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### Course Description

This is a General Education course in the following three Pathways: (1) Great Books and Ideas (2) International Studies (3) Science, Technology, and Values. The course also satisfies the lower-division requirements for the philosophy major.

The aim of this course is to introduce students to some of the main philosophers and philosophical problems in western philosophy. Reading materials for the first half of the course are mostly historical; students have to read biographical articles about and writings by seven great philosophers, namely, Plato, Aristotle, Descartes, Hume, Kant, Nietzsche, and Wittgenstein. The second half of the course covers some “big questions” in philosophy, such as “Does God exist?”, “Do we have free will?”, “Why should we be moral?”, and “Does life have meaning?”; for each of these questions, students have to read an article by a contemporary philosopher.

### Textbook

This course does not require any textbook. Reading materials will be posted on Blackboard Learn.

### Grading

Your course grade is based on the score you get out of a total of 200 points:

- (i) 30 points for attendance: you may miss 3 classes with no penalty; after that, you lose 2 points for each class you miss unless you have very good reason for missing that class.
- (ii) 100 points for 5 quizzes: 20 points for each quiz, and each quiz has 20 multiple-choice questions.
- (iii) 30 points for a mid-term short essay.
- (iv) 40 points for a final writing assignment.

Grade conversion:

|                   |                    |                    |
|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 181-200 points: A | 171-180 points: A- | 161-170 points: B+ |
| 151-160 points: B | 141-150 points: B- | 131-140 points: C+ |
| 121-130 points: C | 111-120 points: C- | 101-110 points: D  |
| 100 and below: F  |                    |                    |

**University Policies and Campus Resources**

**Adding and Dropping:** You are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drops, academic renewal, etc. found at [http://www.csuchico.edu/sro/registration/class\\_add\\_drop\\_process.shtml](http://www.csuchico.edu/sro/registration/class_add_drop_process.shtml). You should be aware of the new deadlines and penalties for adding and dropping classes.

**Academic Integrity:** Students are expected to be familiar with the University's Academic Integrity Policy. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs. The policy on academic integrity and other resources related to student conduct for this course can be found at: <http://www.csuchico.edu/sjd/integrity.shtml>.

**Disability Services:** Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me to discuss your specific needs. You can also contact the Disability Support Services office to coordinate reasonable accommodations for your needs. Disabilities Support Services online: <http://www.csuchico.edu/dss/studentServices/>.

**Schedule****A. Great Philosophers:**

|             |   |
|-------------|---|
| 1/22 - 1/26 | Isaiah Berlin, "The Purpose of Philosophy"<br>The Athens of Socrates (from Anthony Kenny, <i>An Illustrated Brief History of Western Philosophy</i> ) |
| 1/29 - 2/2  | The life and works of Plato (from Anthony Kenny, <i>An Illustrated Brief History of Western Philosophy</i> )<br>Plato, <i>Apology</i>                 |

- 2/5 - 2/9            The life and works of Aristotle (from Anthony Kenny, *An Illustrated Brief History of Western Philosophy*)  
Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book I
- 2/12 - 2/16        The life and works of René Descartes (from Anthony Kenny, *An Illustrated Brief History of Western Philosophy*)  
Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy* (I & II)
- 2/19 - 2/23        The life and works of David Hume (from *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*)  
Hume, "Of Miracles" (from *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*)
- 2/26 - 3/2         The life and works of Immanuel Kant (from *Encyclopedia of World Biography*)  
Kant, "An Answer to the Question: What Is Enlightenment?"
- 3/5 - 3/9          The life and works of Friedrich Nietzsche (from *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*)  
Nietzsche, excerpts from *The Gay Science & Beyond Good and Evil*
- 3/12 - 3/16        The life and works of Ludwig Wittgenstein (G. H. von Wright, "A Biographical Sketch", in Norman Malcolm, *Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Memoir*)  
Wittgenstein, "A Lecture on Ethics"
- 3/19 – 3/23        Spring Break

#### B. Big Questions:

- 3/26 & 3/28        Why is there something rather than nothing?  
Earl Conee & Theodore Sider, "Why Not Nothing?" (Chapter 5 of *Riddles of Existence: A Guided Tour of Metaphysics*, 2nd edition)
- 4/2 - 4/6          Does God exist?  
T. J. Mawson, "The Argument to Design" (Chapter 8 of *Belief in God: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion*)

|             |  |
|-------------|--|
| 4/9 - 4/13  | What am I?<br>John Perry, <i>A Dialogue on Personal Identity and Immortality</i> , The First Night.  |
| 4/16 - 4/20 | How do we know?<br>Penelope Maddy, "The Argument from Illusion" (Chapter II, section 1 of <i>What Do Philosophers Do?: Skepticism and the Practice of Philosophy</i> ) |
| 4/23 - 4/27 | Do we have free will?<br>Mark Balaguer, "The Case against Free Will" (Chapter 2 of <i>Free Will</i> )  |
| 4/30 - 5/4  | Why be moral?<br>Valerie Tiberius, "Why Be Moral? Can the Psychological Literature on Well-Being Shed Any Light?"  |
| 5/7 - 5/11  | Does life have meanings?<br>Susan Wolf, "The Meanings of Lives"  |
| 5/14 - 5/18 | Finals week  |