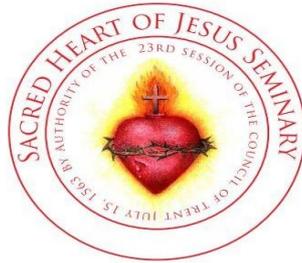


Sacred Heart of Jesus Theological Seminary



Module One-Introduction to Philosophy

Syllabus

Overview: The purpose of this course is to introduce the students to some of the varied and often-changing discipline of general and fundamental issues of philosophy, concerning matters such as existence, knowledge values, reason, mind and language. It is a study of meaning of the principles underlying conduct, thought and knowledge. The course includes careful critical inquiry, debate and reflection upon fundamental questions about our human condition and fundamental belief systems. A large part of the course will deal with introductory historical-philosophy readings that cover branches, theories, moral and political philosophy, traditions and overview of the philosophy literature.

Goal: To raise the student's awareness offering a broad academic acquaintance with the major philosophical disciplines.

Learning Objectives:

- 1.Explain at least five problems/issues of ancient philosophy that continue to have relevance for contemporary philosophy.
- 2.Define the main area of philosophy: Aesthetics; Epistemology; Ethics; Logic; Syllogism; Metaphysics; Social and Political philosophy.
- 3.Define the branches of philosophy to include Western, and Eastern, philosophy.
- 4.Evaluate an argument of an ancient philosopher. Develop and effectively present a counterargument with other perspectives that find expression in contemporary society or ancient philosophy.
- 5.Research and discuss the four main theories and five moral and political philosophies in the literature.
- 6.Summarize and explain philosophical ideas and concepts
- 7.Recognize, articulate and illustrate major philosophical ideas accurately
- 8.Write a careful sustained critical discussion and formal term paper on a given philosophical question(s).
- 9.Research independent philosophical ideas not listed in the syllabus.
- 10.Complete weekly exercises and pass a comprehensive course examination related to the core learning outcomes.

Instructional learning objectives are intended to emphasize to both the facilitator of learning and student that learning outcomes are an integral part of learning. Effective instruction and testing require a clear conception of the desired learning outcomes

Why Study Philosophy?

In addition to philosophy courses being required at seminaries in preparation for ministry, there are other numerous reasons why the study is important. It also is needed to pursue questions of every dimension of human experience and life. Its techniques apply to problems in any field or study. If you are interested in truth, a quest for understanding or a study of human understanding, this course is for you. Its practical usage can be applied to establishing standards of evidence and providing rational methods of resolving conflicts. In your pursuit for ministry this course will help you to see the world from the perspective of other persons and their unique cultures. It has been asserted by many theologians that philosophy is necessary because many of the problems society face today are predicated upon a deeply flawed philosophical understanding of reality.

“The unexamined life is not worth living” Plato

“The life of the intellect is the best and pleasantest life of man.” Aristotle

Assignments

Readings for this course will be individually identified within each weekly assignment. The general content of our study will cover the branches of philosophy, main theories, moral and political philosophy including aesthetician; epistemologist; ethicist, logician; metaphysical; social and political philosophical traditions. This should not frighten you as the course is an introductory one with abbreviated reading to raise your awareness and develop familiarity. Of primary importance this course as structured will strive to develop an appetite for further life-long study and learning.

Materials:

Reading materials should not be purchased as they are provided free through the various internet channels list in this syllabus. You are not required to copy any reading materials unless, of course, if you want to.

Schedule:

Weekly assignment questions will be sent to the student each week by the instructor. Specific directions for Discussion 1 and Paper 1 will also be sent to the students in advance.

Grading: The following grade weighting is assigned:

Weekly assignments: 50%

Discussion: 10%

Paper: 20%

Exam: 20%

The assignments are noted in the syllabus and are based upon the readings for the week in the course reading assignments. The discussion topic and the paper guidelines will be sent to students about two weeks before they are due, usually on Monday.

Assignments are to be returned to the instructor by 6:00 PM on Saturday of each week. Unless excused by the instructor, late assignments and discussions will be penalized 20% up to two weeks late. Work over two weeks late will receive a grade of zero. Of course, there are reasons why some assignments or discussions may need to be turned in late, and the instructor may grant extensions without penalties, if students have a legitimate reason.

Grades are assigned as follows:

90-100%	A
80-89%	B
70-79%	C
60-69%	D
<60%	F

Cheating and Plagiarism

As a student, you are responsible for your own work and you are responsible for your actions. Sacred Heart Seminary will not condone academic cheating or plagiarism in any form. We insist that you use your own ideas and give proper credit to your sources. Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to the following: the submission of a work, either in part or in whole completed by another; failure to give credit for ideas, statements, facts or conclusions which rightfully belong to another; failure to use quotation marks when quoting directly from another, whether it be a paragraph, a sentence or even a part thereof, close and lengthy paraphrasing of another's writing without credit or originality; use of another's written project without giving credit. Any form of cheating should immediately be reported to the Dean of the Seminary.

Philosophical branches to be studied in this course include:

Aesthetics

Epistemology

Aesthetics

Ethics

Logic

Metaphysics

Social philosophy

Political philosophy

Syllogism

Dualism

Philosophers:

Aristotle

Plato

St. Thomas Aquinas

Francis Bacon

Rene Descartes

Augustine of Hippo

William James

Ludwig Wittgenstein

Bernard Russell

Martin Heidegger

Karl Popper

Saul Kripke

Immanuel Kant

Soren Kierkegaard

Thomas Hobbs

Jeremy Bentham

Weekly Assignments

Assignment # 1

Written assignment

Read PP. 1-5 (From the beginning through the section on Renaissance philosophy 1350-1600)

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philosophy>

- 1.What are the fundamental questions raised in philosophy?
- 2.Discuss why philosophy may be useful to you in your ministry.
- 3.Explain why philosophy is distinguished as a separate discipline.
- 4.Compare and contrast philosophy with psychology.
- 5.Discuss how philosophy has impacted your personal experiences
- 6.Discuss why ethics or moral philosophy centers its definition on “how a person ought to act” as opposed to “should act.”
- 7.List the six periods that divide the history of philosophy.
- 8.Who are considered the most important ancient philosophers?
- 9.What are the main subjects of ancient philosophy?
- 10.Discuss the two parts that define medieval philosophy
- 11.Discuss why the work of Aquinas was a departure from the Neo-Platonic and Augustinian thinking in early Scholasticism.

Assignment # 2

Read PP. 6-12 (From Early Modern 1600-1800 through Idealism)

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philosophy>

1. Explain what early modern philosophy is centered upon
2. Discuss the importance of Immanuel Kant
7. Explain why Kant wrote Critique of Pure Reason
3. Explain the significance of Ludwig Wittgenstein
4. Name the schools in Chinese philosophy
5. Compare and contrast Rationalism with Empiricism
6. Summarize the philosophical attitude of Skepticism
8. Define Idealism and give an example

Assignment # 3

Read PP.2-7

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dualism>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philosophy>

Read PP. Chapter 15 (short)

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philosophy>

PP. 13-15

Discuss the history and theory of Pragmatism.

1. Who is reported to be the father of Existentialism?
2. Discuss the main thoughts of Francis Bacon in his essay Death.
3. Write a two page paper arguing for and against Dualism.
4. Write a one page review of the main ideas of Epictetus's discourse on What Philosophy Promises.
5. Discuss the beliefs of Existentialism of the late 19th and 20th century.
6. Write a one page paper on the following question: Is it more necessary to know yourself in order to know others, or to know others in order to know yourself?

Assignment # 4

Read PP.1-8.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Syllogism>

1. Define the term syllogism.
2. How does Aristotle define syllogism?
3. Why did Aristotle limit himself with his definition of syllogism?
4. Discuss the three parts of a categorical syllogism.
5. Define and give an example of a sorites argument.
6. Discuss why Francis Bacon rejected the idea of syllogism and deductive reasoning.
7. Explain what Francis Bacon offered instead of syllogisms.
 8. Give an example how everyday mistakes are made when reasoning syllogistically.

Assignment # 5

Read PP. 1-4

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Epistemology>

1. Define Epistemology and what questions it addresses.
2. Discuss some of the debate in the field of epistemology
3. Who introduced the term epistemology into English?
4. Explain what is mean by propositional knowledge.
5. Discuss Bertrand Russell and why he is famous
6. What is the Aristotelian definition of truth?
7. Summarize the arguments on the theory of knowledge

Assignment # 6

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/An_Essay_Concerning_HumanUnderstanding

Read PP1-4

Discussion Paper:

In your reading, John Locke presents his main thesis suggesting that the mind of a newborn is a blank slate and all ideals are developed from experience.

- a. Name the two most famous works of John Locke.
- b. Summarize Book 1 and Book II
- c. One of Locke's fundamental arguments against innate ideas is the very fact that there is no truth to which all people attest. Write an argument for and against people having no innate principles.

Locke's argues that traditional Christian theology and God are separate.

What are your general feelings about believing in God and not believing in traditional Christian theology? In your opinion, is all significant knowledge innate or acquired through experience? Explain how certain people such as child prodigies have unexplainable talented insight without experience.

This paper should be limited to 6-7 pages in length

Assignment # 7

<http://philosophy.eserver.org/bacon-essay.txt>

Essay: Of Unity in Religion, Page 1

Bacon who has a strong leaning towards Puritanism suggests in his essay that heresies and schisms are forms of evil and corrupt the human society with ill manners of derision. Thus, he attempted to revolutionize an idea where men must procure and maintain a single religion.

1. Argue for and against Bacon's position about unity in the Church.
2. Summarize the main points of his essay Of Unity of Religion.
3. In your opinion, do you think the Church will ever be unified?
4. If so, what do you envision the leadership to consist of?
5. Exactly how would the "poor people" fit into your vision of a unified religion?
6. Discuss who has the monopoly on organization religion today?
7. Explain why the state of organized religion is in the state that exists.

Assignment # 8

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Metaphysics_\(Aristotle\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Metaphysics_(Aristotle))

Read PP. 1-5

- 1.Explain the basis for critics in the 19th century to believe Metaphysics were a haphazard collection of shorter works.
- 2.Define Metaphysics.
- 3.Identify one of the principal early contributors to the subject of metaphysics.
- 4.Explain what Metaphysics examine?
- 5.Discuss why the book Metaphysics is considered to be one of the greatest of philosophical works.
- 6.What are the three questions that are at the heart of the book?
- 7.Aristotle's genius was to reconcile what two apparently contradictory view of the world?
- 8.Compare and contrast the arguments of Heraclitus and Parmenides.
- 9.Summarize the books Alpha to Epsilon.
- 10.Discuss Aristotle's four candidates for substance

Assignment #9

Aesthetics Read PP. 1-7

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aesthetics>

1. Define Aesthetics in both the general usage and from a scientific standpoint.
2. List the six branches of Aesthetics.
3. Discuss why aesthetic values rely upon and identify the various factors in making aesthetic judgments.
4. Summarize Immanuel Kant writings on aesthetic judgments.
5. Explain why you agree or disagree with Leo Tolstoy insight about art.
6. List the seven universal signatures in human aesthetics.
7. Discuss the criticism offer by some sociologist and writers about art and society.
8. Discuss whether or not, there is a special relationship between art and spirituality?
9. Does most art communicates something, or is it about something? Should art tell a story?

Assignment # 10

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aesthetics>

Read PP. 7-15.

- 1.Name the seven great ancient civilizations that art is largely based upon.
- 2.Discuss the similar universal elements Plato and Aristotle perceived beauty to be.
- 3.Explain why human or animal depiction is generally forbidden in Islamic cultures.
- 4.Describe how Indian art evolved.
- 5.Discuss why the term “rasa” is of particular concern to Indian drama and literature.
- 6.Summarize the Chinese, African and Western medieval esthetics.
- 7.Explain why Saint Thomas Aquinas’ aesthetic theory is arguably the most famous and influential among the medieval aesthetic theories.
- 8.Define the term Aesthetic ethics and give examples from John Dewey and James Page.
- 9.Interview thee people randomly and attempt to learn from them why they perceive certain items, or things to be aesthetically beautiful.

Assignment #11

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meditations_on_First_Philosophy

Read PP.1-8

1. Concerning the Nature of the Human Mind discuss Descartes' pattern of thought called representationalism.
2. Offer some reasons why you would criticize Descartes and state your own position.
3. Summarize the six meditations in this section
4. Discuss the objections to the proofs of God's existence.
5. After using two arguments to dispel solipsism and skepticism, Descartes seem to have succeeded in defining reality in what three parts?

Assignment # 12

Paper

1. What happens at death? Is death the end of everything, or is there a soul in humans that continues to exist? What is your evidence to prove your position? Is there an existence after death? Is “good” rewarded and “bad” punished? If so, how do you reconcile this with the concept of predestination?
2. Write out your personal philosophy about death.
3. What is your educational philosophy?
4. Discuss your opinion on the following questions: Who are you? Where are you going and why?
5. Why are you here on earth? What is your purpose?

Please limit your paper to 7-10 pages.