Course Description

"This course is designed to help the student understand the world better by studying significant interpretations of self, the world, and God that have been offered by thinkers, past and present—the major concerns of philosophy. Meets Philosophy requirement in Heritage and Institutions.

Objectives

1. To introduce students to representative topics within the major branches of philosophy.
2. To survey important and influential attempts to deal with basic philosophical questions over the course of history.
3. To understand the way these developments shape the Western mind and society, and to examine our own philosophy of life and the values and presuppositions which influence the choices which shape our lives.
4. To understand the purpose of our lives and sense that our lives are serving that purpose.
5. To learn the value of precision in thinking and in the use of language.

Texts

Wilkins, Steve, Good Ideas of Questionable Christians & Outright Pagans (IVP)
Frankl, Viktor, Man’s Search For Meaning (New York: Washington Square)

Attendance **Perfect attendance record = 50 bonus points**

You will need to sign an attendance sheet when you come to class. The University Catalog & Student Handbook states that "class attendance is of paramount importance and will affect the final grade. The individual instructor defines for the student the grading and attendance policies for each class in the course instruction plan." Leaving class in the middle of a lecture is disruptive to the whole class. If you must leave during a class lecture rather than at break, please notify me before class begins and sit where your escape is easy.

In this class, because the exams draw upon the lectures, your attendance will be vital to your ability to do well on them. When you have a necessary absence please turn in any work due prior to your absence. Under very special circumstances where it is not possible to contact me prior to class, you must get in touch with me as soon as possible by email or through the Dept. of Theology and Philosophy. Students are responsible for all assignments and materials given during any absences.
**Course Requirements**

1. **Reading**: It is essential that you prepare by reading the assigned pages.

2. **Exams**: You must bring a scantron to both Multiple choice exams. The exams will cover all assigned readings and lectures. Exams must be taken on the dates listed. Exams may not be taken early. The first multiple choice exam (100 pts) is on Tues., **Mar. 10**. The second multiple choice exam (200 pts) on **Apr. 28**. The Final essay (100 pts) is on **May 5**. Two quizzes will be given worth 50 points each (See schedule). Missed quizzes due to unexcused absences may not be made up.

3. “**Good Ideas…**” **Review Questions**: You are required to respond to one question from each chapter as listed on the question sheet for *Good Ideas* (Wilkens) by writing a one paragraph answer for each chapter question you select. Each answer will be worth 40 pts (200 pts total). Submit them as follows:
   - **Group 1 = chapters 1-5 Due on Mar. 17**
   - **Group 2 = chapters 6-10 Due on May 5, the day of the final**

   All papers are to be typed and grammatically correct and should be no more than 1-2 pages (see sample handout). In **your answers do not restate the questions, do not use quotes, and do not ask rhetorical questions**.

4. **Movie or Book analysis paper**: A one page paper on a movie or book will be due the day of the final (**May 5**) and is worth 100 pts. **Review and analyze the movie or book you choose from below by describing its relevance to philosophy and its impact on you. It is your responsibility to pick the movie or book you will critique.** This paper is to be typed (double spaced) and should be one page. Possible movies and books are listed below.

   - **Movies** on reserve in Marshburn Library (East campus):
     - “2001: A Space Odyssey” – Metaphysics/Epistemology, man and machine
     - “The Matrix” - Metaphysics/Epistemology, the quest for truth/reality
     - “Contact” - Religion and Science, Belief in God’s existence
     - “Does God Exist” documentary and panel discussion on C.S. Lewis and Freud
     - "Million Dollar Baby" - Ethics and moral responsibilities
     - “On the Waterfront” – Ethics and moral responsibilities
     - “Saving Private Ryan” – Ethics and moral responsibilities
     - “Schindler’s List” – Ethics and moral responsibilities
     - “Lord of the Flies” - Political Philosophy
     - “Century of Self” (freedocumentaries.org/film.php?id=140) - Political
     - “Flight From Death” - documentary on Ernest Becker
     - "Seven Days in May" - Political Philosophy

   - **Books**:
     - “Man’s Search for Meaning” Frankl – (required reading, so only 90 points max.)
     - “Frankenstein” Shelley – Man and machine
     - “1984” Orwell – Social philosophy
     - “Brave New World” – Huxley – Social philosophy
     - “Lord of the Flies” - Golding - Political Philosophy
5. "Man’s Search For Meaning" by Viktor Frankl should be read by the last week of class. Questions will be given on the final based on Part 1 of the book.

APU Policy on Exams
The mid-term and final exams must be taken on the exam date during class time. The only exceptions will be extreme illness (like leprosy) or a death in the family. You will need to contact me and receive approval prior to the test date.

APU Policy on Plagiarism
Plagiarism is "intentionally or knowingly representing the words, ideas, or work of another as one's own in any academic exercise" (APU Student Handbook). Thus, plagiarism is not merely copying material from published works such as books, magazines, pamphlets, the Internet, etc. without giving proper credit in the form of footnotes and quotation marks; it is also replicating material from students or other individuals without giving proper credit. Plagiarism is still plagiarism, even if it is only one sentence that is borrowed or copied without giving proper credit. Any examination, reading response, term project or other written work that either plagiarizes or submits "group" work as one's own, will result in a failing grade for the entire project being submitted. This policy applies not only to those who copy work, but also to those who allow their work to be copied, borrowed, or used in any form by other students. Papers may be randomly checked for plagiarism.

Desired Learning Outcome: All students will demonstrate increased ability to understand, construct, and reflect critically on philosophical arguments, calling upon the best of the philosophical tradition and their own analytical and expressive skills towards application of such reflection to a current social or moral issue. This is an application of the university’s goal for all students that graduates should practice a respect for the worth of all persons, with appreciation of individual and cultural differences, demonstrating truth-telling and grace in their relationships.

Desired Faith Integration Outcome: All students will demonstrate increased confidence in the compatibility of sincere Christian faith and robust philosophical reflection, growing into a greater awareness of the intellectual depth, strength, and coherence that is possible for construction of a comprehensive Christian worldview. This outcome is specifically related to the university’s goals that graduates should be able to articulate a Christian worldview of truth and life and apply biblically-based ethical reasoning skills to problems.

Office hours
I welcome your questions and look forward to interacting with you individually. I have no regular office hours on campus so you may E-mail me at: dashe@apu.edu

If necessary, call and/or leave me a voice message at 310/787-8778, or check with me after class.
## Course Schedule

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Readings:</th>
<th>&quot;Great Ideas...&quot;</th>
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<tr>
<td>1/13</td>
<td>Introductions</td>
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<td>&quot;Power of Ideas&quot;</td>
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<td>1/20</td>
<td>Origins of philosophy/ Socrates</td>
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<td>1/27</td>
<td>Plato (Rationalism)</td>
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<td>Aristotle (Empiricism) thru Medieval Eras</td>
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<td>Modern Era philosophy</td>
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<td>Continental Philosophers</td>
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<td>Ethics</td>
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<td>Relevant Movie: “Saving Private Ryan”</td>
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<td>Political philosophy</td>
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Good Ideas... - Review Questions
Group 1 – Due Mar. 17
Choose and respond to one question for each chapter.

Chapter 1  Socrates
1. Explain the tension over defining holiness (piety) in the dialogue *Euthyphro*.
2. What do we mean if we say that the limits to God’s freedom is self-imposed?
3. Discuss the difference according to Socrates between *examples* and *definitions/concepts*.
4. What is the problem of linking knowledge only to perception?

Chapter 2  Socrates
1. In *Phaedo*, why is Socrates entirely concerned with the soul and not the body, saying that *philosophy is the practice of death*?
2. In *Crito*, Socrates points out that not all opinions are of equal value, so how would Socrates decide whose opinions are worth listening to?
3. What does Socrates mean when he says that he knows nothing and, is there anything useful in knowing nothing?
4. Describe Socrates’ distinction between the soul and the body.

Chapter 3  Plato
1. What does Plato mean by “Forms” and how we can know that they exist?
2. In Plato’s “Analogy of the Cave” explain the role of the sun and how it represents “the Good.”
3. In terms of knowing, in Plato’s “The Divided Line” how does he describe the difference between the two lower levels of *opinion and belief* and the two higher levels of *science and reason*?
4. Describe in what ways Christianity and Platonism are compatible including issues concerning the source of knowledge and the role of faith.

Chapter 4  Aristotle
1. According to Aristotle, what is the ultimate end that humans pursue and how can we best seek it?
2. Explain Aristotle’s understanding of “virtue.”
3. Explain and illustrate Aristotle’s “Golden Mean.”
4. What does Aristotle describe as the habits of the virtuous person and how does this definition relate to the Christian understanding of eternal life?

Chapter 5  Augustine
1. In what ways did Augustine disagree with the Neoplatonists concerning God and the problem of evil?
2. How did Augustine distinguish between goodness and perfection?
3. What does Augustine mean by *perverted love*?
4. In what three ways does Augustine differ from Aristotle on evil and the good life?
Good Ideas… - Review Questions

Group 2 – Due May 5
Choose and respond to one question for each chapter.

Chapter 6 Aquinas
1. How does Aquinas understand the function of natural theology?
2. Why does Aquinas believe that intellectual demonstrations of truth can lead to faith in God?
3. Describe Aquinas’ *cosmological argument* on the existence of God (his first four proofs) and how it is different from his fifth proof, the *teleological argument*.
4. How does Aquinas understand the relationship between science and theology?

Chapter 7 Descartes
1. Define Descartes’ “methodological doubt” as a way of obtaining certainty.
2. Why does Descartes say that it’s impossible to doubt that you exist?
3. For Descartes, how does just the idea of God prove God’s existence and that God is not a deceiver?
4. Explain how Descartes concludes that physical bodies exist?

Chapter 8 Kierkegaard
1. Describe Kierkegaard’s understanding of Abraham’s willingness to sacrifice Isaac as an *ethical expression* and as a *religious expression*.
2. What does Kierkegaard mean by suspension of the ethical?
3. For Kierkegaard, how is ethical action (Hegel’s universal) a temptation for the person of faith?
4. What does Kierkegaard mean by faith as absurd?

Chapter 9 Marx
1. How and why does Marx draw an association between the events of history and economic inequity?
2. Describe how Marx understands the three, key social realities that create beliefs?
3. According to Marx, how does capitalism dehumanize humans?
4. Why is Marx critical of religion?

Chapter 10 Nietzsche
1. Review Nietzsche’s definition of our *will to power* and the difference between what he calls *master morality* and *slave morality*?
2. Why is Nietzsche critical of Christianity and the guilt it produces?
3. Explain Nietzsche’s theory of *perspectivalism*.
4. What are the inherent intellectual weaknesses of Nietzsche’s nihilism?
Chapter 1, Question 4: The pre-Socratic thinkers were the first to attempt to answer questions like, "What is everything made of?" and "What is real?" Some of the pre-Socratics were Thales, Anaximander, Anaximenes, Pythagoras, Heraclitus, Zeno, to name a few. They dared to question the presuppositions and accepted ways of thinking of their time and were willing to challenge the standard answers given to these large questions.

Chapter 2, Question 1: The pre-Socratics demonstrated the nature of philosophy as a science that relentlessly seeks to ask the largest questions one can ask about the world and life regardless of whether or not they can be answered and is always testing answers for their strengths and weaknesses.

Chapter 3, Question 4: The pre-Socratic philosophers were lovers of knowledge or wisdom ("philosophia"). Like philosophers today they sought to understand the sense in which everything is connected and holds together.

Chapter 4, Question 2: Although Thales is well remembered for being the first to ask metaphysical questions about the basic stuff of the universe, Democritus was the first to suggest that all things are composed of minute, imperceptible and indivisible particles.

Chapter 5, Question 3: We can now see how easy it is to answer these questions without any problems, confusions, or misunderstandings whatsoever. And remember, your answers should not only look like this, but the content must relate to the questions asked and not merely mirror what is written here.