



HZT 4U

Philosophy: Questions and Theories

Grade 12, University

General course information:

Teacher:	
Department:	History and Social Sciences, Room 336
Email:	Hussein.Kamaledine@tdsb.on.ca
Prerequisite:	None
Extra Help:	Morning, Lunch, or After School by appointment
Textbook Replacement Cost:	\$120
Material Required:	3-Ring Binder, Pens/Pencil, Notebook Paper

Course Description:

This course is designed as a formal introduction to the study of philosophy, covering the spectrum from the pre-Socratics to contemporary philosophy. We begin with a consideration of what philosophy is, briefly touch upon formal and informal logic, and then concentrate upon metaphysics (theories of existence and reality); epistemology (theories of knowing, questions of truth); and conclude with ethics (theories of right and wrong). There are three additional branches (aesthetics, political and social philosophy, and philosophy of science) which are not formally covered but will be explored in your culminating activity. Throughout the course, we will endeavor to develop critical thinking skills, to learn the main ideas expressed by philosophers from a variety of the world's traditions, to develop one's own philosophical ideas and how to apply these ideas to contemporary social issues and personal experiences. You will be expected to present your ideas in a coherent, cogent, and logical fashion, and to respond critically to the ideas of others.

Units of Study:

- Unit 1: Logic and Reasoning
- Unit 2: Metaphysics
- Unit 3: Epistemology
- Unit 4: Ethics

Course Expectations – Students will be able to:

Strand A. Research and Inquiry Skills

1. Explore topics related to philosophy, and formulate questions to guide their research.
2. Create research plans, and locate and select information relevant to their chosen topics, using appropriate philosophical research and inquiry methods.
3. Assess, record, Analyze, and synthesize information gathered through research and inquiry.
4. Communicate the results of their research and inquiry clearly and effectively, and reflect on and evaluate their research, inquiry, and communication skills.

Strand B. Philosophical Foundations

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the main areas of philosophy, periods of philosophical development, and the differences between philosophy and other areas of inquiry.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of philosophical reasoning and critical thinking skills, including skills required to identify and avoid common fallacies of reasoning, and demonstrate the ability to apply these skills in various contexts.

Strand C. Metaphysics

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the main questions in metaphysics, and of the positions of major philosophers and schools of philosophy with respect to some of these questions.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of metaphysical theories, and evaluate responses to some of the main questions in metaphysics by major philosophers and schools of philosophy.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of connections between metaphysics and other areas of philosophy, other subject areas, and various aspects of society, including everyday life.
4. Use philosophical reasoning skills to develop, communicate, and defend their own responses to metaphysical questions.

Strand D. Ethics

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the main questions in ethics, and of the positions of major philosophers and schools of philosophy with respect to some of these questions.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of theories in ethics, and evaluate responses to some of the main questions in ethics by major philosophers and schools of philosophy.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of connections between ethics and other areas of philosophy, other subject areas, and various aspects of society, including everyday life.
4. Use philosophical reasoning skills to develop, communicate, and defend their own responses to philosophical questions in ethics.

Strand E. Epistemology

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the main questions in epistemology, and of the positions of major philosophers and schools of philosophy with respect to some of these questions.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of epistemological theories, and evaluate responses to some of the main questions in epistemology by major philosophers and schools of philosophy.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of connections between epistemology and other areas of philosophy, other subject areas, and various aspects of society, including everyday life.
4. Use philosophical reasoning skills to develop, communicate, and defend their own responses to epistemological questions.

Teaching Strategies:

- socratic questions
- debate
- problem-solving
- co-operative learning
- jigsaws
- Film-viewing/analysis
- role-playing
- think/pair/share
- research using various sources
- class discussions and debates
- group research/presentations
- note-taking from text and lectures

Textbooks: *Stickney, Jeff et al. Philosophy: Thinkers, Theories and Questions. McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 2011.*

Expectations of Students:

- Regular attendance and punctuality are essential to ensure success in this course.
- Students are expected to: come to class prepared with a notebook, textbook and pen, put forth a sincere effort at all times, and complete and submit all assignments by the posted deadlines.
- Should students miss a class, they are expected to catch up on the work they missed and see the teacher (if needed) to ensure that all the material covered in class is clearly understood.
- If you miss a test due to an illness or any other legitimate reason, you must provide written documentation of absence and write the test upon your return so that the teacher may return the marked tests as soon as possible. It is your responsibility to make arrangements with your teacher to write any missed tests.
- Take part in class discussions. This shows your initiative and that you are taking a responsible and active role in your education.
- Students are expected to be academically honest: plagiarism, cheating, and academic dishonesty, including the use of AI (e.g., Chat GPT, Quillbot) for any assignment, will result in a penalty of 0 on their assessments.

Learning Skills

Throughout the course, your teacher will be assessing you on the learning skills listed below. Often, but not necessarily always, your teacher will let you know when such assessments are taking place. These assessments will help determine both the comments and the learning skills levels on your report cards. The learning skills are:

- responsibility
- organization
- independent Work
- collaboration
- initiative
- self-regulation

Course Evaluation:

Each student's final mark will be in the form of a percentage grade based on their achievement in the 4 categories on the achievement chart. The breakdown of the final mark is as follows:

- Term Evaluation: 70%
- Final Evaluation: 30%

A variety of assessment and evaluation strategies will be employed in this course. Expectations are organized into four categories of knowledge and skills. The 70% of coursework will be weighted and categorized as follows:

Knowledge and Understanding	25%	Thinking	25%
		Communication	25%

Application	25%
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The breakdown of the term evaluation will be as follows:

Unit	Evaluation	Value of Overall Grade
Unit One: Intro to Philosophy + Logic	Intro Essay: What is Philosophy?	5%
	Logic and Reasoning Unit Test	10%
Unit Two: Metaphysics	Essay or Seminar/Creative Piece	10%
	Metaphysics Unit Test	7.5%
Unit Three: Epistemology	Essay or Seminar/Creative Piece	10%
	Epistemology Unit Test	7.5%
Unit Four: Ethics	Debate	10%
<i>Ongoing</i>	Quizzes and Minor Assignments	10%

The breakdown of the final evaluation will be as follows:

Summative Project	15%
Final Exam	30%