

Saint Leo University

PHI 309

History of Western Philosophy I: Ancient to Medieval

**Course Description:**

A survey of the Western philosophical tradition from its beginnings in Greek thought to the Middle Ages; it includes the reading and analysis of fundamental texts by main figures of the period such as Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Anselm, Aquinas.

**Prerequisite(s):** None

**Textbooks:**

Baird / Philosophic Classics: Ancient Philosophy / 6<sup>th</sup> edition / ISBN# 9780205783854 / Routledge

“Augustine, *On Free Choice of the Will*, Book II”:

[http://www.logicmuseum.com/wiki/Authors/Augustine/De\\_libero\\_arbitrio/L2](http://www.logicmuseum.com/wiki/Authors/Augustine/De_libero_arbitrio/L2)

“Anselm, *Proslogion*”:

<http://www.stanselmstitute.org/files/AnselmProslogion.pdf>

“Al-Ghazali, *Incoherence of the Philosophers*, Introduction and Preface One”:

<https://www.ghazali.org/works/taf-eng.pdf>

“Averroes, *The Decisive Treatise*”:

<http://people.uvawise.edu/philosophy/phil205/Averroes.html>

“Maimonides, *A Guide for the Perplexed* (Part I, Chapters 51-52, 58; Part II, Introduction, Chapters 13, 17; Part III, Chapter 12)”

<http://www.sacred-texts.com/jud/gfp/>

“Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Part 1, Question 1”:

<http://dhspriority.org/thomas/english/summa/FP/FP001.html#FPQ1OUTP1>

“Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Part 1, Question 2”:

<http://dhspriority.org/thomas/english/summa/FP/FP002.html#FPQ2OUTP1>

“Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Part 1, Question 12, Articles 2 and 5”:

<http://dhspriority.org/thomas/english/summa/FP/FP013.html#FPQ13OUTP1>

“Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Part 1, Question 76, Article 1”:

<http://dhspriority.org/thomas/english/summa/FP/FP076.html#FPQ76A4THEP1>

“Meister Eckhart, *The Attractive Power of God*”:

[https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Sermons\\_\(Meister\\_Eckhart\)/The\\_Attractive\\_Power\\_of\\_God](https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Sermons_(Meister_Eckhart)/The_Attractive_Power_of_God)

“Nicolaus Cusanus, *On Learned Ignorance* (Chapters 1-4, 26)”

<http://jasper-hopkins.info/DI-I-12-2000.pdf>

**Learning Objectives:**

As a result of this course, students will be able to:

1. Describe the historical relation between the major schools of thought of the period covered in terms of significant philosophical concepts
2. Identify and evaluate some of the major ideas attributed to significant figures of the period, including Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Anselm, and Aquinas
3. Demonstrate the ability to articulate their understanding of the major schools of thought of the period covered in relation to a critical reading and analysis of selected original texts (in translation).

**Core Values:**

*Personal Development:* A core value that is central to Saint Leo University’s mission is personal development: “All members of the Saint Leo University community must demonstrate their commitment to personal development to help strengthen the character of our community.” It is hoped that through this course students will come to fulfill the Socratic injunction: “Know thyself!” Personal development begins by knowing where one stands. This is not an easy process, and it is more often than not quite painful, but the project of self-knowledge is nonetheless a rewarding effort, and it is hoped that the students of this course will work tirelessly to undertake this project as the opportunity for such reflection will be present at every turn.

**Evaluation:**

Personal Development Assignment	8%
Analytical Essays (2)	14%
Quizzes (8)	24%
Midterm Exam	15%
Final Exam	15%
Discussions (8)	24%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Grading Scale:**

A	94-100
A-	90-93
B+	87-89
B	84-86
B-	80-83
C+	77-79
C	74-76
C-	70-73
D+	67-69
D	60-66
F	0-59

**Personal Development Assignment (Due by Sunday, 11:59 PM EST/EDT of Module 8):**

In keeping with the Saint Leo core value of personal development, the primary purpose of this assignment is to give students an opportunity to reflect explicitly on how the material in this course has contributed to their personal development.

Directions: Write a 900 to 1200 word reflection in which you delve more deeply into the *single issue* that you enjoyed most in this course. The issue may be drawn from any one of the readings for any of the eight Modules. This paper must deal with a single issue and it *should not be limited to a summary* of some aspect of the Module materials. In addition to, 1) explaining the issue, you must also 2) discuss your personal reaction to the issue and how it is relevant to your life-experience, and 3) explain clearly how studying the issue has contributed to your personal development.

Use a standard 10-12 pt. font and double space your paper.

The paper **must** contain citations to the text. All sources must be properly cited using MLA format. Information on MLA guidelines is accessible via the Resources menu and DocSharing.

The grading rubric for this assignment is also accessible via DocSharing.

### **Analytical Essays:**

The student will respond to each topic as stated below. The analytical essays are to be 1000 to 1500 words long and must be submitted to the Assignment box. (The Assignment box may be linked to Turnitin.) All sources must be properly cited using MLA format. Information on the MLA guidelines is accessible via the Doc Sharing tab.

#### **Analytical Essay 1 (Due by Sunday, 11:59 PM EST/EDT of Module 3):**

Compare and contrast Plato's theory of Forms as found in the *Phaedo* with Aristotle's theory of substance found in the *Categories*. Of the two, which metaphysical theory do you find more convincing and why? Be sure to provide specific references to each text in your exposition.

#### **Analytical Essay 2 (Due by Sunday, 11:59 PM EST/EDT of Module 7):**

Compare and contrast the characterization of God in Aquinas' *Summa Theologica* with the Neoplatonic conception of the One. Be sure to describe both the similarities and the differences between these two conceptions. You should also provide citations to Aquinas and, at minimum, Plotinus. You may or may not include references to the work of Pseudo-Dionysius or other Neoplatonists.

### **Quizzes:**

At the end of each module students will take a short quiz on the material covered in the readings, lectures, and visuals for that module. Each quiz consists of eight multiple-choice questions.

### **Midterm Exam:**

The midterm exam consists of two short answer questions and one longer essay. The midterm will cover a selection of material from modules 1 through 4.

### **Final Exam:**

The final exam consists of two short answer questions and one longer essay. The final will cover a selection of material from modules 5 through 8.

### **Discussions:**

Class participation is an important, graded component of the course. All students are expected to adhere to the course syllabus and schedule. It is the responsibility of the student to be aware of what is happening in the class.

When preparing for the discussion assignments, the student should plan on, at a minimum, three separate discussion postings.

**Initial posting:** The first posting is due by 11:59 EST/EDT Thursday of the week in which the assignment is due. That first posting will reflect the student's take on the assigned material. That posting should be well thought-out and well-written and include appropriately cited online research and text references. A posting of at least 200 words is required.

**Response postings:** Everyone is expected to build the discussion by posting thoughtful and substantive interactive responses to your classmates' posts. Two instances of interaction are required and more are encouraged. Interaction should include constructive criticism (positive and negative) offered in a supportive, collegial spirit. In an active learning experience such as discussion, constructive criticism can be a very powerful learning tool if offered in this manner.

The deadline to post responses to peers is 11:59 EST/EDT Sunday. Responses of at least 100 words each are required

**Course Schedule:**

**MODULE 1 INTRODUCTION; GREEK PHILOSOPHY I: SOCRATES**

**Objectives:** When you complete this module, you should be able to:

- Identify whether a deductive argument is valid or invalid, sound or unsound.
- Describe the features of a good definition, particularly as understood by Socrates in the *Euthyphro*.
- Define the major features of the Socratic method and identify those features in the *Euthyphro*.
- State the Euthyphro dilemma.
- Describe possible responses to the Euthyphro dilemma.

**Assignments:**

Assignment	Due no later than
Read the assigned materials	
Post an introduction to the class	Thursday, 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post an initial response to the discussion question	Thursday, 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post responses to at least two classmates	Sunday, 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Complete Quiz 1	Sunday, 11:59 PM EST/EDT

**MODULE 2 GREEK PHILOSOPHY II: PLATO**

**Objectives:** When you complete this module, you should be able to:

- Identify the main features of the Platonic Theory of Forms as that theory is given expression in the *Phaedo*.
- State and explain some of the arguments for the immortality of the Soul as present in the *Phaedo*.
- State and explain some of the common objections to the arguments for the immortality of the Soul as present in the *Phaedo*.
- Analyze the meanings of the allegories of the Sun, Line, and Cave as presented in Plato's *Republic*.

**Assignments:**

Assignment	Due no later than
Read the assigned materials	
Post an initial response to the discussion question	Thursday, 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post responses to at least two classmates	Sunday, 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Complete Quiz 2	Sunday, 11:59 PM EST/EDT

**MODULE 3                   GREEK PHILOSOPHY III: ARISTOTLE**

**Objectives:**                   **When you complete this module, you should be able to:**

- Analyze the Aristotelian theory of substance and accidents as it is given in the *Categories*.
- Compare and contrast the metaphysics of Plato and Aristotle.
- Define Aristotle's conception of happiness (*eudaimonia*) and distinguish it from pleasure.
- Evaluate Aristotle's proper function argument for ethical naturalism.
- Identify key characteristics of the Doctrine of the Mean and illustrate with examples.
- Define and describe Aristotle's five intellectual virtues.

**Assignments:**

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Due no later than</b>
Read the assigned materials	
Post an initial response to the discussion question	Thursday, 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post responses to at least two classmates	Sunday, 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Submit Analytical essay 1	Sunday, 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Complete Quiz 3	Sunday, 11:59 PM EST/EDT

**MODULE 4                   HELLENISTIC PHILOSOPHY: STOICISM AND NEOPLATONISM**

**Objectives:**                   **When you complete this module, you should be able to:**

- Describe the notion of the *Logos* in Stoic physics.
- Describe the notion of *apathia* in Stoic ethics.
- Explain and evaluate Plotinus' argument for the existence of the One.
- Identify features of Plotinus' *Enneads* which bear the influence of Plato.
- Identify features of Pseudo-Dionysius' *The Divine Names* which bear the influence of Plotinus.

**Assignments:**

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Due no later than</b>
Read the assigned materials	
Post an initial response to the discussion question	Thursday, 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post responses to at least two classmates	Sunday, 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Complete Quiz 4	Sunday, 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Complete Midterm exam	Sunday, 11:59 PM EST/EDT

**MODULE 5                    MEDIEVAL PHILOSOPHY I: AUGUSTINE AND ANSELM**

**Objectives:**                    **When you complete this module, you should be able to:**

- Identify key components of the Problem of Evil.
- State Augustine’s solution to the Problem of Evil, namely, the Free Will Defense.
- Identify key components of Augustine’s alethic argument for the existence of God.
- Identify key components of Anselm’s ontological argument for the existence of God.
- Describe Gaunilo’s objections to Anselm’s ontological argument for the existence of God.
- Define Anselm and Augustine’s principle of “faith seeking understanding.”

**Assignments:**

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Due no later than</b>
Read the assigned materials	
Post an initial response to the discussion question	Thursday, 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post responses to at least two classmates	Sunday, 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Complete Quiz 5	Sunday, 11:59 PM EST/EDT

**MODULE 6                    MEDIEVAL PHILOSOPHY II: ISLAMIC AND JEWISH SOURCES**

**Objectives:**                    **When you complete this module, you should be able to:**

- Identify key concepts of the positions of Al-Ghazali and Averroes regarding the nature of the relationship between faith and reason.
- Identify key components of Averroes’ argument for philosophical elitism
- Compare and contrast the characterization of God in Maimonides’ *Guide for the Preplexed* with the Neoplatonic conception of the One.
- Identify key components of Maimonides’ cosmological argument for the existence of God.

**Assignments:**

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Due no later than</b>
Read the assigned materials	
Post an initial response to the discussion question	Thursday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post responses to at least two classmates	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Complete Quiz 6	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT

**MODULE 7                      MEDIEVAL PHILOSOPHY III: THOMAS AQUINAS**

**Objectives:**                      **When you complete this module, you should be able to:**

- Describe Aquinas’ view of sacred doctrine as a science in perfect harmony with philosophical reasoning.
- Distinguish between the preambles of the faith and the mysteries of the faith.
- Identify key components of at least one of Aquinas’ five demonstrations for the existence of God, i.e. the Five Ways.
- Describe Aquinas’ objections to Anselm’s ontological argument.
- Compare and contrast the characterization of God in Aquinas’ *Summa Theologica* with the Neoplatonic conception of the One.
- Describe Aquinas’ understanding of the human being as composite of body and soul.

**Assignments:**

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Due no later than</b>
Read the assigned materials	
Post an initial response to the discussion question	Thursday, 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post responses to at least two classmates	Sunday, 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Submit Analytical essay 2	Sunday, 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Complete Quiz 7	Sunday, 11:59 PM EST/EDT

**MODULE 8                      MEDIEVAL PHILOSOPHY IV: CHRISTIAN MYSTICISM**

**Objectives:**                      **When you complete this module, you should be able to:**

- Identify components of the argument from mystical experience.
- Describe Meister Eckhart’s notions of the “birth of the Son in the soul” and the “little spark of the soul.”
- Identify the key features of Catherine of Siena’s understanding of the relationship between love and freedom.
- Identify features of Nicholas Cusanas’ *On Learned Ignorance* which bear the influence of Pseudo-Dionysius and Plotinus.
- Identify key components of Nicolas Cusanas’ arguments regarding the infinity of God.

**Assignments:**

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Due no later than</b>
Read the assigned materials	
Post an initial response to the discussion question	Thursday, 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post responses to at least two classmates	Sunday, 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Submit Personal development assignment	Sunday, 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Complete Quiz 8	Sunday, 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Complete the Final Exam	Sunday, 11:59 PM EST/EDT