

Aspects of Western Philosophy - Video course

COURSE OUTLINE

This course attempts to give an overview of the major philosophical trends and approaches of the European civilization. It starts with a discussion of the Greek philosophy where we find the historical beginnings of Western thought.

After a discussion of the major contributions of the Greek thinkers like the pre-Socratics, Sophists, Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, the course will have a brief examination of Medieval philosophy.

A detail examination of the Modern Philosophy will follow where we discuss the Rationalism of thinkers like Descartes, Spinoza and Leibnitz, the Empiricism of John Locke, George Berkeley and David Hume, the critical philosophy of Kant, the absolute idealism of Hegel and the historical materialism of Karl Marx. This will be followed by an examination of Nietzsche's criticism of western philosophy.

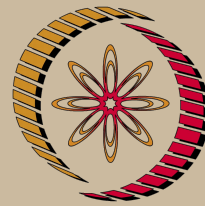
The remaining portion deal with twentieth century contributions to western philosophy, with an examination of the major traditions of Analytic philosophy and Continental thought.

We will discuss thinkers like Russell and Wittgenstein and also the contributions of the Logical Positivist philosophers when we discuss Analytic philosophy and the discussion of Continental thought will begin with the Phenomenology of Edmund Husserl.

This will be followed by a discussion of the philosophies of Heidegger and Sartre and some other Existential philosophers. The course will conclude with a brief survey of the Postmodern developments that take place in contemporary thought.

COURSE DETAIL

Module/Lecture No.	Topic
1	Greek Philosophy: Ionians, Pythagoras, Parmenides, Heraclitus and Democritus
2	Sophists, Socrates; philosophy of man; relativism and subjectivism; the idea of good
3	Plato's idealism: theory of ideas
4	Plato: theory of knowledge, method of dialectic; theory of soul
5	Aristotle's criticism of Platonic idealism and the concepts of Form and Matter



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<http://nptel.iitm.ac.in>

Humanities and Social Sciences

Additional Reading:

1. Ayer, A.J, *Language, Truth and Logic*, London, Penguin Books, 1971.
2. Bowie, Andrew, *Introduction to German Philosophy: From Kant to Habermas*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 2003.
3. Davidson, D, *Inquiries into Meaning and Truth*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.
4. Deleuze, Gilles, and Guattari, Felix, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, Robert Hurley, Mark Seem, Helen R. Lane (trans.), Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983.
5. Gross, Barry, *Analytic Philosophy: An Historical Introduction*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1981.
6. Kockelmans, Joseph J, *Phenomenology*, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc, 1967.
7. Lyotard, J.-F, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, Geoff BENnington and Brian Massumi (trans.), Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984.
8. Moran, Dermot, *Introduction to Phenomenology*, London:Routledge, 2000.
9. Spiegelberg, Herbert, *The Phenomenological Movement: A Historical Introduction*, Vol. I and

10. Wittgenstein, L, *Tractatus Logico Philosophicus*,

11. Wittgenstein, L, *Philosophical Investigations*, Trans. By G.E.M. Anscombe, Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1953.

12. Wood, Allen W, *Karl Marx*, New York: Routledge, 2004.

Hyperlinks:

<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/>

Coordinators:

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6	Aristotle's theory of causation; potentiality and actuality
7	Medieval philosophy: St. Augustine and the Problem of evil; St. Thomas Aquinas's concepts of faith and reason; proofs for the existence of God.
8	Modern Philosophy: main characteristic features; renaissance and scientific revolution; rationalism and empiricism: main features.
9	Descartes: the method in philosophy; the concepts of doubt and indubitable knowledge.
10	Descartes: the mind-body dualism; the concept of God and proofs for God's existence
11	Spinoza: the concepts of Substance, attributes and modes.
12	Spinoza's pantheism-God and nature
13	Leibniz: Monadology; the mind-body problem revisited; concept of God; the concept of pre-established harmony
14	The empiricism of John Locke: ideas and their classification; refutation of innate ideas
15	John Locke: theory of knowledge; concept of substance; the primary and secondary qualities
16	Berkeley: the refutation of the distinction between primary and secondary qualities, immaterialism
17	Berkeley's critique of abstract ideas, esse est percipi, the problem of solipsism; God and self
18	Hume : Impressions and ideas, knowledge concerning relations of ideas and knowledge concerning matters of fact, induction and causality.
19	The external world and the self, personal identity, rejection of metaphysics, scepticism, reason and the passions.
20	Critical Philosophy: characteristic features; Kant's objectives: the classification of judgements, possibility of synthetic a priori judgements, the Copernican revolution
21	Kant: forms of sensibility, categories of understanding; the process of knowledge acquisition; phenomenon and noumenon,

22	The Ideas of Reason-soul, God and world as a whole; antinomies; rejection of speculative metaphysics.
23	Kant's ethics; freedom and immortality, problems with Kant.
24	Hegel : The conception of Geist (spirit), the dialectical method, concepts of being, non-being and becoming,
25	Absolute idealism; consciousness, self consciousness and reason.
26	Karl Marx: historical materialism; the significance of the proletariat; the base structure-superstructure division.
27	Nietzsche : Critique of western culture, religion and morality; will to power; the idea of superman.
28	Linguistic turn in British philosophy: Russell's logical atomism and the refutation of idealism.
29	Wittgenstein : early Wittgenstein's conception of language and reality; the picture theory of meaning
30	Later Wittgenstein's conception of language games and forms of life; meaning and use.
31	Logical positivism; against metaphysics and a scientific conception of philosophy; the limitation of logical positivism
32	Husserl : Phenomenology and the methods of reduction; the principle of intentionality.
33	Phenomenological reduction, eidetic reduction and transcendental reduction; transcendental subjectivity; the pure subject.
34	Heidegger : phenomenological hermeneutics; concept of Being; man as being-in-the-world; destruction of the western intellectual tradition.
35	Authentic and inauthentic existence; Truth as disclosure
36	Existentialism: main features; existence precedes essence; freedom and responsibility; finiteness and situatedness of human existence
37	Sartre's conception of human existence; man is condemned to be free; rejection of essentialism

38	The concept of being-in-itself, being-for-itself and being-for-others
39	Postmodernism: major trends and chief characteristic features; conceptions of human subject; different postmodern approaches
40	Deconstruction, feminism, discourse theory etc.
Total Lectures=40	

References:

1. Ayer, A.J., *Philosophy in the Twentieth Century*, London: Weidenfeld, 1982.
2. Bhadra, Mrinal Kanti, *Phenomenology and Existentialism*, New Delhi: ICPR in association with Allied Publishers, 1990.
3. Brooker, Peter (Ed.) *Modernism/Postmodernism* (Longman Critical Readers), Essex: Longman Publishing Group, 1992.
4. Gerner, Paul, *Twentieth Century German Philosophy*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.
5. Kenny, Anthony, *A Brief History of Western Philosophy*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1981.
6. Moran, Dermot, *Introduction to Phenomenology*, London: Routledge, 2000.
7. Rogers, Arthur Kenyon, *A Student's History of Philosophy*, New York: The Macmillan Company, 3rd edition, 1971.
8. Russell, Bertrand, *A History of Western Philosophy*, London: Routledge, 2000.