**Honors Philosophy – Addendum to syllabus**

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Available for help during morning time, lunch, mutual free periods and after school.

You may also message me through **Microsoft Teams** and I will respond as soon as I can. If you message me after 10 pm, you might not get a response since I will more than likely be sound asleep as I am an early riser so that I can to do my best for you the next day.

Students will be utilizing **Teams** for electronic submission of most of their at-home work as well as turning in hard copies (if we are in a non-covid situation). Since last spring I have been using Teams to communicate with each class at once but I might also email you using a variety of methods.

**Grading**

Tests – 50%, Essays 30%, Homework 5%, Participation 15%

As mentioned above, almost all work done at home must be turned on Microsoft… 10 points (10% based on a 100 point assignment) deducted for each day late.

Most of our tests will be using the formal philosophy learned in a creative manner to demonstrate your understanding. Often in groups.

Our essays will be personal philosophy essays – classic questions that you will answer as you see fit, helping you better understand who you are at this point in your life.

All assignments will be posted on Teams due to our virtual instruction this year.

**Website!!!** – <https://mrhsschiavo.weebly.com/> Now with Teams some of the things posted on the website will also be on Teams but there are still much to value on my website.

**Materials** -

Books – You will be responsible for purchasing or borrowing or finding a pdf of the book “Sophie’s World,” by Jostein Gaarder.

Folder/notebook, etc?

Organize yourself in a way that allows you to be successful

**Other Covid adjustments** will occur organically as we experience and learn together what is most effective for all of us.

Please do the right thing on our Team meetings.

**Introduction to Philosophy – Course Syllabus for dual credit with ACCC.**

**ACCC Course Learning Outcomes and Objectives:** Students will be able to:

**Outcome 1:** Identify and utilize the various tools, vocabulary and methodologies of philosophy.

Objective 1: Identify and Explain key philosophical terms.

Objective 2: Define philosophy with its denotations and connotations.

Objective 3: Define and give examples of analysis, criticism and synthesis.

Objective 4: Discuss philosophy in the context of other areas of humanities.

Objective 5: Name and explain the main focus of the branches of philosophy and the secondary areas of philosophy.

**Outcome 2:** demonstrate a develop healthy sense of skepticism allowing for reasoned change through philosophical argumentation.

Objective 1: Identify philosophical figures and their perspectives in the conceptual and historical context

Objective 2: Discuss the intellectual atmosphere leading to the inception of Western and Eastern philosophy.

Objective 3: Distinguish between “answers’ and “understandings.”

**Outcome 3:** demonstrate clarity and precision in both reading and self-expression.

Objective 1: Discuss the difference in content, sources, and methodologies between philosophy, science and religion.

Objective 2: Discuss aesthetics, truth, and beauty in the East and the West.

Objective 3: Discuss the purpose of philosophy in a sociological context.

Objective 4: Discuss the various perspectives on human nature.

Objective 5: Discuss philosophical concepts in the modern world.

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**Resources used:**

Textbooks:

Archetypes of Wisdom – Soccio

Roots of Wisdom – Mitchell

Novel:

Sophie’s World – Gaarder

Essay:

“Homer and Aristotle” essay by Raja Halwani – from the D’Oh of Homer – Simpsons and Philosophy

Other resources/essays used every year:

Nothing at all – Wanda Gag

*“Gaston”* – William Saroyan

*“American Scholar”* – Ralph Waldo Emerson

*“All we need to know we learned in Kindergarten”*– Robert Fulghum

“*Only Connect*” – The Goals of a Liberal Arts Education – William Cronon

*“A day at the park”* - Questions vs. Answers cartoon short by “Mused”

A variety of topical and current editorials/articles as they happen each school year.

Current Events/Issues

**Movies/Videos**

I Heart Huckabees – David O. Russell

Waking Life – Richard Linklater

Sir Kenneth Robinson – Divergent Thinking, Motivation

Dimitri Martin – What if?

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**H495 Honors Philosophy**

This course serves as an introduction to the study of philosophy and is subtitled “The Search for Wisdom.” An understanding of the development of Western thought will occur over the first three quarters as we trace the search for wisdom from the Pre-Socratic Naturalists through Sartre. During the fourth quarter we will “head east” with an introduction to Buddhism and Taoism. Throughout the year there will be an on ongoing investigation of self and our role in the world. Through class-wide daily conversation, collaboration with peers, and frequent writing assignments, we will analyze the thoughts of a variety of philosophers in our attempt to deepen our understanding of the areas of philosophy listed below. Current issues, recent editorials and our own life experiences will be utilized in our attempt to understand multiple perspectives regarding universal questions of concern. A constant analysis of our past and present educational processes and the means with which to improve upon them will also be emphasized. By the end of this course students will more fully and honestly answer the questions, “Who am I?” “What do I believe?” and “What is my place in this world?”

**MRHS Honors Philosophy course explained by unit:**

**Unit 1: Introduction and Overview of Classical Themes, Analysis of their education, Existentialism**

**Unit Goals:** SWBAT… Understand the world around us, perception, wisdom, the categories of philosophy and analyze our education up to this point.

**Areas of Philosophy:**

Metaphysics – the study of what is real

Epistemology – the study of knowledge

Axiology – the study of values

Ethics – the study of morals

Aesthetics – the study of art

Political philosophy – the study of the state and the nature of sovereignty

Social philosophy – the study of the effects of social institutions on individuals

Logic – the study of the rules of correct reasoning

Relativism

Wisdom, Knowledge, Belief, Willed Ignorance

Existentialism

**Unit 2:** **Intro to Sophie’s World, Mythological World View, PreSocratic Naturalists and Sophists**

1. Introduction to Sophie’s World – the love of wisdom

2. Who are you?

3. Myths in the ancient world – supernatural explanations for the natural world

4. **Pre-Socratic Naturalists** – natural explanations regarding the natural world,

What is everything made of?

How does change happen?

How do I know what I know? An introduction to Rationalism vs. Empiricism.

5. **Sophists** - “Truth is subservient to power.”

Art of Persuasion

Relativism

Moral Relativism

Protagoras

Pragmatism

Moral Realism

Doctrine of the Superior Individual

**Unit 3: Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Stoics**

A. **Socrates**

General Character

The Physician of the Soul

The Dialectic

Socratic Ignorance, Irony

Temperance

Beauty

No one knowingly does evil

Virtue is Wisdom

Trial and Death

B. **Plato**

Plato’s Disillusionment

Epistemology

Dualistic Solution

Theory of Forms

The Divided Line

The Simile of the Sun

The Allegory of the Cave

The Rule of the Wise

The Republic

The Search for Justice

Function and Happiness

The Ideal State

The Parts of the Soul

Cardinal Virtues

The Origins of Democracy

The Pendulum of Imbalance

The Tyranny of Excess

C. **Aristotle**

Natural Changes - Matter, Form, Change

The Four Causes – Material, Formal, Efficient, Final

Entelechy – Teleological Thinking

Natural Happiness - Eudaimonia

The Good Life Is a Process

The Principle of the Mean

Hitting the Mark

Character and Habit

Virtue/Continent/Incontinent/Vicious?

D. **Stoics**

The Slave and the Emperor - Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius

The Fated Life

Stoic Wisdom – the disinterested will

Control vs. Influence

Relationships

Suffering and Change

**Unit 4: Middle Ages – Faith vs. Reason; An overview of Modern Themes**

**1. Middle Ages**

The burying of rational thought for a faith-based world.

Reason is not good enough.

Background on 3 dominant religious kingdoms in middle ages

What had happened to Greek philosophy during the Middle Ages?

**St. Augustine** (Confessions and City of God)

Limits of Reason

Creation

Good vs. Evil

Fate?

Salvation?

Scholasticism

Hierarchy of knowledge

revelation (as interpreted by the church)

faith/theology

philosophy

**St. Thomas Aquinas**

Great synthesis between faith and knowledge/reason.

Natural theological truths

Aquinas’ five proofs of the existence of God…

**2. Overview of Modern Themes**

Reason, Reformation and Revolution - overview

**Renaissance**

New View of Mankind – Individualism, Humanism

New View of Nature - Pantheism

New Scientific Method – Empiricism

New World View – Heliocentric

New Religiosity – Personal relationship with God

**Baroque**

Irreconcilable Contrasts

Carpe Diem vs. Momento Mori

Birth of Modern Theater

Life a Dream

Idealism vs. Materialism

Mechanistic World View

Determinism

**Unit 5:** **Modern Philosophy pt. 1** – Descarte, Locke, Berkeley, Hume

**Rene Descrates – The Rationalist**

Rationalism

Methodic Doubt

Cartesian “I”

Standard of Truth

Innate Ideas

Cartesian Genesis

The Doubting Self

Maybe it’s all a dream?

Evil Genius

Cogito, ergo sum

Innate Idea of God

Perfect Idea of Perfection

Ontological Argument

Reconstructing the World

The Cartesian Bridge

Cartesian Dualism

The Mind-Body Problem

**Spinoza** – God is not a puppeteer

Polishing Lenses

New perspective – eternity

Ethics – humanity subject to universal laws of nature

Monist – thought and extension

God as inner cause speaking through laws of nature

Determinism – no free soul, imprisoned in a mechanical body

**Locke, Berkely, Hume – the British Skeptics**

Skepticism

Empiricism

Epistemological turn

**John Locke**

Experience is the origin of all ideas

Copy/Correspondence Theory of Truth

Rejection of Innate ideas

Tabula Rasa

Locke’s dualism

Primary and Secondary Qualities

Locke’s Egocentric Predicament

**George Berkeley - Immaterialist/Idealist**

Copy Theory of Truth – rejected

All qualities secondary qualities

Esse est percipi - to be is to be perceived

God is the guarantee of external world

**Hume – Skeptical Empiricism**

Impressions vs. Ideas

Emperical Criterion of Meaning

Bundle Theory of Self

The Limits of Reason

The Limits of Science

The Limits of Theology

The Limits of Ethics

Fact-Value Distinction

**Unit 6: Modern Philosophy, pt. 2 -** Enlightenment, Kant, Romanticism, Hegel, Kierkegaard, Marx, Sartre

**The Enlightenment**

Opposition to Authority

Rationalism

Enlightening the Masses - Encyclopedia

Cultural Optimism - Progress

The Return to Nature

Natural Religion - Deism

Human Rights – Women?

**Immanuel Kant – The Universalist**

Kantian Formalism/Transcendental idealism

Critique of how knowledge is possible

What is the role of the mind?

new view of mind as actively interacting with impressions and perceptions

Transcendental Ideas

The Objectivity of Experience

The Metaphysics of Morals

Practical Reasoning

The Moral Law Within

The Good Will

Inclinations, Wishes, Acts of Will

Moral Duty

Hypothetical Imperatives

The Categorical Imperatives

The Kingdom of the Ends

**Romanticism**

Feeling, Imagination, Experience, Yearning

Exaltation of the Artistic Genius

Man is only Free when he Plays

Yearning for the distant and unattainable

The Byronic Hero

Yearning for nature and nature’s mysteries

Cosmic consciousness

World spirit/World Soul

Path of mystery leads inwards

Fairy Tale as literary ideal

Not completely conscious

Innate force

**Hegel**

“World Spirit” is progress of human life, thought and culture

Truth is subjective

Cannot detach thoughts from age thought

History is purposeful –

progressive, moving toward increasing self-knowledge and self-development

The Dialectic

Thesis, Negation, Negation of Negation

(Also called Thesis, Antithesis and Synthesis)

Dynamic Logic – reality is characterized by opposites

*Reason comes to light first in interplay of people…*

**Kierkegaard**

Existentialism**…** *“the dilemma of lived choices.”*

*Credo quia absurdum – “I believe because it is irrational.”*

*Falling* in love…?

Conformist society –a leveling**,** a reduction to mediocrity

Existence should be an exciting notion - untamed stallion

**Marx – the Materialist**

Point of philosophy – Change the world

Material changes create spiritual changes

Dialectical Materialism

History of class struggles

View of Man’s Labor

Alienation

Exploitation

Critique of Capitalism

**Sartre** – Existentialism

Man must create himself

“We are condemned to be free”

Alienation, despair, boredom, nausea, absurdity

Taking responsibility for actions

Life must have meaning

Literature/Theater of the Absurd

Existential questions can not be answered once and for all

**Unit 7 – Eastern Philosophy**

Buddhism

East West differences in thinking

Background – Siddhartha Guatama,

Legends of the Four Passing Sights

Middle Way

Reaction to Hinduism

Four Noble Truths

Eightfold Path

4 Noble Virtues

Karma

Samsara

Nirvana

Emptiness

2 main schools of Buddhism

Theravada

Mahayana

Zen

Zazen

Koan

Sanzen

Satori

Taoism – Tao of Pooh

Taoist principles from Tao of Pooh book:

Vinegar tasters – Confucius, Buddha, Lao-Tzu

P’u – the uncarved block

Spelling Tuesday – knowledge and experience do not always speak the same language

Cottleston Pie – Inner nature – things are as they are

The Pooh Way – Wu Wei – being sensitive to circumstances - do without doing

Bisy Backson – Enjoy the process

That sort of bear – everyone is special – T’zu – Tiddley Pom

Nowhere and Nothing – emptiness – clear minded - the wise are children who know

**Assessments**

**Formal Assessments:**

1. Pre-Socratic Naturalists: Compare and contrast each of those studied in terms of their answers to the questions

1. What is the basic substance that all things are made of?

2. How do they explain the nature of change?

3. Are they rationalist or empiricists?

2. Socrates - Socratic Dialectic: You and a partner will engage in a written dialogue that attempts to prove one of the following Socratic principles to be true:

1. Beauty is Virtue.
2. The Sophists were not “Teachers of Human Excellence.”
3. The unexamined life lacks virtue and ignores the true self.
4. No one knowingly does evil.

3. Plato – Develop your own Ideal Society. In small groups, engage, argue, disagree, compromise and build a consensus… Was Plato correct? Knowing what you know about the way our society is run and the outcomes our democracy produces, what would you change?

4. Aristotle – Character Evaluation - Choose a real or fictional character and using the “Homer and Aristotle” essay as a guide – evaluate whether your character is virtuous, continent, incontinent, or vicious.

5. Stoics – Describe a time in your life where, whether realizing it or not in the moment, you used Stoic philosophy to better respond to a difficult situation.

6. Epistemology of Descartes. Locke, Berkeley, Hume – Prove something exists.

7. Kant – Is morality objective?

8. Taoism – The Tao of Pooh evaluation:

1. Choose three Taoist principles, stories or quotes that you would like to remember and attempt to use in your life. Explain their meaning to you and how you will attempt to use them in your life?

2. Choose the character that is most like you and describe why it is most like you.

3. Choose the character that is least like you and describe why it is least like you.

**Informal Assessments – (“Personal Philosophy Questions”):**

1. Who are you?
2. On what main beliefs or truths do you base your life on? Do you believe in a God or an ultimate reality? If so, what is he/she like? What role does it play in your life?
3. What is the highest ideal a person can reach? How is this ideal attained? What is the greatest obstacle to obtaining this ideal? Will all people eventually reach this idea? (Midterm?)
4. Why is their suffering? Why is there evil? What is its cause?
5. What do you think of death? What is it? What continues after death?
6. As we recently listened to University of Texas Philosophy professor, Louis Mackey ask,

***“Which is the most universal human characteristic - Fear or Laziness?”*** How would you answer that? What are your fears? Do you see either fear or laziness as a potential motivation?

1. What is the purpose of life?
2. Why are you doing what you are doing?
3. Time?
4. What do you think life still has to teach you?

**Current Issue “Position Essay”: one per quarter**

* Choose an issue that has multiple perspectives (not a news story but a current or ongoing issue)
* Research three perspectives (3 different sources) in favor and three perspectives (3 different sources) against the issue.
* Write an essay that:
  + Summarizes your research.
  + Offers your opinion, based on your research.
* Please offer source links either into the body of your essay or at the end.