

Glendale Unified School District

High School

August 31, 2021

Department: Social Studies

Course Title: Philosophy

Course Code: 6267D/6268D

Grade Level(s): 9-12

School(s)
Course Offered: Glendale High School

UC/CSU Approved
(Y/N Subject): Yes, (G) College-Preparatory Elective

Course Credits: 10

Recommended
Prerequisite: None

Recommended
Textbook: Popkin, Richard H. and Avrum Stroll. Philosophy Made Simple.
Crown; 2nd edition (July 1, 1993)

Course Overview: This course is an introduction to the major concerns of Western philosophy. Topics included are the question of ethics, metaphysics, the philosophy of religion, and the theory of knowledge. Through an examination of the evolution of key philosophical issues, students will also learn how arguments are formed, how new theories are developed from philosophical debate, and how through disagreement a greater understanding of complex topics can occur. Throughout the class students will examine their own systems of knowledge, beliefs, and the course will culminate with them creating a portfolio of their own personal philosophy.

First Semester

Unit 1: **Introduction to Philosophy**

(3 weeks)

- A. This unit is designed to introduce the student to the concept of critical thinking, logic, and how one studies Philosophy. Students will learn what it means to define philosophy and the different varieties it contains. Students will learn that philosophers have historically attempted to work out some general, systematic, coherent, and consistent picture of all that we know and think. They will obtain a general understanding of ethics, political philosophy, metaphysics, and the theory of knowledge.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.1
Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.
 - CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.2
Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.
- B. Students shall produce 1-2 page “pre-knowledge” reflection papers offering their initial opinions on the big ideas presented in class. Each paper shall respond to an essential question, for example, “How do you know the difference between right and wrong?” or “How do you know that you exist?” Papers will be presented in class.

Unit 2: **Ethics**

(6 weeks)

- A. In this unit, students will investigate and evaluate the theoretical study of the different codes or sets of principles by which people live their lives. Students will attempt to answer the question of what is right and what is wrong and discuss whether there are any universal ethical truths. They will learn where ethical principles come from and what they mean and consider the moral standards that determine right and wrong. Students will determine how theories of ethics apply to specific issues of contemporary relevance and study. Students will read works about: Platonism, Aristotle, Hedonism, Cynicism, Spinoza, Kant, Naturalism, and Objectivism.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.3
Evaluate various explanations for actions or events and determine which explanation best ACCORDS with textual evidence, acknowledging where the text leaves matters uncertain.

- B. Students will choose a specific issue of contemporary relevance, such as the environment, war, immigration, capital punishment, etc. Using the different ethical theories studied in class, students will write a 1.5-2 page essay describing how each branch of ethics would view the issue and how they would solve it. Students will present their essay in class.

Unit 3: **Political Philosophy**

(6 weeks)

- A. In this unit, students will define and study political philosophy. They will discuss what a person's relationship is to society is and what role ethics play in the relationship between individuals and society. Students will investigate what a government owes its citizens and what citizens owe a government. Students will study the work of Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, John Stuart Mill, and Marx. They will discuss what an "ideal" form of government would look like and debate whether or not there is an "ideal" form. Students will examine what the primary values are that hold a society together and if there is ever a legitimate reason to overthrow a government.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.8
Evaluate an author's premises, claims, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other information.
 - CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.9
Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.
- B. Using one of the four political philosophers studied in this unit, students will create their own country and government using their particular philosophy on what a government should look like. Students will name their country, name their political party, and create laws that abide by their chosen philosophy. Students will need to create a travel brochure of their country and present it in class.

Unit 4: **Applied Ethics**

(4 weeks)

- A. This unit is designed for students to examine current ethical issues with the knowledge they have obtained from all previous units. Students will examine and discuss issues such as: is it a criminal act to euthanize an animal, should drugs be legalized, is terrorism ever justified, and is cheating morally wrong.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.9
Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.
- B. Students will debate these issues in classes, being sure to choose an ethical framework to work within. They will defend and critique peer positions from within their chosen

philosophical framework and spend much of the unit researching and working on a 2-3 page position paper.

Second Semester

Unit 5: Metaphysics

(6 weeks)

A. This unit is designed to introduce students to the study of metaphysics. Students will learn about pluralism and monism and explore the concept of free will. Students will debate how one knows that they “exist” and attempt to answer the question of what “reality” is. Students will read and examine Plato’s “Allegory of the Cave” and write about the concept of reality Plato is attempting to push forward with this piece. Students will read about and discuss the concept of Determinism and evaluate their own concepts of free will and be able to debate their opinions. Additionally, students will read criticism of metaphysics.

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.1

Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.2

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

B. Students will interview 6-8 people, using a system of Cartesian Queries and formulate the interviews into prose format for the purpose of presentations. Possible questions may include: Can you trust reality? Can you prove you exist? How are you sure that you’re not dreaming right now? Students will then interpret their interviewee’s questions and write a 2 page essay on what they discovered about people’s perception of reality and existence. It will be presented in class.

Unit 6: Philosophy of Religion

(6 weeks)

A. In this unit, students will learn about the philosophy of religion. Students will study the work of David Hume, St. Thomas Aquinas, and look at the theory of cosmology. Students will critically think about the evidence for the existence of god and discuss what “rational” belief is and learn to define it. They will examine the existence of “evil” and debate how evil and a belief in God can coexist. Students will understand the relationship between ethics and morality and be able to describe the difference between theology and the philosophy of religion.

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.4

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including analyzing how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term over the course of a text (e.g., how Madison defines *faction* in *Federalist* No. 10).

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.5

Analyze in detail how a complex primary source is structured, including how key sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text contribute to the whole.

- B. Students will read “Proof of Existence of God” by St. Thomas Aquinas. They will approach the material as an “expert” on the subjects of religion and philosophy. They will write a 3-4 page paper outlining their interpretation and criticisms of the material. They will be required to cite possible responses/criticism of at least two other philosophers in their paper, based upon their previous knowledge.

Unit 7: **Theory of Knowledge**

(6 weeks)

- A. This unit is designed to introduce students to the theory of knowledge. Students will study the relationship between knowledge and belief as well as knowledge and truth. They will understand what it means to justify knowledge and examine how the senses play into how one obtains knowledge. Students will study the philosophy and concepts of Descartes, Ancient Greeks, Bishop George Berkeley, and Kant. They will also work to understand what objective reality is and how it applies to philosophy and their own lives.

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.8

Evaluate an author's premises, claims, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other information.

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.9

Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

- B. Students will choose one of the philosophers from this unit and create a presentation on their life and philosophy. They will study the philosopher's history, interpret their philosophy, and discuss how it is relevant in today's world. Students will create either a poster or power point presentation about their philosopher and present it to the class.

Unit 8: **Applied Ethics**

(4 weeks)

- A. This unit is designed for students to examine current ethical issues with the knowledge they have obtained from all previous units. Students will examine and discuss issues such as: is it a criminal act to euthanize an animal, should drugs be legalized, is

terrorism ever justified, and is cheating morally wrong. Students will debate these issues in classes, being sure to choose an ethical framework to work within. They will defend their positions using philosophy and spend much of the unit researching and working on their final project.

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.9

Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

- B. Students will write their own personal philosophy and draw from the philosophical theories they have studied over the entirety of the course. Students will use examples of ethical dilemmas in their paper and explain in detail what they believe the right answer is based on their personal philosophy. Students will research and use articles to support their claims. They will need to cite their sources and explain why they have reached the conclusion they have. The paper shall be 3-5 pages long and include a works cited. Students will present their personal philosophy in class.

Additional Recommended Materials - *Must be approved by Board of Education.*

- Gaarder, Jostien. Sophie's World. Farrar, Straus and Giroux; First Printing edition (March 20, 2007)