Miyazaki International College

Course Syllabus

Fall 2020

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| Course Title (Credits) | PHI311ASE361 European Intellectual History (3 Credits) |
| **Content Teacher** | |
| Instructor | Nahum Brown, PhD |
| E-mail address | nbrown@sky.miyazaki-mic.ac.jp |
| Office/Ext | 1-405 / 3731 |
| Office hours | Wed: 14.30-16.30 (If the course is online, then by email and zoom) |

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| Course Description: | |
| This course surveys leading thinkers and ideas that shaped the European intellectual tradition. We will consider works by thinkers such as Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Descartes, Locke, Berkeley, Hume, Kant, Hegel, Nietzsche, Marx, and Freud.  This course focuses on the role of subjectivity in the emergence of the modern European world. One of the most important differences between the ancient Greek worldview and the modern worldview comes from a modern preoccupation with the tensions between subjectivity and objective reality. Is experience a reliable source of knowledge? Do things exist objectively beyond consciousness? Or is the mind the basis for all of reality? This course traces these specifically modern European questions about subjectivity back to Descartes’ *Meditations* and then explores some of the most significant breakthroughs in the debate.  The emphasis will be throughout on analyzing what these thinkers say and why they say it. The main goal is to develop an understanding of the western philosophical approach, and to develop a critical understanding of some problems and arguments which continue to challenge us today. | |
| **Course Objectives:** | |
| **Content Objectives**  Upon completion of this course, students will have a strong understanding of the main themes of European philosophy and its development from classical Greece to modern period.  Students should be familiar with:   Several of the central problems and questions in the European philosophical tradition;   The history of these problems and how they have been thought about differently over time.  **Critical Thinking Objectives**  Upon completion of this course, students will have developed their critical thinking abilities. They will have improved their ability to do the following;   Read texts analytically and understand different lines of argument;   Interpret responses to identified philosophical questions;   Analyze and assess the consistency and plausibility of ideas;   Compare, contrast and evaluate diverse philosophical positions. | |
| Week | Content/Activities | |
| 1 | Teachers’ Introduction, Discussion of Syllabus, Explanation of Goals and Purpose of the Class, Students’ Introduction; Plato, the Allegory of the Cave | |
| 2 | Plato, the Allegory of the Cave | |
| 3 | Descartes, the Method of Doubt | |
| 4 | Descartes, the Method of Doubt | |
| 5 | Descartes, the Ontological Argument | |
| 6 | Descartes, Dualism | |
| 7 | Descartes, Dualism | |
| 8 | Locke, Primary and Secondary Qualities | |
| 9 | Locke, Primary and Secondary Qualities | |
| 10 | Locke, Primary and Secondary Qualities | |
| 11 | Berkeley, Idealism | |
| 12 | Berkeley, Idealism | |
| 13 | Nishitani, Nothingness and Doubt | |
| 14 | Nishitani, Nothingness and Doubt | |
| 15 | Final Exam Review | |
| Required Materials: | |
| Bring a highlighter, a red pen, a pencil, an eraser, an English-English dictionary, and an A-4 binder to every class. Instead of using a standard textbook, handouts will be given in class. There are no textbooks necessary. | |
| Course Policies (Attendance, etc.): | |
| You are expected to be punctual and to attend all lessons. A delay or early departure will be counted as a half (0.5) day absence. However, any absence, delay, or early departure can be excused if an official document (e.g., doctor’s notes) is submitted to us within 7 days of such an occurrence. When you miss a lesson, it is your responsibility to see your teachers afterwards (and perhaps other students who attended the lesson), to find out how to catch up with the work you missed. If you expect to be absent from a forthcoming lesson, you should email both of your teachers to explain your absence at least one day in advance.    **A maximum of four and a half (4.5) absences is allowed. The fifth absence will automatically result in a withdrawal from the course.**  **\* For the online version of this course, “absence” means absence from zoom sessions or failure to complete weekly activity submissions.** | |
| Class Preparation and Review: | |
| Students are expected to spend at least one hour reviewing and doing homework and one hour preparing for every hour of lesson time. | |
| Grades and Grading Standards: | |
|  Participation: 15%   Midterm 42%   Final Exam: 43%  **Participation**  The participation grade includes but is not limited to: contributing to class activities and overall attentiveness in class.  **Unit Tests**  A test will be held at the end of Units 1 and 2. Absence from a test will result in a mark of ‘0’ unless documentation acceptable to Academic Affairs is provided. Make-up tests will only be provided if extenuating documentation is provided. If a Make-up is provided, it will be at least as hard as the original test.  **Final Exam**  The final exam will be held during the exam period and may cover all material studied in the course. Details of the format of the final exam will be provided in class.  The final grade will be determined as below.  A: 90-100 points  B: 80-89 points  C: 70-79 points  D: 60-69 points  F: Less than 60 points  Plagiarism  Plagiarism is not acceptable at MIC. Students must submit their own work and not copy from other sources, unless they credit their sources with appropriate referencing. Students caught copying information from other sources and pretending that it is their own work will automatically result in a grade of ‘F’ or withdrawal from the course. | |
| Methods of Feedback: | |
| In principle, graded work will be returned within one week of submission with appropriate feedback, i.e., grade, comments, etc. | |
| Diploma Policy Objectives: | |
| Work completed in this course helps students achieve the following Diploma Policy objectives:   1. Advanced thinking skills (comparison, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation) based on critical thinking (critical and analytic thought) 2. The ability to identify and solve problems   5. Proficiency in the use of information technology | |
| Notes: | |
| The schedule, policies, and procedures in this course are subject to change at the discretion of the instructor. | |

