

COURSE TITLE: IB Philosophy SL & HL

Level of Difficulty	Estimated Homework	Prerequisites
Difficult	60-90 minutes	District: None Department Suggestion: This class is open to juniors and seniors only.

Course Description:

In the words of the IB: "Philosophy involves systematic critical enquiry into profound, fascinating and challenging questions; for example, what is it to be human? Do we have free will? What is truth? Philosophical tools, such as critical and systematic thinking, careful analysis, evaluation and construction of arguments provide us with the means of addressing these questions. Practicing philosophy deepens and clarifies our understanding of these questions and their possible responses.

"The emphasis of the [...] course is very much on doing philosophy. Students develop their skills through the study of philosophical themes and the close reading of philosophical texts. They also learn to apply their philosophical knowledge and skills to real-life examples or situations and learn how non-philosophical material can be treated in a philosophical way. Students are challenged to develop their own philosophical voice and independence of thought, [...] to engage in reflection on the nature of philosophy itself."

The aims of the philosophy course are to enable you to:

- Develop an intellectually independent and creative way of thinking
- Relate your philosophical understanding to other disciplines and to personal, social, and civic life
- Formulate arguments in a sound and purposeful way
- Examine critically your own experience and your ideological and cultural perspectives
- Appreciate the diversity of philosophical thinking
- Appreciate the impact of cultural diversity upon philosophical thinking

This is a writing-intensive course. Students will keep a philosopher's notebook which contains their writings, musings, notes on readings, lectures, terminology, and other assignments. In addition, we will maintain a portfolio of written work from which essays will be selected for grading. All students will be expected to share their writing with peers through multiple means (peer response, author's chair, online posting / discussions). Student-led seminars, group and independent presentations, and "show and tell"-style talks are also regular features of this course.

Grading:

The student and teacher share the burden of grading in this class. The purpose is to give students opportunity to take risks, to try new things, and to practice skills that will surely challenge them. Students will assess and evaluate the work they do; through regular reflective evaluation, students will experience deeper learning of content and skills. It is also expected that self-assessed grades will reflect what was actually learned and not just what was produced. The teacher will inform students of their progress, advising on work compares to expectations, and confirming and/or adjusting grades as appropriate. Grading is based on a 4-point scale.

Syllabus:

The course is designed to meet the requirements of the IB curriculum through an inquiry-based methodology. After a brief introduction to the history and branches of philosophy, the course content will focus on the philosophical themes of primary interest to us, and we will choose the appropriate text for close study from the prescribed list of texts. Themes include what it means to be human (human nature, personhood, freedom, identity, self & others, mind & body), ethics, political philosophy, philosophy and contemporary society, philosophy of science, epistemology, and others. Possible texts include Plato's Republic, Nietzsche's Genealogy of Morals, and Lao Tzu's Tao te Ching. Many readings will be excerpted from longer works.

Supplemental Information:

College credit may be earned by those students who opt to take the IB test at the HL level (certification). IB full diploma candidates have the option to test at SL or HL levels. Additional coursework (meetings beyond the standard block) may be required for HL students as either a quarter-long period 5 course or independent study and seminar meetings.

UC subject area "g"

Weighted grade