

МИНИСТЕРСТВО ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ И НАУКИ
РОССИЙСКОЙ ФЕДЕРАЦИИ

**Национальный исследовательский Нижегородский государственный
университет им. Н.И. Лобачевского**

H. Wagler

AN INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY

Учебно-методическое пособие

Рекомендовано научно-методическим советом исследовательской школы
«Лазерная физика» для аспирантов ННГУ, обучающихся по
направлению подготовки 03.06.01 «Физика и астрономия», и для
магистрантов ННГУ, обучающихся по направлениям подготовки
03.04.03 «Радиофизика», 02.04.02 «Фундаментальная информатика и
информационные технологии»

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госуниверситет, 2017. – 17 с.

Рецензент: доктор философских наук **А.М. Дорожкин**

Пособие предназначено для иностранных студентов, поступивших в магистратуру и аспирантуру радиофизического факультета ННГУ. Содержит программу курса по истории и философии науки, ссылки на источники в сети Интернет и контрольные вопросы по курсу.

Ответственные за выпуск:
председатель научно-методического совета
исследовательской школы «Лазерная физика»
д.ф.-м.н., профессор **М.И. Бакунов**

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Objectives of the course

The objectives of this course are to demonstrate to students the complexity of human efforts to understand the material and spiritual world and help them develop habits of philosophical reflection. The course presents structured systems that philosophers in the past have developed; explains how philosophers have developed different world views; teaches students how to apply philosophical methods in real life situations; and helps them uncover the complex connections between philosophy and other disciplines of human thought.

Philosophy is the art of rational thought, so this course is basic to forming student competence in the humanities, as well as in social and organizational activities, and careers in the exact sciences. There are no specific academic prerequisites for the course.

Learning outcomes

Students who take this course will acquire knowledge and skills to:

- Think critically, constructively, and coherently;
- Share their thoughts with the greatest minds in human history;
- Analyze carefully significant social issues and make practical use of knowledge gained in the liberal arts in their professional and social life;
- Respect and preserve their historical and cultural traditions while developing tolerance in accepting social and cultural differences;
- See philosophy in the context of an intellectual panorama showing the relative disposition of things and ideas;
- Understand the driving forces and principles that govern historical processes, the role of violence and non-violence in history, and the human role in developing political organizations;
- Analyze the issues of world view, human nature and society as presented by philosophers;
- Demonstrate proper motivation in achieving their goals by considering moral and legal norms and obligations;
- Strive constantly to elevate their professional and cultural qualifications;
- Make judgements about the meaning and implications of professional activities by taking into account social and ethical factors;
- Be aware that liberal arts values are important in preserving modern civilization;
- Be prepared to fulfill their moral obligations in relation to themselves, society, and the natural environment.

This manual outlines the topics to be presented in two semesters, taking into account that most students will not be philosophy majors. Each topic represents one

class period. The topic will be presented in lecture form; here are given the basic ideas from every lecture and the accompanying readings. Also included in each topic are questions to be answered by the students.

Basic Reference Sources

1. <http://www.earlymoderntexts.com> (Philosophical texts)
2. <http://classics.mit.edu> (Classical texts)
3. <https://plato.stanford.edu> (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy)
4. <http://www.iep.utm.edu> (Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy)

Semester I

Topic 1. The Philosophical Enterprise

Immanuel Kant “What is Enlightenment?” (1784)

https://www.aub.edu.lb/fas/cvsp/Documents/reading_selections/CVSP%202023/Fall%2013-14/What%20is%20Enlightenment%20-%20Immanuel%20kant.pdf

Basic definitions of the philosophical enterprise

Benefits of studying philosophy

Main branches of philosophy

- Characterize briefly the five main branches of philosophy.
- Select a sentence from Kant’s “What is Enlightenment?” and show how it fits into the world of philosophy.

Topic 2. Mythological World View

How Theseus Slew the Minotaur, Charles Kingsley, Greek Fairy Tales for my Children

<http://sacred-texts.com/cla/gft/gft17.htm>

Significance of myth in human history

Types of world views compared

- Read the text, “Theseus and the Minotaur.” Discuss:
 - a) three ways this story represents the mythological world view;
 - b) an archetype;
 - c) the story’s universal and philosophical significance.

Topic 3. Aristotle’s Ontology: Substance and Categories

Aristotle, Categories, Section 1, translated by E. M. Edghill. (excerpt)

<http://classics.mit.edu//Aristotle/categories.html>

Significance of ontology

Plato and Aristotle compared

Understanding essence and categories

- Select any object and describe it in terms of categories. Use Aristotle’s terminology to explain how substance differentiates it from the other nine categories.
- Discuss seven ways in which mathematical language is unique.

Topic 4. Plato’s Ontology

Plato, Phaedrus (Jowett translation, 1892). “The Chariot Allegory.” (Excerpt)
<http://classics.mit.edu/Plato/phaedrus.html>

Plato’s concept of Forms, Ideas
 The divided line and ontology

- Explain Plato’s dualism in terms of metaphysics and epistemology. Give six characteristics.
- How does Plato’s Myth of the Charioteer help illustrate his concept of Forms? Include one quotation from the text.
- Discuss Plato’s views on education.

Topic 5. Determinism and Free Will

The Myth of Oedipus, as told by Josephine Preston Peabody
<http://fullreads.com/literature/oedipus/>

John Locke, Essay Concerning Human Understanding, Book II, Chapter XXI, “Of Power”
<http://www.earlymoderntexts.com/assets/pdfs/locke1690book2.pdf>

Philosophical approaches to free will and determinism
 Principle of Sufficient Reason
 Types of determinism

- Characterize briefly the four philosophical approaches that deal with causal relationships in the world.
- Describe the necessary conditions for free will to exist.
- From the story of Oedipus, evaluate four specific events that indicate either free will or determinism.

Topic 6. Philosophical Approach to Human Nature

Shakespeare, Hamlet, Act II, Scene ii (monologue)

<http://www.bartleby.com/70/4222.html>

Rene Descartes, Second Meditation, 1641.

<http://www.earlymoderntexts.com/assets/pdfs/descartes1641.pdf>

Rene Descartes, Discourse on the Method of Rightly Conducting the Reason, and Seeking Truth in the Sciences, 1637.

<http://newlearningonline.com/new-learning/chapter-7/descartes-i-think-therefore-i-am>

Philosophical criteria for personhood

Monism and its proponents

Explanation of Descartes' dualism

- Demonstrate how the Shakespearean passage illustrates four essential qualities of being human.
- Explain how the mind and body interact in Cartesian dualism.

Topic 7. Society and Politics: Aristotle and Hobbes

Thomas Hobbes, Leviathan, 1651. Modernized by Jonathan Bennett, Chapter 13. (excerpt)

http://www.woldww.net/classes/General_Philosophy/Hobbes_on_the_state_of_nature.htm

Aristotle's view of human nature and formation of the state

Contrast Hobbes and his view of human nature and the state

Leviathan as the state

- Briefly describe the five parts of a state, according to Aristotle.
- Explain how Hobbes' view of human nature and society, as described in "Leviathan," differs from Aristotle's view.

Topic 8. Society and Politics: Hegel

G. W. F. Hegel, Philosophy of Right, 1820, Preface. (excerpt)

<https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/hegel/works/pr/preface.htm>

Central ideas in Hegel's philosophy: Geist, history, dialectic, consciousness, state

Freedom and the state

- Compare and contrast the views of Hobbes and Hegel:

- a) how the state is formed;
- b) the meaning of freedom.
- Explain what self-consciousness means for Hegel, and give an example from life.
- Explain one quote (from the excerpt) in the context of Hegel’s philosophy.

Topic 9. Three Approaches to Ethics

Immanuel Kant, Formulations of the Moral Law, (Categorical Imperative).

http://www.inp.uw.edu.pl/mdsie/Political_Thought/Kant%20-%20groundwork%20for%20the%20metaphysics%20of%20morals%20with%20essays.pdf

Robby Suave, “Michelle Carter Didn’t Kill With a Text,” June 16, 2017

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/16/opinion/michelle-carter-didnt-kill-with-a-text.html>

Katherine Q. Seelye and Jess Bidgood, “Guilty Verdict for Young Woman Who Urged Friend to Kill Himself,” June 16, 2017

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/16/us/suicide-texting-trial-michelle-carter-conrad-roy.html>

Aristotle’s concept of virtue

Kant and the Categorical Imperative

Utilitarianism and the importance of consequences

- Explain the steps of reasoning that led Kant to the Categorical Imperative.
- How does Aristotle define virtue?
- Discuss how Bentham determines whether actions are good or bad.
- In your opinion, should Michelle Carter have been charged with murder? Defend your answer by using one of the ethical approaches.

Topic 10. Epistemology and Truth Theory

Mikhail Bulgakov, The Master and Margarita, Chapter 23 (excerpt), trans. not indicated; ed. Harley Wagler

https://www.weblitera.com/book/?id=205&lng=1&ch=29&l=#.Wc_IoGi0Pcs

Edmund Gettier, “Is Justified True Belief Knowledge?” Analysis, 1963.

<http://fitelson.org/proseminar/gettier.pdf>

Plato’s famous definition of truth

Three traditional approaches to truth
The mind-body relationship
Faith and belief

- Explain 1) correspondence, 2) coherence, and 3) pragmatic truth theories:
 - a) how truth is defined;
 - b) how the world is defined;
 - c) two weaknesses in each theory.
- Make a proposition with a subject and predicate. Explain the statement from the perspective of the three theories.
- Explain how Woland defines truth and falsehood in the Bulgakov text.

Topic 11. Philosophy of History: Spengler

Oswald Spengler, The Decline of the West, 1918, Vol. 1. (Introduction)
<http://ahistoryofthepresentanthology.blogspot.ru/2014/02/the-decline-of-west-by-oswald-spengler.html>

The Judeo-Christian linear view of history
Spengler's emphasis on "Kultur"
Importance of Prime Symbols

- Discuss and evaluate five major ideas in Spengler. Do you agree with him?
- Select a Prime Symbol and give an example of its application.
- Select a quotation from Spengler and place it in the context of his philosophy of history.

Topic 12. Philosophy of History: Huntington

Samuel Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?" Foreign Affairs, 1993.
<http://users.metu.edu.tr/utuba/Huntington.pdf>

Huntington's definition of "civilization"
Influence of Hegelian philosophy
Challenges to Huntington's thesis

- Discuss the five reasons the Huntington gives for future clashes.
- Describe the currently existing civilizations, and their core states, according to Huntington.
- Do you agree with Huntington's thesis? Provide three challenges to his views.

Topic 13. Human Aggression: Lorenz and Tolstoy

Leo Tolstoy, War and Peace, trans. Ann Dunnigan, Book One. “**Prince Andrei at Austerlitz**,” (excerpt)

http://michaelprescott.typepad.com/michael_prescotts_blog/2009/02/andreis-vision.html

Lorenz and ethology

Types of aggression and their function in society

Tolstoy’s systematic defense of pacifism

- Discuss and evaluate five characteristics of aggression, according to Lorenz.
- Explain, and critique, five arguments given by Tolstoy for pacifism.
- Read the excerpt from Tolstoy’s “War and Peace.” How does this passage fit into his philosophy?

Topic 14. Themes in Existentialism

Albert Camus, The Stranger, Part 2. (excerpt)

<https://bookquotemonster.wordpress.com/2014/12/19/the-stranger-by-albert-camus/>

Themes in the existentialist movement

Camus’ response to the absurd

- Explain five characteristics of existentialist philosophy.
- Explain how freedom can be a burden. Do you agree?
- Select two short passages from Camus, and discuss how they reflect his philosophy.

Semester II

Topic 1. Greek Mythology

Prometheus – A Greek Myth Retold, by W.T. Jewkes (1970)

<https://www.tracy.k12.ca.us/sites/elucas/Lists/Calendar/Attachments/370/Prometheus.pdf>

Homer, Iliad, Book Nine. Peace Offerings to Achilles

<https://records.viu.ca/~johnstoi/homer/iliad9.htm>

Campbell's analysis of myth

Archetypes in philosophical discourse

- Show four ways in which the Prometheus myth demonstrates the mythological world view, and contrast them to the enlightenment approach.
- Explain Campbell's four functions of myth.
- Discuss a situational archetype in the passage from Homer's "Iliad."

Topic 2. Greek World View: Presocratics

Hesiod, The Theogony, opening, trans. H. G. Evelyn-White

<http://www.sacred-texts.com/cla/hesiod/theogony.htm>

Heraclitus (c. 535 – c. 475 B.C.) Fragments

<http://www.heraclitusfragments.com/>

Parmenides of Elea (c. 475 B.C.) On Nature (Peri Physis) Ed. by Allan F. Randall, trans. various authors. Compare to Burnet translation:

<http://philoctetes.free.fr/parmenidesunicode.htm>

Hesiod's understanding of the cosmos

Presocratic monistic approach to the world

- Describe how Heraclitus explains the physis.
- How does Heraclitus explain continuation in the cosmos?
- Explain five characteristics of Parmenides' aletheia.
- Explain the statement: "...it is impossible for it not to be."

Topic 3. Classical Greek Philosophy: Plato

Plato, The Republic, Book VII, (excerpt) The Allegory of the Cave
<http://classics.mit.edu/Plato/republic.html>

Plato's famous illustration of his idealistic philosophy

- Discuss four definitions of “justice” as presented in Plato's The Republic.
- Explain Plato's concept of the divided line.
- How is the sun symbolic in Plato's philosophy?

Topic 4. Stoicism

Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, Meditations, (excerpts)
<http://classics.mit.edu/Antoninus/meditations.html>

Logos in Plato and the Stoics

Influence of Stoicism in modern psychology

- Discuss the Stoic understanding of Logos, and what it means in life.
- Explain “apatheia,” and what it means for the philosophy of Stoicism.
- Select a passage from Aurelius' “Meditations,” and show how it illustrates basic principles of Stoic philosophy.

Topic 5. Augustine

Augustine, City of God (excerpts) Trans. from series 1, vol. 2 of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, published 1886-1890 and in the public domain.
<http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/120114.htm>

Augustine's view of history

The problem of evil and ontology

Human nature and its expression in society

The theory of justified war

Reinhold Niebuhr and Augustine in modern political science

- Present three characteristics of evil, as defined by Augustine, and discuss two metaphors. Compare his definition to Woland's argument in the Bulgakov novel.
- Give seven characteristics of a just war, according to Augustine.
- Compare four elements in the City of God with four elements in the City of Man; include a quote from the text.

Topic 6. Aquinas

Aquinas, Summa Theologica (1265-74) (excerpt)

<http://www.newadvent.org/summa/1001.htm>

Faith versus reason

Aristotle's four causes

Four kinds of law

- Explain three important issues being discussed by philosophers in the Medieval Period.
- Discuss five similarities and five differences in the philosophies of Aristotle and Aquinas.
- Characterize briefly the four types of law presented by Aquinas.

Topic 7. The Renaissance

Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, Oration on the Dignity of Man (excerpt)

https://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/p/pico_della_mirandola/giovanni/dignity/

Comparing Medieval and Renaissance views of human nature

Essential rediscoveries during the Renaissance

Significance of humanism

Important personalities

- Explain briefly six characteristics of the Renaissance view of man.
- Name four significant inventions developed during the Renaissance period.
- Explain three significant differences between the geocentric and heliocentric views.
- Show how Pico's Oration demonstrates humanism, and use at least one quote from his work.

Topic 8. Political Science: Locke and Hobbes

John Locke, Second Treatise of Government, Chapter V, Of Property (selections)

<https://www.gutenberg.org/files/7370/7370-h/7370-h.htm>

Concept of the state in Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Aquinas

Understanding the state of nature

Role of the social contract

- Explain five elements characterizing Locke’s view of human nature. Use at least one quote from his treatise.
- Explain how Locke defends private property. Do you agree?
- Discuss five disagreements between Hobbes and Locke in their political philosophies.

Topic 9. Applied Ethics

Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics (excerpts)

<http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/nicomachaen.html>

Immanuel Kant, Formulations of the Moral Law

http://www.inp.uw.edu.pl/mdsie/Political_Thought/Kant%20-%20groundwork%20for%20the%20metaphysics%20of%20morals%20with%20essays.pdf

Her story: UTA grad isolated at New Jersey hospital in Ebola quarantine (Dallas Morning News, Washington Post, August, 2015)

Good action defined in a) virtue, b) deontological, c) utilitarian ethics

Importance of society in ethical decisions

- Explain the connection between eudaemonia and virtue.
- What is the role of society in virtue and deontology ethics?
- In your opinion, should the nurse have been quarantined in the New Jersey hospital? Explain your answer by using a specific ethical approach.

Topic 10. Existentialism: Kierkegaard

Bible, Genesis 22, Abraham Tested. New International Version (NIV)

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+22>

Soren Kierkegaard, Fear and Trembling by Johannes De Silentio, 1843 (alias Søren Kierkegaard) tr. Walter Lowrie, 1941 (excerpt)

<http://www.solargeneral.org/wp-content/uploads/library/fear-and-trembling-johannes-de-silentio.pdf>

Truth as subjectivity

The role of paradox in life, faith

Philosophy as a way of life

- Explain the term, “Teleological suspension of the ethical.”
- How is paradox important for Kierkegaard? Give several examples.
- Explain why Kierkegaard, as an existentialist, might give four accounts of the same event. Use quotations to support your opinion.

Topic 11. Nietzsche

Friedrich Nietzsche, Thus Spake Zarathustra (excerpts), trans. Walter Kaufmann
<http://www.theperspectivesofnietzsche.com/nietzsche/nuber.html>

Nietzsche and nihilism

Evaluation of Christianity and religion

Psychological basis for morality

- Explain these terms and show how they fit into Nietzsche’s philosophy: (Use at least two quotes from the anthology).
 - a) Will to power
 - b) Übermensch
 - c) God is dead
 - d) Master morality

Topic 12. Dostoevsky

Fedor Dostoevsky, The Brothers Karamazov, trans. Constance Garnett. Chapter 5, “The Grand Inquisitor”
<https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/pol116/grand.htm>

Existential themes in Dostoevsky

Emphasis on personal responsibility

Freedom, responsibility, and kenosis

- Show how “The Grand Inquisitor” text illustrates two themes from existentialist philosophy.
- Explain the Inquisitor’s arguments for mystery and authority, and how could counter them.
- How does Alesha respond to Ivan’s argument about suffering children? Do you agree with him?

Topic 13. Marx

Karl Marx, Economic & Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844 (excerpt)

<https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/download/pdf/Economic-Philosophic-Manuscripts-1844.pdf>

Influence of Hegelian philosophy

Role of determinism in human society

- Describe the stages of history, as envisioned by Karl Marx.
- Characterize and evaluate the types of alienation among humans, according to Marx.
- According to Marx, what is the role of money in human society? Why does Marx cite Shakespeare?

Topic 14. Philosophy of History: Fukuyama

Francis Fukuyama, The End of History? The National Interest, 1989

<http://www.wesjones.com/eoh.htm>

Influence of Hegelian philosophy

History as a reflection of current events

- Explain the context for Fukuyama’s definition of the “end” of history.
- How does Fukuyama’s approach reflect Hegelian philosophy?
- Explain the author’s concept of “political decay.”

Harley Wagler

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Учебно-методическое пособие

Федеральное государственное автономное образовательное учреждение
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