against him. These other philosophers developed interesting ideas of their own. In Britain, 19th century philosophers took a more practical approach. They focused on what makes people happy.

Learning Objectives

- Describe approaches to philosophy that began in 19th century Europe.
- List the main contributions of the German philosopher Georg Hegel.
- Summarize the philosophies of Schopenhauer, Kierkegaard, and Nietzsche.
- Identify the main ideas of Karl Marx and Jeremy Bentham.

Activities

Unit 7 Text Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 7 Online Lab Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 7 Discussion Assignment 1	Discussion	5 points
Unit 7 Discussion Assignment 2	Discussion	5 points
Unit 7 Quiz	Quiz	15 points

Unit 8: Western Philosophy in the Twentieth Century

In the 20th century, philosophers in America and England focused on deciding whether ideas were useful or on analyzing language with logic. In continental Europe, in contrast, philosophers took a psychological approach. They wanted to get inside people’s heads and understand what it means to experience life or just exist. The 20th century also saw two big changes in Western philosophy: the development of the first uniquely American philosophy and the first internationally renowned female philosophers.

Learning Objectives

- Describe the philosophy of pragmatism.
- Give an overview of analytic philosophy.
- List the basic tenets of phenomenology.
- Identify the main ideas of existentialism.
- State how philosophy has changed your thinking.

Activities

Unit 8 Text Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 8 Online Lab Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 8 Discussion Assignment 1	Discussion	5 points
Unit 8 Discussion Assignment 2	Discussion	5 points
Unit 8 Quiz	Quiz	15 points

Unit 8: Western Philosophy in the Twentieth Century (Continued)

Final Exam Objectives

- Review information acquired and mastered from this course up to this point.
- Take a course exam based on material from units five to eight in this course – the last four units.
(Note: You will be able to open this exam only one time.)

Final Exam Activities

Class Reflection Discussion	Discussion	10 points
Final Exam	Exam	50 points

HOW YOU WILL BE GRADED

For critical thinking questions, there are no right or wrong answers. For example, a question on your thoughts on why you think people are shy is a pretty open-ended type of question. Grades will be based on the depth of personal insight you present. **Do not simply agree or disagree** with an insight question. We are looking for critical thinking and possibly a related personal experience with the question.

It is important to provide detailed answers for insight/opinion questions.

For review questions, you should produce a more academic answer. For example, "What two categories are norms divided into?" This type of direct question requires a specific answer. Please use full sentences and proper grammar.

When submitting paragraphs, use these guidelines.

1. The first, second or last sentence contains the main idea and key words from the question or assigned topic.
2. Paragraph contains one to three explanatory sentences.
3. Paragraph contains two to four sentences about specific details related to question.
4. Details are colorful, interesting and appropriate.
5. Paragraph ends with a good closing sentence that refers to the main idea without repeating it.
6. Free of spelling and grammatical errors.

GRADE SCALE

The following grading scale will be used to determine your final letter grade.

Letter Grade	Percentage Earned
A	95%+
A-	90% - 94.9%
B+	87% - 89.9%
B	84% - 86.9%
B-	80% - 83.9%
C+	77% - 79.9%
C	74% - 76.9%
C-	70% - 73.9%
D+	67% - 69.9%
D	64% - 66.9%
D -	60% - 63.9%
F	59% and lower

SUPPORT

At NUVHS you will have access to multiple support teams. Who you contact will depend on the questions you have. Always start by contacting your teacher through the Message Center in the course. Your teacher should be able to answer your question, but if they can't, then they will direct you to another support team. If you have questions about any of the course content, your grades, or course policies, you should contact your instructor.

For questions about your enrollment, transcripts, or general school-wide policies, you can contact **NUVHS Student Services** at info@nuvhs.org or by phone at 866.366.8847. For example, if you would like to withdraw from your course, you should contact Student Services. Please note that a refund for your course can only be obtained if you drop within the first seven days of enrolling in the course.

For help with login/password issues, or other technical issues specific to the Blackboard website, you can contact the team at [National University Blackboard Learn](#). They can also be reached by phone at (888) 892-9095.

EXPECTED SCHOOL-WIDE LEARNING RESULTS (ESLRs)

Engaged Learners

- Demonstrate self-directed learning skills such as time management, and personal responsibility through the completion of course requirements
- Develop an understanding of their own preferred learning styles to enhance their overall academic potential
- Incorporate effective and relevant internet and multimedia resources in their learning process to broaden their knowledge base

Critical Thinkers

- Effectively analyze and articulate sound opinions on a variety of complex concepts
- Illustrate a variety of problem-solving strategies that strengthen college preparation and workforce readiness
- Formulate a framework for applying a variety of technology and internet-based research to enhance information literacy and collaborative thinking

Effective Communicators

- Demonstrate awareness and sensitivity to tone and voice in multiple forms of communication
- Express concepts and ideas in a variety of forms
- Enhance communication skills through the use of media rich or other technology resources

Global Citizens

- Appreciate the value of diversity
- Understand the range of local and international issues facing today's global community
- Demonstrate awareness of the importance of cultural sensitivity and social responsibility in the 21st century