

Northern Marianas College

CURRICULUM ACTION REQUEST

Effective Semester / Session: Summer 2007

Type of Action:

- ☐ New
- ☒ Modification
- ☐ Move to Inactive (Stop Out)
- ☐ Cancellation

Course Alpha and Number: PI 201

Course Title: Introduction to Philosophy

Reason for initiating, revising, or canceling:

The course guide has been modified to reflect current curriculum content, teaching methods, new textbook, and student learning outcomes.

Deanne Jessee-Jones

Proposer

Date

Michael Nurmi

Department Chair

Date

English and Format Reviewer

Date

Dean of Academic Programs and Services

Date

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Course Guide

Course: PI 201 Introduction to Philosophy

1. Department

Languages and Humanities

2. Purpose

PI 201 provides an introductory survey of major sub-fields within philosophy: epistemology, metaphysics, ethics, logic, and philosophy of religion. Studying philosophy offers students a meaningful experience in critical thinking, as well as a chance to understand cultural and historical differences in how basic questions such as "Who am I?" and "Why am I here?" are answered. PI 201 is designed to facilitate students' understanding of their own philosophy of life and to give them an appreciation of the philosophies of others. Starting with the Western tradition, the course also incorporates wisdom from Asia, Africa, and the Americas.

3. Description

A. Required/Recommended Textbook(s) and Related Materials

Required:

Mitchell, Helen Buss. *Roots of Wisdom*. 4th ed. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Thomson Learning, 2005.

Readability Level: Grade 11.

Required:

Mitchell, Helen Buss. *Readings from the Roots of Wisdom: A Multicultural Reader*. 3rd ed. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Thompson Learning, 2002.

Readability Level: Grade 10.7.

B. Contact Hours

1. Lecture: 3 hours per week / 45 hours per semester
2. Lab: N/A
3. Other:

C. Credits

1. Number: 3
2. Type: Regular Degree Credits

D. Catalogue Course Description

This course provides an introduction to world philosophy, studying the works of great thinkers. Readings and discussions show how, around the world and throughout history, people have sought answers to the same philosophical questions. Who am I? Where did the world come from? Is there a God? How do I know what is truth? What is the right thing to do? English Placement Level: EN 101

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E. Degree or Certificate Requirements Met by Course

This course fulfills the General Education Humanities requirement for all A.A./Liberal Arts degree emphases.

F. Course Activities and Design

This course incorporates lectures, small group and class discussions, reading assignments, group activities, audiovisual presentations, take-home assignments, reflection papers, periodic quizzes, a final project, and a final exam.

4. **Course Prerequisite(s); Concurrent Course Enrollment;**

Required English/Mathematics Placement Level(s) Prerequisites: None.
English Placement level: EN 101

5. **Estimated Cost of Course; Instructional Resources Needed**

Cost to the Student: Tuition for a 3-credit course; the cost of the textbooks, and instructional materials fee.

Cost to the College: Instructor's salary

Instructional resources needed for this course include chalk and chalkboard, TV/VCR and videotaped programs, overhead projector and transparency film, library books, periodicals and other materials as may be necessary.

6. **Method of Evaluation**

Student grades will be based on the regular letter grade system as described below:

- A: Excellent – grade points: 4.0;
- B: Above average – grade points: 3.0;
- C: Average – grade points: 2.0;
- D: Below average – grade points: 1.0;
- F: Failure – grade points: 0.0.

NMC's grading and attendance policies will be followed.

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7. Course Outline

This is a topical outline and does not necessarily indicate the sequence in which the material will be presented.

1.0 Why Philosophy?

1.1 The Pre-Socratic cosmologists

1.1.1 The Milesians

1.1.2 Other monists

1.1.3 Pluralists

1.1.4 Cosmogony and cosmology

1.2 The Sophists

1.3 Classic period in Greek philosophy

1.3.1 Socrates

1.3.2 Plato

1.3.3 Periclyone

1.3.4 Aristotle

1.4 Metaphysics, epistemology, and axiology in Asian thought

2.0 Reality and Being

2.1 Reality and the brain: The visual world and constructed reality

2.2 Ontology: What is real?

2.3 Asian views of reality

2.3.1 Buddhism: Reality as interdependence

2.3.2 Taoism: Reality as the Tao

2.4 Materialism: Reality as purely material

2.5 Pragmatism: Reality as what we can know

2.6 Contemporary physics and the nature of reality

2.7 Cosmology: Is there order and purpose in the universe?

3.0 Human Nature

3.1 Who or what are we? (Western views)

3.2 Non-western views of self

3.3 What are we doing here?

3.3.1 Western views

3.3.2 Non-western views

3.4 Issues of human identity and freedom

3.4.1 Race and ethnicity

3.4.2 Biological sex and gender

3.4.3 Freewill versus determinism

4.0 Philosophy and God

4.1 The issue defined

4.1.1 Atheism

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- 4.1.2 Deism
 - 4.1.3 Pantheism
 - 4.1.4 Theism
- 4.2 Arguments for the existence of God
 - 4.2.1 Knowledge based on reason
 - 4.2.2 Knowledge based on intuition
- 4.3 Traditional images of God
 - 4.3.1 God as eternal
 - 4.3.2 God as omnipotent and omniscient
 - 4.3.3 God as good
- 4.4 Nontraditional images of God
 - 4.4.1 God as mother
 - 4.4.2 God as ground of being
 - 4.4.3 God as cosmic architect
- 4.5 Theological implications for human nature and cosmology
 - 4.5.1 Atheistic worldview
 - 4.5.2 Pantheistic worldview
 - 4.5.3 Theistic worldview
- 5.0 Knowledge Sources
 - 5.1 The rationalist approach of Rene Descartes
 - 5.2 Responses to the mind-body problem
 - 5.2.1 Baruch Spinoza
 - 5.2.2 Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz
 - 5.2.3 Anne Finch
 - 5.3 British empiricism
 - 5.3.1 John Locke
 - 5.3.2 George Berkeley
 - 5.3.3 David Hume
 - 5.4 Implications of empiricism for philosophy
 - 5.5 The knower and the known
 - 5.5.1 The western tradition
 - 5.5.2 The non-western tradition
- 6.0 Truth Tests: Do You Swear to Tell the Truth?
 - 6.1 Truth tests
 - 6.1.1 Warrantability
 - 6.1.2 Informal fallacies
 - 6.2 Truth and the really real
 - 6.3 Truth in science
 - 6.4 Truth in history
 - 6.4.1 The changing definition of history
 - 6.4.2 Race, class, and gender in historical interpretation
 - 6.4.3 Research methods of social history

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- 6.5 Truth in texts: The deconstruction test of truth
- 6.6 The elusive nature of truth
 - 6.6.1 Truth and time
 - 6.6.2 Truth and the "gut feelings"
- 7.0 Political Philosophy
 - 7.1 Theories of the right to rule
 - 7.1.1 The philosopher-king: Plato
 - 7.1.2 Natural Law: The Stoics, Aristotle, and Thomas Aquinas
 - 7.1.3 Social contract theory
 - 7.1.4 John Locke
 - 7.2 Natural rights and feminism
 - 7.2.1 Gender equality: Mary Wollstonecraft
 - 7.2.2 "Declaration of Sentiments" Elizabeth Cady Stanton
 - 7.2.3 The struggle for suffrage: Susan B. Anthony
 - 7.3 The right to govern
 - 7.3.1 The absolute: Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel
 - 7.3.2 The mandate of heaven: Rule in China
 - 7.3.3 The divine right to rule
 - 7.4 Political theory
 - 7.4.1 Liberalism and conservatism
 - 7.4.2 American constitution theory and civil rights
 - 7.4.3 The U.S. government and human rights
- 8.0 Social Philosophy: Am I My Brother or Sister's Keeper?
 - 8.1 Classical theories of justice
 - 8.1.1 Plato
 - 8.1.2 Aristotle
 - 8.2 Utilitarianism as a means to justice
 - 8.2.1 Jeremy Bentham
 - 8.2.2 John Stuart Mill
 - 8.2.3 Harriet Taylor Mill
 - 8.3 Justice expressed as fairness
 - 8.3.1 The alienation of workers: Karl Marx
 - 8.3.2 The equal liberty and difference principles: John Rawls
 - 8.3.3 The theory of entitlement: Robert Nozick
 - 8.4 African-American political philosophy
 - 8.4.1 Assimilation or separatism?
 - 8.4.2 The dilemma of being both African and American: W.E.B. Du Bois
 - 8.4.3 The Nineteenth- century debate: Martin Delany and Frederick Douglass
 - 8.4.4 A twentieth century approach: Malcolm X, Martin Luther King, Jr.
 - 8.5 Feminism in Social Philosophy
- 9.0 Ethics
 - 9.1 Western Ethical Theories

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- 9.1.1 Consequentialist, teleological, ethical theories
- 9.1.2 Nonconsequentialist, deontological, ethical theories
- 9.1.3 Natural law theory
- 9.1.4 Virtue ethics
- 9.2 Asian and African ethical theories
- 9.3 The question of human freedom: How much do we have?
 - 9.3.1 Determinism
 - 9.3.2 Existentialism
 - 9.3.3 Excusability
 - 9.3.4 Radical evil and the theory of punishment
- 9.4 The question of human freedom: How much should we have?
 - 9.4.1 The human genome project, cloning, and in vitro fertilization
 - 9.4.2 Maternal obligations to the fetus
 - 9.4.3 Our obligations to one another
 - 9.4.4 Everyday ethics
 - 9.4.5 The global community
- 9.5 Environmental ethics: Ecocentrism and ecofeminism

8. Instructional Goals

This course will introduce students to:

- 1.0 The nature, basic concepts, and methods of philosophy;
- 2.0 The major figures in philosophy from ancient to modern times, and their significant contributions to the field;
- 3.0 The scope, basic concepts, major issues, and important theories of epistemology;
- 4.0 The scope, basic concepts, major issues, and important theories of the philosophy of science;
- 5.0 The scope, basic concepts, major issues, and important theories of metaphysics;
- 6.0 The scope, basic concepts, major issues, and important theories of ethics;
- 7.0 The scope, basic concepts, major issues, and important theories of the philosophy of religion;
- 8.0 The concept of wisdom as construed in different schools of philosophical thought;
- 9.0 The concept of wisdom as construed in different cultures; and

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10.0 Philosophical ideas and arguments that students can apply in pursuing their own answers to basic questions of life.

9. Student Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1.0 Demonstrate an understanding of the nature, basic concepts, and methods of philosophy;

2.0 Identify and describe the significant contributions of major philosophers from ancient to modern times, and analyze the strengths and weaknesses of their arguments;

3.0 Recognize and think critically about issues of importance in epistemology;

4.0 Recognize and think critically about issues of importance in the philosophy of science;

5.0 Recognize and think critically about issues of importance in metaphysics;

6.0 Recognize and think critically about issues of importance in ethics;

7.0 Recognize and think critically about issues of importance in the philosophy of religion;

8.0 Compare and contrast concepts of wisdom as construed in different schools of philosophical thought;

9.0 Compare and contrast concepts of wisdom as construed in different cultures; and

10.0 Demonstrate the ability to seek their own answers to the basic questions of life, and to express their knowledge and opinion both orally and in writing.

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10. **Assessment Measures**

Assessment of student learning may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- 1.0 Quizzes (online and in class)
- 2.0 Take-Home Assignments
- 3.0 Oral Presentations
- 4.0 Final Project
- 5.0 In class group and individual projects
- 6.0 Final Exam