

HS254 Introduction to European Philosophy

Credit: 3-0-0-3

Approval: Approved in 2nd Senate

Prerequisite: Consent of the faculty member

Students intended for: B.Tech.

Elective or Core: Elective

Semester: Odd/Even: Even (Higher Semesters)

Course objective:

The course offers a compact survey of the European tradition in philosophy from its beginnings to the present largely in the form of samplings. The course, however, should not be construed as a historical account of leading thinkers and their ideas. Rather, it is structured around key themes in European thought like the problem of knowledge and its organization, law, religion, society, science and technology. The course examines these issues in their traditional as well as contemporary reflexes and their import for the ideal of the 'Good Life'. In addition, the course emphasizes the four main approaches to the philosophic investigation of phenomena, namely Idealism and Positivism, Rationalism and Empiricism.

Course Content

- The Problem of Knowledge: How do we come by knowledge? From Meno's Paradox to Polanyi's 'Tacit Knowing' (10 hours)
- The Problem of Justice: From Platonic Communism to Marxist Dialectics; from the Polis to the Open Society; from isonomia to distributive justice (10 hours)
- The Problem of Religion: From the City of God to the City of Man; the Church and the State; The Saint and the Statesman; Transcendence and Immanence (10 hours)
- The Problem of Technology: From the Novum Organon to the 'Question Concerning Technology'; 'Technology and the Character of the Good Life' (10 hours)
- The Problem of Philosophy Today: The Battle of the Ancients against the Moderns (5 hours)

Text & Reference Books:

Prescribed Texts:

Eric Lund, Mogens Pihl and Johannes Sløk, *A History of European Ideas*, Hurst, London, 1971.

Select excerpts from the writings of leading European philosophers since Plato (can be had of the teacher)

Recommended Readings:

Alistair J. Sinclair, *What Is Philosophy? An Introduction*, Dunedin Academic Press, Edinburgh, 2008.

Anthony Kenny, *The Oxford Illustrated History of Western Philosophy*, Oxford, Clarendon, 1994.

Bertrand Russell, *A History of Western Philosophy*, Routledge, London, 2004.

Jacob Needleman, *The Heart of Philosophy*, Jeremy P. Tarcher, New York, 2003.

Jostein Gaarder, *Sophie's Dream*, 1995 (soft copy placed in the library).

James L. Christian: *Philosophy, An introduction to the Art of Wonderin*, Wordsworth, Belmont CA 2009.

Richard David Precht, 'Who am I', Spiegel & Grau, New York, 2011.

Richard Schacht, *Hegel and After: Studies in Continental Philosophy Between Kant and Sartre*, University of Pittsburgh Press, Pittsburgh, 1975.

Classical Modern Philosophers: Descartes to Kant, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1984.

Ted Honderich, *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1995.