



Course Syllabus PHL101G

History of Western Philosophy

Number of ECTS Credits: 6 ECTS.

Contact Details for Professor

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Course Description

This course provides a general overview of the main philosophical topics discussed from the presocratics to the postmodernists. The course develops historically the most important subfields of philosophy: philosophy of nature, philosophy of mind, metaphysics, ethics, epistemology (theory of knowledge), aesthetics and philosophy of history. We successively discuss presocratic philosophy, Plato, Aristotle, Hellenistic philosophy, the early and late Middle Ages, Descartes, Hume, Kant, Hegel, Marx, Nietzsche, Heidegger and Derrida. Students are required to read primary sources, to write papers, and to participate in debates.

Course Prerequisites (if any)

none

Learning Objectives

After this course, you should be able to:

- understand the main traditions in the history of western philosophy;
- read extracts from original sources and put them into their appropriate historical context;
- write papers on philosophical topics;
- provide a short presentation on philosophical topics.

Course Schedule

Week	Class	Topic	Reading	Assignment
1	1	Introduction to Philosophy	Course Syllabus.	
	2	Presocratics	Kenny, 1, 1-20. Heraclit, quotations.	Homework 1
2	1	Socrates	Kenny, 2, 21-37.	
	2	Plato	Kenny, 3, 38-60.	Homework 2
3	1		Plato, extracts.	
	2	Aristotle	Kenny, 4, 61-90.	Homework 3
4	1		Aristotle, extracts.	
	2	Hellenism	Kenny, 5, 91-108.	Assignment 1
5	1		Cicero, <i>De Finibus</i> .	Research question
	2	Middle Ages	Kenny, 6-9, 109-181.	Homework 4
6	1		Aquinas, <i>Summa Theologica</i> .	
	2	Rationalism	Kenny, 10-13, 182-250.	
7	1			Mid-Term
	2			Covers week 1-6
8	1		Bacon, Descartes	Bibliography
	2	David Hume	Kenny, 14, 251-265.	Homework 5
9	1		Hume, <i>Treatise</i> .	
	2	Immanuel Kant	Kenny, 15-16, 266-297.	Homework 6
10	1		Kant, <i>Critique of Pure Reason</i> .	Abstract
	2	Hegel and Marx	Kenny, 17, 298-308.	Assignment 2
11	1		Engels, <i>Anti-Dühring</i> .	
	2	Utilitarianism	Kenny, 18, 309-319.	Homework 7
12	1		Mill, <i>Utilitarianism</i> .	
	2	Nietzsche and Heidegger.	Kenny, 19-20, 320-350.	Homework 8
13	1		Nietzsche, 'True World'.	
	2	Wittgenstein and Derrida	Kenny, 21-22, 351-381.	Presentation
14	1			
	2			
15	1			Final Exam
	2			Covers week 8-13

Course Materials

Textbook: Kenny, Anthony. 2006. *An Illustrated Brief History of Western Philosophy*. Malden: Blackwell.

Reference book: Kenny, Anthony. 2012. *A New History of Western Philosophy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (plato.stanford.edu).

Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy (iep.utm.edu)

Extracts from primary sources in the History of Western Philosophy (in chronological order):

Heraclit [500 BC], quotations.

Plato [400 BC], *Crito*, and extracts from *The Republic*, *Phaedros* and *Parmenides*.

Aristotle [350 BC], extracts from *Metaphysics* and *Nichomachean Ethics*.

Cicero [45 BC], *De finibus bonorum et malorem* (extract on epicureanism).

Aquinas, Thomas [1267-1273], *Summa Theologica*.

Bacon, Francis [1620]. *Novum Organon*.

Descartes, René [1637]. *Discourse on Method*.

Hume, David. [1738]. *A Treatise on Human Nature*.

Kant, Immanuel [1781]. *Critique of Pure Reason*.

Mill, John Stuart [1861]. *Utilitarianism*.

Engels, Friedrich [1877]. *Anti-Dühring*.

Nietzsche, Friedrich [1888]. "How The 'True World' Finally Became a Fable".

Movie: *Derrida* [2002].

Course Assessment

The students will be evaluated on the basis of their performance as follows:

➤ Assignment First Half	10%
➤ Midterm examination	20%
➤ Assignment Second Half	10%
➤ Research Paper	30%
➤ Class Attendance and Performance	10%
➤ Final examination	<u>20%</u>
TOTAL	100%

Grading Scale of Vesalius College

Vesalius College grading policy, in line with the Flemish Educational norms, is now as stated follows:

Letter grade	Scale of 20	Scale of 100
A	17.0-20.0	85-100
A-	16.1-16.9	81-84
B+	15.3-16.0	77-80
B	14.5-15.2	73-76
B-	13.7-14.4	69-72
C+	13.1-13.6	66-68
C	12.3-13.0	62-65
C-	11.5-12.2	58-61
D+	10.7-11.4	54-57
D	10.0-10.6	50-53
F	0-9.9	0-49

Description of Activities and Grading Criteria

The homework consists of additional reading and answering questions (which will include previous exam questions). While the homework will not be graded, the students are expected to have done the work as it will be discussed in class (during the first session of the week). The two assignments are applications of respectively Hellenistic and Kantian ethics to contemporary moral problems. The smaller assignments count for 10% each towards the final grade.

The mid-term exam and the final exam consist of questions which will cover the class material, including the textbook(s) and the primary sources. As part of the exam, students will receive an extract (or extracts) from a primary source which was not discussed in class.

The research paper must examine a primary source in the history of philosophy (a significant book chapter or a seminal article) and put the text in context. You cannot choose a text which has been read in class, and the text needs to be approved beforehand by the instructor. The paper must summarize the article or chapter; place it in the wider context of the work of the author; and in a wider historical and theoretical context. The paper must indicate what the importance is of this article or chapter – to which authors or texts does it refer, and why and how, and which authors have been influenced by this paper or article? The paper must meet the requirements of an academic paper. Students can choose their own system of referencing, but they must remain consistent with this choice. It is essential that a good bibliography is provided. At least one academic article, published in a scientific journal, must be used for this assignment. Internet

sources are acceptable, but they must be treated critically and quoted correctly. The total length of the paper should be 1.500-2.000 words.

Further description of assessment activities and Grading Criteria

The following criteria will be applied in assessing your written work:

- ability to correctly and critically use philosophical concepts and theories;
- ability to analyze contemporary moral issues using relevant theoretical frameworks;
- ability to appropriately use academic sources;
- ability to write a good introduction and a clear conclusion.

Grading Form for Written Assignments

The research paper will be graded using the following scheme. If a statement applies, then full marks will be granted; if a statement does not apply, then zero marks will be granted; if a statement does more or less apply but there are some difficulties, then half marks will be granted. Given that there are 24 statements, six of which count double, the total maximum score for the paper is 30 marks. The research paper counts for 30% towards the final grade.

1	INTRODUCTION
1a	The research question or topic is well introduced and defined.
1b	A relevant text, a primary source from the history of philosophy, has been chosen.
1c	A coherent overview of the paper is provided.
2	THEORY (x2)
2a	At least two other texts or authors (quoting or quoted or otherwise relevant) are identified.
2b	All theories are described well, using appropriate concepts.
2c	The discussion of theory is connected in a meaningful way with the rest of the paper.
3	TOPIC
3a	The topic falls within the domain of the history of western philosophy.
3b	Relevant theories have been connected with each other.
3c	The information about the topic is complete and adequate given the question at stake.
4	ANALYSIS (x2)
4a	The argumentation of the paper is adequate and follows a logical pattern.
4b	The argumentation succeeds in connecting different texts and authors.
4c	There are no logical mistakes or unjustified conclusions in the paper.
5	SOURCES
5a	At least one academic articles, published in a scientific journal, has been used.
5b	Sources are summarized, but also critically examined and placed in broader perspective.
5c	The sources are adequate and relatively complete given the question at stake.
6	CONCLUSION
6a	The paper ends with a well-rounded conclusion.
6b	This conclusion follows from the argumentation(s) built up in the paper.
6c	The conclusion includes a broader reflection and/or perspectives on future research.

7	REFERENCES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY
7a	The paper uses a coherent system of referencing which is applied consistently.
7b	The references in the text correspond to the titles in the bibliography.
7c	The bibliography is set up according to academic standards.
8	LANGUAGE
8a	The paper is written in good academic English.
8b	The paper does not contain any disturbing typing errors.
8c	The text is written from an impartial point of view.

Additional Course Policies

Students are expected to attend all classes. If a student cannot attend, then he/she is responsible for catching up by consulting fellow class mates. At the beginning of every class, absences will be taken. Students who are late may still enter the class; however they will remain marked as 'absent' for that session.

Several deadlines for the research paper must be kept: students must submit a research question by the first session of week 5; a bibliography by the first session of week 8; and an abstract by the first session of week 10.

The deadline for submitting the final research paper is the Sunday preceding week 14 (i.e. the week of the student presentations). Papers must be uploaded on Turnitin.com, with the name of the student as the name of the file. If a paper is uploaded after the deadline, it will still be graded, but then 10 percentage points will be deducted from the grade of the paper, per day after the deadline. This implies that a student will get zero if the paper is handed in 10 days or later after the deadline has passed.

During week 14 the students present their research to the class. They are expected to provide a PowerPoint presentation and upload it to Pointcarré.

The students are expected to visit the instructor during his office hours, to discuss the progress of the paper, especially during the second half of the course.

The following scheme will be used to grade class attendance and performance, which counts for 10% towards the final grade. If a statement applies, then one mark will be granted; if it does not apply, zero marks. Total maximum score is therefore 10 marks.

1	The student attended at least 90% of all classes.
2	The student attended at least 80% of all classes.
3	The student attended at least 70% of all classes.
4	The student handed in a suitable research question before the first session of week 5.
5	The student handed in a suitable bibliography before the first session of week 8.
6	The student handed in a suitable abstract in week 10.

7	The student visited the instructor at least once during weeks 11-13, to discuss a suitable (printed) draft of the research paper.
8	The student provided a suitable research presentation in week 14.
9	The student provided a suitable power point for the research presentation and uploaded it on Pointcarré.
10	The student handed in the assignments before the first session of that week (in weeks 5 and 11).

Academic Honesty Statement

Academic dishonesty is **NOT** tolerated in this course.

Academic honesty is not only an ethical issue but also the foundation of scholarship. Cheating and plagiarism are therefore serious breaches of academic integrity.

Following the College policy, cheating and plagiarism cases will be communicated in writing to the Associate Dean and submitted to the Student Conduct Committee for disciplinary action.

If you refer to someone else's work, appropriate references and citations must be provided. Grammar, spelling and punctuation count, so use the tools necessary to correct before handing in assignments.