

Introduction to Philosophy

Global Program on Economics and Finance (2021 Fall)

Course Title	Introduction to Philosophy		
Credit	3	Credit Hours	48 credit hours
Course Objectives	<p>On successful completion of this course, students will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Describe and explain famous philosophical ideas and the philosophers throughout history. 2. Critically assess and evaluate philosophical ideas with multiple angles. 3. Critically evaluate philosophical ideas from both objective and subject perspectives. 4. Identify important philosophical ideas and associated philosophers. 5. Apply relevant philosophical ideas and reference philosophers to solve contemporary issues and problems. 		
Course Description	<p>This course is to introduce the main concepts and ideas elicited by the leading western philosophers such as Plato, Aristotle, Kant, Hegel, etc. This course will largely examine western philosophers' ideas and their intellectual vision of the way of thinking. Additionally, students will be encouraged to critically analyze and propose personal opinions and arguments to these philosophical ideas and the influence to the development of human behavior and thought that apply to the modern world rather than just learning philosophy from the textbook. At the early part of this course, the contents will mainly focus on the meaning of life, truth, justice, right/wrong. Deontology, utilitarianism, virtue ethics, morality, universal law categorical imperative in philosophy. We will extensively assess these philosophical issues elicited by the leading philosophers. One thing we need to remember is that there is no definite answer to any right-or-wrong question as the evaluation is relative.</p>		
<p>Course Requirements: Prerequisite: None.</p> <p>Students will be expected to fulfill the following requirements, and their grade in the class will be assessed accordingly.</p> <p><u>Attendance and Participation:</u> Students will be expected to attend class regularly and participate in class discussion positively.</p> <p><u>Presentation:</u> Each student will be expected to give a class presentation of approximately 30 minutes in length, and the topic of the presentation can be decided after discussion with the instructor.</p> <p><u>Final Exam:</u> Students will be expected to take the final exam in the end of the term.</p>			
<p>Teaching Methods: Lecture</p>			
Course Schedule			

Week 1: Introduction; Pre-Socratics and the Origin of Western Philosophy

Week 2: Sophists, Socrates and Plato

Week 3: Aristotle

Week 4: Medieval Philosophy

Reading materials for weeks 1-4: Kenny, pp. 1-181; Popkin, pp. 1-139.

Week 5: Early Modern Rationalists

Week 6: Early Modern Empiricists

Week 7: Kant

Week 8: Hegel

Reading materials for weeks 4-7: Kenny, pp. 182-297; Popkin, pp. 329-515.

Week 9: Modern Philosophy: From Idea to Experience

Week 10: Modern Philosophy: From Idea to Language

Week 11: Modern philosophy: From Subjectivity to Intersubjectivity

Week 12: Term Exam

Reading materials for weeks 9-11: Kenny, pp. 298-385; Popkin, pp. 516-754.

The design of class discussion or exercise, practice, experience and so on:

Will be announced in the class.

Grading & Evaluation:

Class Participation 10%; Presentation 30%; Final Exam 60%

Teaching Materials & References:

Required Texts:

Kenny, Anthony. ed. The Oxford History of Western Philosophy. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994.

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

Additional materials (mostly are primary sources) will be supplemented from time to time.