

Higher Institute of Philosophy


FILO1113 Philosophical propaedeutics 1 : Historical introduction to Philosophy

[45h+30h exercises] 5 credits

This course is taught in the 1st semester

Teacher(s): Jean Leclercq
Language: French
Level: First cycle

Aims

The objectives entail understanding the basic elements of a philosophical tradition. These entail, additionally, the ability to put this tradition to use in the reading of philosophical texts, whether classical or recent, as well as the ability to compose works that demonstrate an understanding of what is at stake, both on a historiographical and on a thematic level, in the texts we shall examine. In addition to these criteria, oriented towards philosophical research, should be added also criteria evaluating the ability to address a specific type of reader and to express clearly the projected objective through an exposition that is informed, well argued, critical, and intelligible.

Main themes

The key turning points in the development of Western philosophy. The course will concentrate on showing both the role that context plays in the emergence of various fields and disciplines that constitute the corpus we call "philosophy" in Europe today, and how this context is linked to the articulation of some of philosophy's cardinal questions. This will allow us to show how the understanding of the range and scope of these disciplines and questions changed through Western history.

Content and teaching methods

Content: In the Greeks, the appearance of philosophical thinking stemming from: a demythologized reflection on phusis; the experience of the politeia (marking the birth of both political and moral thought); and the formalization of the potentialities of the logos (logic, dialectic, etc.). There will be a more specifically juridical approach to the Romans. The internalization of reflection and the confrontation with religious doctrine at the heart of the Middle Ages. In the Modern Period: the role of subjectivity; the appearance of rationalist, empiricist, and idealist strands; the appearance of phenomena linked to the emergence of capitalism, of secularism, and of individualism; then the crisis following the collapse of idealistic systems and linked to the emergence of so-called "philosophies of suspicion"; and finally, the contemporary attempts to overcome the crisis (phenomenology, hermeneutics, etc.) and the meeting [of philosophy] with the social sciences (psychoanalysis, anthropology, sociology, etc.).

Method:

- a. Base: Lectures (by the professor): providing the basic instruments (doctrines, texts)
- b. Group tutorials (led by the assistant): the reading and commentary of texts that illustrate the lectures; preparation by the students; discussions.
- c. Work in small groups (led by the student monitors); the writing of short works to be presented, and defended, in the presence of the assistant and of the larger group (or team)
- d. Individual work done by the student to assimilate the lectures, preparing exercise sessions (library research, reading), writing of short works, and the writing of an essay, that is, a more substantial work (10 pages) to be defended at the final exam before the lecturer.

Other information (prerequisite, evaluation (assessment methods), course materials recommended readings, ...)

Assessment:

a. Continuous (by the assistant)

i) participation in the tutorials (20% of final grade)

ii) composition of short essays (20% of final grade)

b. Final (by the lecturer): an oral exam covering the entire subject matter of the lectures as well as a discussion of the essay written by the student (60% of final grade)

c. Synthesis (deliberation of grade): final grade based on "a" and "b."

Supporting Materials:

i) Course notes

ii) Readings (philosophical texts illustrating the lectures and meant to be examined both individually and in a group)

iii) IT materials

Other credits in programs

FILO11BA	Première année de bachelier en philosophie	(5 credits)	Mandatory
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