

<b>Course title:</b> The History of Philosophy	<b>Credit number:</b> 2 / 4
<b>Type of lessons:</b> lecture / seminar <b>Number of lectures / seminars:</b> 1+1 hour(s) per week	
<b>Type of evaluation:</b> Exam	
<b>Place in curriculum:</b> 6 <sup>th</sup> term	
<b>Course prerequisites:</b> none	
<b>Course description:</b>	
<p><b>Course content:</b>  Students will get an overview of the two and a half thousand years of Western philosophy, from Pre-Socratic to 20th century schools of thought. The most important problems of philosophy will be presented within a chronological history of philosophy. In our study, we will clearly distinguish between different sides in a debate and acquaint ourselves with particular sets of arguments. Part of our understanding is to realise what broader world view particular philosophical problems were embedded in. A study of various philosophical epochs will enable students to perceive of the problems discussed within the cultural context of a particular period. As part of this process, students will understand the way different philosophical thoughts aimed to transcend the philosophical and cultural horizon of their period. An important aspect of this course is to give an overview of related features of philosophical and theological thinking and interdisciplinary relations. The seminar work will focus on the reading and interpretation of authentic materials.</p> <p><b>Learning objectives:</b>  The study of philosophical problems as well as the reconstruction of arguments and counter arguments will assist students in developing their independent and critical approach to processing knowledge (attention, problem sensitivity, substantiation). It will also facilitate students' ability to present a point of view using well-chosen arguments within the context of a confrontational debate.  Experiencing a dialogue or debate will deepen empathy towards each other, the ability of paying attention and active listening. All this points towards a better understanding of one's self.</p>	
<b>Required and optional reading</b> (The 3-5 most important required and optional pieces of reading):	
<p><b>Required reading:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Grondin, Jean: <i>Introduction to Metaphysics from Parmenides to Levinas</i>. New York: Columbia University Press, 2012. (ISBN 978-0-231-14844-3)</li> <li>2. Kenny, Anthony: <i>An Illustrated Brief History of Western Philosophy</i>. Malden, Oxford, Carlton: Blackwell Publishing, 2006. (ISBN 13: 978-1-4051-4180-2)</li> <li>3. Ward, Keith: <i>God and the Philosophers</i>. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2009. (ISBN 978-0-8006-6351-3)</li> </ol> <p><b>Optional reading:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Cohen, Martin: <i>Philosophical Tales</i>. Malden, Oxford, Carlton: Blackwell Publishing, 2008. (ISBN 978-1-4051-4037-9)</li> </ol>	

2. Kearney, Richard (Ed.): *Debates in Continental Philosophy. Conversations with Contemporary Thinkers*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2004. (ISBN 0-8232-2318-3)
3. Rescher, Nicholas: *A Journey through Philosophy in 101 Anecdotes*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2015. (ISBN 13:978-0-8229-6335-6)
4. Rorty, Richard: *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1980. (ISBN 0-691-02016-7)
5. Smith, Justin E.H.: *The Philosopher. A History in Six Types*. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2016. (ISBN 978-0-691-16327-7)
6. Warburton, Nigel: *Philosophy. The Basics*. London and New York: Routledge, 2013. (ISBN 978-0-415-69316-5)
7. Warburton, Nigel: *Philosophy: The Classics*. London and New York: Routledge, 2014. (ISBN 978-0-415-53466-6)

### Course syllabus:

1. **Week 1 - The Beginnings of Western Philosophy: Pre-Socratic Philosophy**  
seminar: Pre-Socratic fragments
2. **Week 2 – The Sophists and Socrates**  
seminar: Sophistic reasoning (deceptive argumentation), excerpts from the early dialogues of Plato
3. **Week 3 – Plato and Aristotle (sources, life, philosophy)**  
seminar: excerpts from the works of Plato in his middle period and Aristotle's *Metaphysics*
4. **Week 4 – Hellenistic Schools of Thought (Epicures, Stoics, Sceptics)**  
seminar: analysis of Hellenistic texts
5. **Week 5 – Neo-Platonism and Patristic Philosophy**  
seminar: excerpts from works of Plotinus and Augustine of Hippo
6. **Week 6 – Scholasticism**  
seminar: the ontological argument of Anselm of Canterbury, the problem of universals, arguments for the existence of God of Thomas Aquinas
7. **Week 7 – The Birth of Modern Philosophy: Francis Bacon and Thomas Hobbes**  
seminar: excerpts from *Novum Organum* by Bacon and *Leviathan* by Hobbes
8. **Week 8 – Rationalism: The Philosophy of René Descartes and Baruch Spinoza; The Natural Scientific Work of Descartes**  
seminar: excerpts from *Meditations* by Descartes and *Ethics* by Spinoza
9. **Week 9 – Empiricism: The Philosophy of John Locke, George Berkeley and David Hume**  
seminar: excerpts from *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* by Locke, *Three Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous* by Berkeley and *A Treatise of Human Nature* by Hume
10. **Week 10 – The Philosophy of Enlightenment: Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Immanuel Kant**  
seminar: excerpts from the works of Kant (*Answering the Question: What is Enlightenment?*, *Critique of Pure Reason*)
11. **Week 11 – Classical German Philosophy**  
seminar: excerpts from the works of Fichte, Schelling and Hegel
12. **Week 12 – Philosophy of Søren Kierkegaard and Friedrich Nietzsche**

seminar: excerpts from the works of Kierkegaard and Nietzsche (e.g. *On Truth and Lies in a Nonmoral Sense*)

**13. Week 13 – An Insight into 20th Century Philosophical Schools (e.g. Phenomenology, Logical Positivism and its 19th century historical and intellectual background, Philosophy of Science, Existentialist Philosophy, Hermeneutics, Deconstruction)**

seminar: excerpts from 20th century works of philosophy

**Course instructor in charge:** Dr. Gusztáv Bölcskei, university professor

**Additional course instructor(s):** Dr. Szilárd Kmeczkó, college associate professor