

SAULT COLLEGE OF APPLIED ARTS AND TECHNOLOGY

SAULT STE. MARIE, ONTARIO

COURSE OUTLINE

FILE COPY  
PLEASE DO  
NOT REMOVE

97/02/14

COURSE TITLE: The Great Thinkers (Introduction to Philosophy)

CODE NO.: LIB 210-3

PROGRAM: General Arts & Science

SEMESTER: Winter

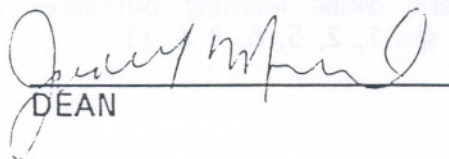
DATE: January 1997

INSTRUCTOR: Richard Page

New:  X

Revised:

Approved:

  
DEAN

Dec 1996  
DATE



## DESCRIPTION:

This course traces the development of philosophical thought through eastern and western roots and focuses upon "wisdom" as its key concept; wisdom concerns what is true and important and makes the gaining of knowledge not so much an objective but rather a means to applying what we have learned in a worthwhile manner in our lives. Thus, while you explore the likes of Plato, Aristotle, Kant, Marx in the terms of their historical context and philosophical differences, the subject matter will always be topical, accessible and relevant. While the course necessarily introduces such concepts as the language of logic, metaphysics, dialectic technique, ethics etc. and uses them in the analysis of different philosophies, all subjects are approached in a down-to-earth manner that in no way trivialises them, but rather demands student participation and the forging of connection between thought and action.

Plan to be challenged! Plan to be unsettled!...and bear in mind a few quotations that set the pace for the course:

*"I do not know how to teach philosophy without becoming a disturber of the peace" (Spinoza)*

*"Faith means not wanting to know" (Nietzsche)*

*"I think...therefore I am" (Descartes)*

*"The meaning of life is the most urgent of questions"  
(Camus)*

*"The recipe for perpetual ignorance is: be satisfied with your opinions and content with your knowledge".  
(Hubbard)*

*"To be...or not to be. That is the question" (Shakespeare)*

## GENERAL EDUCATION:

As a *Humanities* course, "The Great Thinkers" meets a core requirement in the General Arts and Science Liberal Studies diploma program and addresses a Collegewide General Education requirement in goal areas of Aesthetic Appreciation, Personal Development and Cultural Understanding as outlined by The College Standards and Accreditation Council.

## GENERIC SKILLS:

As a General Education course, this course also addresses through written assignments, research and in-class-activities, several of the Generic Skills learning outcomes as outlined by The College Standards and Accreditation Council: #s 1, 2, 5, 6, 8 & 11

## PREREQUISITE: ENG 120

A proven competence in reading and writing at a "College Level" is necessary for you to be able to tackle the level of reading comprehension and verbal response demanded by the text and assignments.



## LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Upon successful completion of the course each student will be able to do the following:

1. Define basic philosophical concepts and terminology;
2. Identify the key movements in philosophy and link individual philosophers with these movements;
3. Paraphrase and summarize the key elements of these philosophers' views;
4. Apply these elements to current life situations;
5. Analyse philosophical views by discussing and debating the issues;
6. Argue, in oral and written form, the strengths and/or weaknesses of certain philosophical positions;
7. Discuss, as a team, the merits of a certain philosophical perspective and present it as a discussion topic;
8. Construct a "personal philosophical creed" giving reference to the philosophers and their views that have guided you;
9. Evaluate the creeds of other students in terms of logic, consistency and sincerity;
10. Appreciate and be open to well-developed philosophical views that are in disagreement with your own views.

## TEACHING METHODOLOGY:

Lecture, class discussion, group work and videotape presentation and assigned readings are arranged in a way to help address different learning styles and provide a variety of stimuli. Guest speakers may be invited to make special presentations.

## TEXT:

Archetypes of Wisdom (An Introduction to Philosophy) Second Edition  
(1994) Douglas J. Soccio. Toronto: Wadsworth.

Note: The course is built around this text. All readings, quizzes and the final exam are based on this text, class lectures and notes. Supplementary reading is encouraged for individual topic assignments.

**YOUR POSSESSION OF THE TEXT IN WEEK 1 IS ESSENTIAL!**



## TOPICS AND SEMESTER OUTLINE:

- Week 1. Introduction to the course. Philosophy and Wisdom. (Text: A Student's Guide to This Book; Chapter 1)  
*"Without philosophy, we would be little above the animals"* (Voltaire)
- Week 2. Early Eastern Philosophy. (Text: Chapter 2)  
*"What ought to be done is neglected, what ought not to be done is done: the desires of unruly, thoughtless people are always increasing (The Buddha)*
- Week 3. The Sophos and The Sophist (Text: Chapters 3 and 4)  
*"Knowledge is not intelligence" (Heraclitus)*
- Week 4. Socrates and how to "Know Thyself" (Text: Chapter 5)  
*"I found that men in the most repute were all but the most foolish: and that others less esteemed were really wiser and better" (Socrates)*
- Week 5. Plato - "The King!" (Text: Chapter 6)  
*"To understand Plato is to be educated; it is to see the nature of the world in which we live" (Cairns)*
- Week 6. Aristotle - The Good and Natural Life (Text: Chapter 7)  
*"Moral virtue comes to us as a result of habit... we learn by doing" (Aristotle)*
- Week 7. Epicurus and the Pursuit of Pleasure (Text: Chapter 8)  
*"There is no profit in philosophy it does not expel the suffering of the mind" (Epicurus)*
- Week 8. Stoicism...Ancient and Modern (Text: Chapter 9)  
*"Humans are not bothered by the things that happen to them but by their view of these things" (Ellis)*
- Week 9. God and Reason (Text: Chapters 10 and 11)  
*"A philosopher is a blind man in a dark room looking for a black car that isn't there. A theologian is the man who finds it" (Mencken)*
- Week 10. Skepticism and Formalism (Text: Chapters 12 and 13)  
*"Reason is , and ought only to be the slave of passions, and can never pretend to any other office than to serve and obey them" (Hume)*
- Week 11. Utilitarianism and The Greatest Good for ... Whom? (Text: Chapter 14)  
*"It is better to be a human dissatisfied than a pig satisfied" (Mill)*
- Week 12. Marxist Materialism and Alienation (Text: Chapter 15)  
*"All I know is that I am not a Marxist" (Marx)*



- Week 13. Individualism and Nietzsche (Text: Chapter 16)  
*"If we have our own why of life, we shall get along with almost any how"*  
 (Nietzsche)
- Week 14. Condemned to be Free: the Existential Dilemma (Text: Chapter 18)  
*"Man is nothing else but what he makes of himself. Such is the first principle of existentialism"* (Sartre)
- Week 15. Contemporary Philosophy (Text: Chapters 17 and 18)  
*"If we would have new knowledge, we must get a whole world of new questions"*  
 (Langer)
- Week 16. Review and Closure.  
*"And in the end, the love you take.  
 Is equal to the love you make" (Beatles)*

**...AND WHAT YOU PUT INTO THE COURSE IS DIRECTLY PROPORTIONAL TO WHAT YOU GET OUT OF IT.**

The text breaks down the content of each chapter and provides excellent summaries.

COURSE EVALUATION:

5	content quizzes /10 (your best 4 count)	/40
1	presentation of self-philosophy (that gives reference to at least four of the philosophies in the course) to the rest of the class and handed in as a formal essay.	/25
1	final take-home examination	/25

Attendance: philosophy requires getting all sides of the story and being able to debate and argue points. One mark will be given for each class week in which you attend all three hours. The mark is /10 but it is possible to get six bonus marks as the semester is 16 weeks. If you are late or absent for any class you will not get the mark for that week. /10

TOTAL /100

If you miss a quiz, for any reason, your other 4 will count. The presentation must be made on the day assigned and submitted in proper format for evaluation. The **Final Exam** must be submitted to the instructor during the last week of scheduled classes.

If you have any health or personal problems, please contact the instructor sooner rather than later to discuss your standing in the course.



## FINAL GRADES:

The following letter grades will be assigned as final grades in the course:

A+	Consistently outstanding	(90% - 100%)
A	Outstanding Achievement	(80% - 89%)
B	Consistently above average achievement	(70% - 79%)
C	Satisfactory or acceptable achievement in all areas subject to assessment	(60% - 69%)
R	Repeat--The student has not achieved the objectives of the course and the course must be repeated	(Less than 60%)
CR	Credit Exemption	
X	A temporary grade, limited to situations with extenuating circumstances, giving a student additional time to complete course requirements.	

## Special Notes:

All students should be aware of the *Special Needs Office* in the College. Students with identified special needs are encouraged to discuss required accommodations confidentially with the professor before tutoring begins and as needed throughout the semester to enhance the learning process and student success.