



Worldviews and the Human Person

DESCRIPTION

What is the meaning of human existence? What is the origin, essence, and destiny of the human being? These questions are perennial ones, and have received very different replies in the course of history. The present course focuses on answers offered by a small selection of philosophies and religions, ancient and modern, western and eastern, with the object, firstly, of understanding their different ways of looking at reality; secondly, of critically evaluating their way of thought; and thirdly, of comparing them to see interesting similarities and differences.

This course is actually the first half of a more extensive one lasting two semesters, but may be taken as an independent subject in the first semester. It covers the following worldviews: absolute Hedonism (Aristippus) and mitigated Hedonism (Epicurus); Platonism; Hinduism; Thomism; Existentialism (Sartre).

This course belongs to the Core Curriculum of the University of Navarra

CREDITS

3 ECTS

CONTACT HOURS

30 hours

PREREQUISITES

None

GOALS

This course is an exercise in the comprehension of widely differing worldviews -- ancient and modern, Western and Eastern. It aims to provide students with an experience in understanding and appraising points of view quite different from their own, and help them develop the ability to engage in intelligent and respectful dialogue with others.

COMPETENCIES

After this course you will be able to make an:

- Analysis of texts
- Critical evaluation of ideas
- Comparison of different thought systems

ASSESSMENT

Students will be evaluated based on their achievement of the program, which will be measured through the following components:

Components	Percentage
Participation in class and attendance	25%
Exam 1	35%
Exam 2	40%
TOTAL	100%

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Because of the communicative nature of this course, you need to attend class every day. Absences with no official documentation will result in the deduction of one percentage point from your final grade (of 100 total points). Any student with more than 8 unexcused absences will automatically fail the course. Absences need to be excused either before the student is absent or one classroom day after being absent. Late arrivals or early departures from class will also be counted as absences (3 occurrences = 1 absence). It is the student's responsibility to notify their instructor ahead of time of any absences and to contact their classmates to know what they missed in class and the homework that was assigned.

To receive credit for missed assignments (*achievements, homework, compositions, etc.*) students need to bring official documentation and submit them as well as letting their instructor know.

ADDITIONAL GENERAL ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES

Cell Phone, Laptop Tablets, or any electronic device in the Classroom: Please be courteous and **turn off your cell phone before the start of each class.** We also request that you *do not use* a laptop computer during class without expressly being invited to do so by your Instructor (e.g., during a Writing Workshop). Your full attention needs to be committed to communicating in Spanish with your teacher and classmates during each class.

Academic Integrity: Plagiarism, cheating, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor, tampering with the academic work of others and other forms of academic dishonesty may lead to lowered course grades, failure of the course or more severe measures, depending on judgments of the gravity of the individual case.

Code of Student Conduct: Student behavior or speech that disrupts the instructional setting or is clearly disrespectful of the instructor or fellow students will not be tolerated. Disruptive conduct may include but is not limited to: 1. Rude or disrespectful behavior; 2. Unwarranted interruptions; 3. Failure to adhere to instructor's directions; 4. Vulgar or obscene language, slurs, or other forms of intimidation; 5. Physically or verbally abusive behavior. Student behavior that is inappropriate will result in disenrollment from the course.

Extra Credit: No additional extra credit will be given under any circumstances.

COURSE OUTLINE

Part I: The ultimate questions: What is a human person (anthropos)? What is his/her origin, and what is his/her destiny?

Part II: The question of the meaning of existence. What does the human being seek in life? Does life in fact have a meaning? (The notion of an ultimate end). Everyone wants to be happy; but what is happiness exactly?

Part III: Critical examination of diverse answers:

- 1) Absolute hedonism (Aristippus). Brief history of Aristippus and hedonism. Maximizing pleasure and minimizing pain as a formula for happiness.
- 2) Mitigated hedonism (Epicurus). Brief history of Epicurus and hedonism. The atomic theory applied to the human person. Achieving tranquility (ataraxia) by minimizing superfluous needs.
- 3) Platonism. Brief history of Plato and Platonism. The World of Ideas. The actual human condition and the nostalgia for an ideal world.
- 4) Hinduism. Brief history of Hinduism. Brahman, the universe, and the human person. The wheel of reincarnation. The goal of dissolution in Brahman.
- 5) Thomism. Arguments in favor of the existence of a Supreme Being. Human purpose and happiness.
- 6) Existentialism (Sartre). Brief biography of Sartre. Developing a morality without God.

COURSE MATERIALS

Course Website

The professor will provide all the required materials through ADI.

Aula Virtual ADI (Blackboard). It is essential that students check ADI daily.