

Philosophy: Questions and Theories



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Course Description

Philosophy: Questions and Theories

Course Code:	HZT4U
Grade:	12
Course Type:	University Preparation
Credit Value:	1.0
Prerequisite:	Any university or university/college preparation course in social sciences and humanities, English, or Canadian and world studies.
Curriculum Policy Document:	<u>Social Sciences and Humanities, The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 9 to 12, 2013</u>
Developed:	2019-2020 by Dr. Dan Aviv
Revised:	June, 2023 by Dr. Dan Aviv

This course enables students to acquire an understanding of the nature of philosophy and philosophical reasoning skills and to develop and apply their knowledge and skills while exploring specialized branches of philosophy.

This course covers the following branches: metaphysics, ethics, epistemology, as well as social and political philosophy.

Students will also develop critical thinking and philosophical reasoning skills as they formulate and evaluate arguments related to a variety of philosophical questions and theories.

They will also develop research and inquiry skills related to the study and practice of philosophy.

Overall Expectations

Throughout this course, you will:

- explore topics related to philosophy, and formulate questions to guide their research.
- create research plans, and locate and select information relevant to your chosen topics, using appropriate philosophical research and inquiry methods.
- communicate the results of their research and inquiry clearly and effectively, and reflect on and evaluate their research, inquiry, and communication skills.
- demonstrate an understanding of the main areas of philosophy, periods of philosophical development, and the differences between philosophy and other areas of inquiry.
- demonstrate an understanding of philosophical reasoning and critical thinking skills, including skills required to identify and avoid common fallacies of reasoning, and demonstrate the ability to apply these skills in various contexts.
- demonstrate an understanding of the main questions in **metaphysics** and of the positions of major philosophers and schools of philosophy with respect to some of these questions.
- demonstrate an understanding of **metaphysical** theories, and evaluate responses to some of the main questions in metaphysics by major philosophers and schools of philosophy.
- demonstrate an understanding of connections between **metaphysics** and other areas of philosophy, other subject areas, and various aspects of society, including everyday life.
- use philosophical reasoning skills to develop, communicate, and defend your own responses to **metaphysical** questions.
- demonstrate an understanding of the main questions in **ethics** and of the positions of major philosophers and schools of philosophy with respect to some of these questions.
- demonstrate an understanding of theories in **ethics**, and evaluate responses to some of the main questions in ethics by major philosophers and schools of philosophy.
- demonstrate an understanding of connections between **ethics** and other areas of philosophy, other subject areas, and various aspects of society, including everyday life.
- use philosophical reasoning skills to develop, communicate, and defend your own responses to philosophical questions in **ethics**.

- demonstrate an understanding of the main questions in **epistemology**, and of the positions of major philosophers and schools of philosophy with respect to some of these questions.
- demonstrate an understanding of **epistemological** theories, and evaluate responses to some of the main questions in epistemology by major philosophers and schools of philosophy.
- demonstrate an understanding of connections between **epistemology** and other areas of philosophy, other subject areas, and various aspects of society, including everyday life.
- use philosophical reasoning skills to develop, communicate, and defend your own responses to **epistemological** questions.
- demonstrate an understanding of the main questions in **social and political philosophy**, and of the positions of major philosophers and schools of philosophy with respect to some of these questions.
- demonstrate an understanding of theories in **social and political philosophy**, and evaluate responses to some of the main questions in social and political philosophy by major philosophers and schools of philosophy.
- demonstrate an understanding of connections between **social and political philosophy** and other areas of philosophy, other subject areas, and various aspects of society, including everyday life.
- use philosophical reasoning skills to develop, communicate, and defend your own responses to questions in **social and political philosophy**.
- demonstrate an understanding of the main questions in **aesthetics** and of the positions of major philosophers and schools of philosophy with respect to some of these questions.
- demonstrate an understanding of theories in **aesthetics**, and evaluate responses to some of the main questions in ethics by major philosophers and schools of philosophy.
- demonstrate an understanding of connections between **aesthetics** and other areas of philosophy, other subject areas, and various aspects of society, including everyday life.
- use philosophical reasoning skills to develop, communicate, and defend your own responses to philosophical questions in **aesthetics**.

Course Calendar

Our meetings take place on ZOOM on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4:15-5:45pm.

Oct 17+18, 2023	Nov 21+23	Jan 16+18	Feb 27+29	Apr 16+18
Oct 24+26	Nov 28+30	Jan 23+25	Mar 5+7	May 7+9
Oct 31+Nov 2	Dec 5+7	Jan 30+Feb 1	Mar 19+21	May 14+16
Nov 7+9	Dec 12+14	Feb 6+8	Mar 26+28	May 28+30
Nov 14+16	Jan 9+11, 2024	Feb 13+15	Apr 9+11*	June 4+6
				June 18+20

* 1-on-1 ZOOM consultations about your Culminating

Asynchronous learning happens anytime, anywhere and anyplace.

Software / Hardware Requirements

You should have access to an internet connection, broadband wired or wireless preferred.

You will need speakers, a microphone and a webcam. Laptops tend to have them built in.

Your machine should be running macOSX 13 or later or Windows 11.

You can also use the following browsers: Edge, Firefox, Chrome or Safari.

Units of Study

Units	
Unit One: What is Philosophy? What is Jewish Philosophy?	18h 0m
Unit Two: The Islamic World	27h 0m
Unit Three: The Christian "West"	27h 0m
Unit Four: Convergence + Conclusion	40h 30m
CCT	
Culminating	5h 0m
Total Hours	117h 30m

Teaching/Learning Strategies

Brainstorming - group generation of initial ideas expressed without criticism or analysis

Carousel - expert groups or individuals prepare and deliver a carousel or presentation on specific topic for students who circulate from station to station in the carousel

Case Study - investigation of real and simulated problems/scenarios

Concept attainment - from a set of examples students are to determine the concept being illustrated

Conference - student-to-student and student to teacher discussion

Debate - formal group discussions with planned presentations

Essay - research using written text, Internet, visual and auditory media resulting in a written response in appropriate essay form

Guest and Student Speakers - use of guest speakers from other faiths and students from other denominations or faiths who share their stories and worldviews

Independent Study - students explore and research a topic of interest

Jigsaw - specialized group learning followed by home group sharing

Journal - individual reflections recorded in a journal

Kiosk - visual and oral presentations gathered into a display that summarizes selected learning in a cluster

Media Analysis - critique of media resources to support new learning

Media Presentation - use of technology to create and deliver presentation

Mind Map - a graphic method of presenting information using a central image, subsidiary concepts radiating outward, accompanied by symbols and texts

Portfolio - student work collected over the duration of the course and held in a folder

Prayer Service - prepare and participate in celebrations with prayer

Role Play/Drama - visual expressions of ideas expressed through movement, word, and song, without criticism or analysis

Simulation Games - games that encourage reflection and interpretation of events/situations

Socratic presentation - teacher presentation of information using questioning and class discussion

Story-telling - presenting ideas through the art of story telling and reflective discussion

Story Writing/Telling - students create stories and record them for uploading to Youtube

Survey/Interview - collection of data

Taking a Stand - students move in the classroom to a place symbolic of a stance

Think/Pair/Share - students reflect on concept, then share with a partner, then students share the partner's reflections with larger group

Course Requirements

Our course has **THREE** key components.

The first is a face-to-face (**F2F**) interaction and learning with me via ZOOM. This will include an introduction to the topic, discussion, debate and analysis. The second component happens "offline," when you will be working on your learning goals either individually, in pairs or teams of three or more - depending on the assignment.

	# hrs
Face to Face (F2F)	75h 0m
Asynchronous Learning ("Offline")	37h 30m
The "Culminating"	5h 0m
	117h 30m

At the end of the year, there is a "**culminating**" (**Course Culminating Task or CCT**), the topic of which will be proposed by the individual and approved by me.

Students are expected to prepare for each F2F session by reviewing the assigned materials as indicated in the schedule.

The Course Culminating Task (CCT)

The CCT (or "Culminating") will involve a topic you develop individually or in conjunction with peers and me, the teacher.

This project will provide you with an opportunity to:

- support an argument using specific and relevant evidence.
- use critical thinking and reasoning to explain relationships.
- consider ways that diverse or alternative evidence could be used to qualify or modify an argument.

Course Culminating Task	
Overall Expectations	Success Criteria
<p>A1. Explore topics related to philosophy, and formulate question(s) to guide their research;</p> <p>A2. Create a research plan, and locate and select information relevant to their chosen topic, using appropriate philosophical research and inquiry methods;</p> <p>A3. Assess, record, analyse, and synthesize information gathered through research and inquiry;</p> <p>A4. Communicate the results of their research and inquiry clearly and effectively, and reflect on and evaluate their research, inquiry, and communication skills.</p>	<p>K: Define key terms and concepts related to your culminating thesis. Identify key figures in your culminating thesis. Connect concepts and ideas with concrete examples from your culminating thesis. Generalize about trends and themes related to your culminating thesis</p> <p>T: Research/gather evidence in support of your thesis. Appraise and challenge the evidence.</p> <p>C: Present ideas in a clear and coherent fashion. Express yourself with proper writing conventions (i.e., spelling, grammar, punctuation). Cite sources consistently with an accepted citation style.</p> <p>A: Apply the lens of philosophical thinking to your analysis and writing. Revise drafts based on recommendations.</p>
Specific Expectations	Learning Goals
<p>A1.1 explore a variety of topics related to philosophy to identify topics for research and inquiry</p> <p>A1.2 identify key concepts related to their selected topic</p> <p>A1.3 formulate effective questions to guide their research and inquiry</p> <p>A2.1 create appropriate research plans to investigate their selected topic(s)</p> <p>A2.2 locate and select information relevant to their investigations from a variety of primary sources and secondary sources</p> <p>A2.3 based on preliminary research, formulate arguments and anticipate counter-arguments</p> <p>A3.1 assess various aspects of information gathered from primary and secondary sources</p> <p>A3.2 record and organize information and key ideas using a variety of formats</p> <p>A3.3 analyse and interpret research information</p> <p>A3.4 demonstrate academic honesty by documenting the sources of all information generated through research</p> <p>A3.5 synthesize findings and formulate conclusions</p> <p>A4.1 use an appropriate format to communicate the results of research and inquiry effectively for a specific purpose and audience</p> <p>A4.2 correctly use terms relating to their chosen topic(s)</p> <p>A4.3 clearly communicate the results of their inquiries, and follow appropriate conventions for acknowledging sources</p> <p>A4.4 demonstrate an understanding of the general research process by reflecting on and evaluating their own research, inquiry, and communication skills</p>	<p>Reflect and respond to the following essential question(s):</p> <p>How do I live a good life?</p> <p>How do I know what is good?</p> <p>How do I live best with other people?</p>

Evaluation and Grading

Our theory of assessment and evaluation follows the Ministry of Education's Growing Success document, and it is our firm belief that doing so is in the best interest of learners.



Students will be assessed frequently throughout this course.

Many of the assessments will be informal, providing important data for feedback, such as short quizzes at the end of the F2F or exit tickets at the end of group work time.

Report cards will be issues at the end of January and at the end of the academic year in June. The mid-year report, with your consent, will be sent to your home school.

The final grade for this course will consist of two parts:

Formal Assessments 70%

CCT 30%

Seventy percent (**70%**) of the grade will be based on evaluations conducted throughout the course. This portion of the grade reflects the student’s most consistent level of achievement throughout the course, although special consideration will be given to more recent evidence of achievement.

Thirty percent (**30%**) of the grade is based on a final evaluation in the form of a performance, essay, and/or other method of evaluation suitable to the course content and administered toward the end of the course (*Program, Planning and Assessment: The Ontario Curriculum Grades 9 to 12*, p.15). In this course, it is suggested that an CCT be a culminating performance task.

The breakdown includes assessment for learning, assessment as learning and assessment of learning as well as achievement strategies which include observations and conversations in addition to student products so that a mark can be triangulated.

Triangulation is effective and accurate for determining student performance because it can demonstrate at what level a student most consistently performs. In addition, if a student struggles in one area but does significantly better in the other two areas, the teacher can work more effectively with that student to bring their overall performance to a more consistent level.

FYI	
4+	95 – 100
4	87 – 94
4-	80 – 86
3+	77 – 79
3	73 – 76
3-	70 – 72
2+	67 – 69
2	63 – 66
2-	60 – 62
1+	57 – 59
1	53 – 56
1-	50 – 52
%	Below 50
35-49%	accelerated makeup option

Program Considerations

Instructional Approaches

Effective instruction is key to student success. When planning what students will learn, teachers identify the main concepts and skills described in the curriculum expectations, consider the contexts in which students will apply the learning, and determine students' learning goals.

Instructional approaches are informed by the findings of current research on instructional practices that have proved effective in the classroom. A well-planned instructional program is at the student's level, but it also pushes them towards their optimal level of challenge for learning, while providing the support and anticipating and directly teaching the skills that are required for success.

Teachers continually build their awareness of students' learning strengths and needs by observing and assessing their readiness to learn, their interests, and their learning styles and preferences. As teachers develop and deepen their understanding of individual students, they can respond more effectively to the students' needs by differentiating instructional approaches – adjusting the method or pace of instruction, using different types of resources, allowing a wider choice of topics, even adjusting the learning environment, if appropriate, to suit the way their students learn and how they are best able to demonstrate their learning.

Motivating students and instilling positive habits of mind, such as a willingness and determination to persist, to think and communicate with clarity and precision, to take responsible risks, and to question and pose problems, are also integral to high-quality instruction.

Planning for Students With Special Educational Needs

We adhere to evolving provisions emerging from the application of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Ontario Human Rights Code, The Education Act and the regulations related to it as well as best practices related to the teaching and assessment of students with special educational needs. *Learning for All: A Guide to Effective Assessment and Instruction for All Students, Kindergarten to Grade 12 (Draft 2011)* describes a set of beliefs, based in research, that guides program planning for students with special education needs in all disciplines. At ADRABA, we believe that all students can succeed. Each student has his or her own unique patterns of learning. Successful instructional practices are founded in evidence-based research, tempered by experience. An open and accessible learning environment with differentiated instruction are effective and interconnected means of meeting the learning or productivity needs of any group of students. Classroom teachers are the key educators for a student's literacy and numeracy development. Classroom teachers need the support of the larger community to create a learning environment that supports students with special education needs. And, finally, fairness is not sameness.

In planning Media Studies courses for students with special education needs, the teacher begins by examining both the curriculum expectations in the course appropriate for the individual student and the student's particular strengths and learning needs to determine which of the following options is appropriate for the student: no accommodations or modified expectations; or accommodations only; or modified expectations, with the

possibility of accommodations; or alternative expectations, which are not derived from the curriculum expectations for a course and which constitute alternative programs and/or courses.

There are three types of accommodations. *Instructional accommodations* are changes in teaching strategies, including styles of presentation, methods of organization, or use of technology and multimedia. Some examples include the use of graphic organizers, photocopied notes, or assistive software. *Environmental accommodations* are changes that the student may require in the classroom and/or school environment, such as preferential seating or special lighting. *Assessment accommodations* are changes in assessment procedures that enable the student to demonstrate their learning, such as allowing additional time to complete tests or assignments or permitting oral responses to test questions.

For a detailed discussion of the ministry's requirements for IEPs, see Part E of *Special Education in Ontario*. (The document is available at bit.ly/specialedinontario) And for more examples of accommodations, see page E39.

Program Considerations for English Language Learners

In planning programs for students with linguistic backgrounds other than English, the teacher needs to recognize the importance of the orientation process, understanding that every learner needs to adjust to the new social environment and language in a unique way and at an individual pace. Responsibility for students' English-language development is shared by the classroom teacher, the ESL/ELD teacher (where available), and other school staff. Appropriate adaptations include modification of some or all of the subject expectations so that they are challenging but attainable for the learners at their present level of English proficiency, given the necessary support from the teacher, use of a variety of instructional strategies, use of a variety of learning resources and use of assessment accommodations.

For further information on supporting English language learners, refer to the following documents:

- *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 9–12: English as a Second Language and English Literacy Development, 2007*
- *English Language Learners – ESL and ELD Programs and Services: Policies and Procedures for Ontario Elementary and Secondary Schools, Kindergarten to Grade 12, 2007*
- *Supporting English Language Learners with Limited Prior Schooling: A Practical Guide for Ontario Educators, Grades 3 to 12, 2008*
- *Many Roots, Many Voices: Supporting English Language Learners in Every Classroom, 2005.*

Antidiscrimination Education

The implementation of antidiscrimination principles in education influences all aspects of school life. It promotes a school climate that encourages all students to work to high standards, affirms the worth of all students, and helps students strengthen their sense of

identity and develop a positive self-image. It encourages staff and students alike to value and show respect for diversity in the school and the wider society. It requires schools to adopt measures to provide a safe environment for learning, free from harassment, violence, and expressions of hate.

Antidiscrimination education encourages students to think critically about themselves and others in the world around them in order to promote fairness, healthy relationships, and active, responsible citizenship.

Learning resources that reflect the broad range of students' interests, backgrounds, cultures, and experiences are an important aspect of an inclusive program. In such a program, learning materials involve protagonists of both sexes from a wide variety of backgrounds. Magazine and newspaper articles, television programs, and films provide opportunities for students to explore issues relating to representation and their self-identity. In inclusive programs, students are made aware of the historical, cultural, and political contexts for both the traditional and non-traditional gender and social roles represented in the materials they are studying.

The development of critical thinking skills is integral to the Media Studies curriculum. In the context of what is now called "critical literacy", these skills include the ability to identify perspectives, values, and issues; detect bias; and read for implicit as well as overt meaning. In the Media Studies program, students develop the ability to detect negative bias and stereotypes in literary texts and informational materials. When using biased informational texts, or literary works containing negative stereotypes, for the express purpose of critical analysis, teachers must take into account the potential negative impact of bias on students and use appropriate strategies to address students' responses.

Critical literacy also involves asking questions and challenging the status quo, and leads students to look at issues of power and justice in society. The program empowers students by enabling them to express themselves and to speak out about issues that strongly affect them.

Media studies also affords both students and teachers a unique opportunity to explore the social and emotional impact of bullying, violence, and discrimination in the form of racism, sexism, or homophobia on individuals and families. Teachers can help students link the understanding they gain in this regard to messages conveyed through the school's antibullying and violence-prevention programming.

Literacy, Mathematical Literacy, and Inquiry Skills in Media Studies

Literacy involves a range of critical-thinking skills and is essential for learning across the curriculum. Literacy instruction takes different forms of emphasis in different subjects, but in all subjects, literacy needs to be explicitly taught. Literacy, mathematical literacy, and inquiry/research skills are critical to students' success in all subjects of the curriculum and in all areas of their lives.

Students are required to use appropriate and correct terminology, including that related to the concepts of disciplinary thinking, and are encouraged to use language with care and precision in order to communicate effectively.

Media Studies also builds on, reinforces, and enhances mathematical literacy through opportunities to engage with computational strategies and data management and, in particular, the ability to read and construct graphs.

Inquiry and research are at the heart of learning in all subject areas. In Media Studies, students ask questions and to explore a variety of possible answers to those questions, acquiring the skills to locate relevant information from a variety of print and electronic sources, such as books, periodicals, dictionaries, encyclopedias, interviews, videos, and relevant Internet sources. The questioning they practise will become more sophisticated as they learn that all sources of information have a particular point of view and that the recipient of the information has a responsibility to evaluate it, determine its validity and relevance, and use it in appropriate ways. The ability to locate, question, and validate information allows a student to become an independent, lifelong learner.

The Role of the School Library in the Media Studies Program - N/A

The Role of Information and Communications Technology in the Media Studies Program

Information and communications technology (ICT) provides a range of tools that can significantly extend and enrich teachers' instructional strategies and support student learning. ICT can help students not only to collect, organize, and sort the data they gather and to write, edit, and present reports on their findings but also to make connections with other schools, at home and abroad, and to bring the global community into the local classroom.

ICT tools can be used in the inquiry process as they gather, organize, and analyse information, data, and evidence, and as they write, edit, and communicate their findings. ICT tools can be deployed to develop spatial skills. Students can extract and analyse information using on-line interactive mapping and graphing programs. It can also be relevant as part of field studies and simulations.

The Ontario Skills Passport - N/A

Career Education

The classroom teacher supports students in education and career/life planning by providing them with learning opportunities that allow them to apply subject-specific knowledge and skills to work-related situations; explore subject-related education and career/life options; and become competent, self-directed planners.

Cooperative Education and Other Forms of Experiential Learning, Planning Program Pathways and Programs Leading to a Specialist High Skills Major and Health and Safety in the Media Studies Program - N/A

Attendance

Attendance at ADRABA is determined by two factors:

- Physical attendance — logged by the teacher.
- Evidence of current activity — determined by the teacher through evidence of student participation or work through Google classroom, ZOOM or other apps.

Academic Honesty

The following definitions of cheating and plagiarism come verbatim from “Questions and Answers on Academic Honesty For Parents and Students.”

Cheating is defined as the act of practicing deceit or breaking the rules. In the context of assessment and evaluation, cheating would be defined as the deviation from the behaviour expected in an evaluation situation. Examples include but are not limited to:

- Copying another student’s homework;
- Using another student’s work on a test or any other evaluation;
- Bringing unauthorized notes or notations into an evaluation;
- Asking for or giving someone an answer during an evaluation;
- Unauthorized use of electronic media to obtain answers during an evaluation; and
- Presenting assignments that have been completed by someone else as one’s own.

Plagiarizing is defined as the use or close imitation of the language and thoughts of another without attribution, in order to represent them as one’s own original work. (Growing Success 2010, p.151)

It can take many forms, including the following:

- Submitting an essay/assignment written by someone else, e.g., buying an essay online, downloading an essay from a website, having someone else complete one’s assignment, or copying or using work including homework done by another student;
- Piecing together material from one or several sources and adding only linking sentences;
- Quoting or paraphrasing material without citing the source of that material, including, but not limited to books, magazines, journals, websites, newspapers, television programs, radio programs, movies, videos, photographs, and drawings in print or electronic form;

- Copying and pasting from the internet or other electronic sites without citing the source; and
- Omitting quotation marks for direct quotations even if the sources have been cited.

Anything else determined by the teacher as cheating and plagiarism of any kind on an assignment, or assessment will result at least in an “R” for that assignment (and may, depending on the severity of the case, lead to an “R” for the entire course) and may be subject to referral for further action.

Being part of this course, I assume that you will adhere to the **kavod code** and will maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. I will as well.

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