Welcome to Philosophy, Semesters 1 & 2

This course is meticulously designed to align with state standards and targeted learning objectives, ensuring comprehensive coverage of essential knowledge and skills required for student success.

Course Description:
Embark on an enlightening journey through the world of philosophy in this self-paced course. Students will engage in profound discussions, ponder life's biggest questions, and explore the wisdom of great thinkers from ancient to modern times.

Through critical analysis and reflection, students will challenge assumptions, broaden their perspectives, and develop essential skills in critical thinking, argumentation, and ethical reasoning. This course provides a deep dive into the fundamental questions of existence, knowledge, morality, and society, fostering intellectual growth that transcends the classroom and prepares students for thoughtful engagement with the world.

Units and Learning Outcomes

Semester 1:
Unit 1: Introduction to Philosophy and the Nature of Inquiry
- Explore the origins and branches of philosophy.
- Understand the importance of critical thinking and logical reasoning.
- Learn how philosophical questions shape human understanding of the world.

Unit 2: Ancient Greek Philosophy
- Study the works of early Greek philosophers such as Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle.
- Examine foundational concepts such as justice, virtue, and the nature of reality.
- Discuss the Socratic method and its influence on modern philosophical inquiry.

Unit 3: Ethics and Morality
- Explore major ethical theories, including utilitarianism, deontology, and virtue ethics.
- Analyze moral dilemmas and the concepts of right and wrong.
- Develop the ability to critically evaluate ethical issues in personal and societal contexts.

Unit 4: Epistemology: The Study of Knowledge
- Investigate the nature and sources of knowledge.
- Discuss skepticism, belief, truth, and justification.
- Learn about key epistemological thinkers such as René Descartes and Immanuel Kant.

Unit 5: Political Philosophy
- Examine theories of government and justice from philosophers like Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, and Marx.
- Discuss the role of individuals, society, and the state in shaping political systems.
- Debate contemporary political issues using philosophical reasoning.

Unit 6: Existentialism and the Human Condition
- Study existentialist philosophers such as Søren Kierkegaard, Friedrich Nietzsche, and Jean-Paul Sartre.
- Explore themes of freedom, identity, alienation, and the search for meaning.
- Reflect on the human experience and the concept of personal responsibility.

Semester 2:

Unit 7: Philosophy of Mind and Consciousness

- Explore questions surrounding the mind-body problem and the nature of consciousness.
- Examine different perspectives, including dualism, materialism, and idealism.
- Discuss the relationship between brain function and human experience.

Unit 8: Philosophy of Science

- Investigate the philosophy of science and the nature of scientific inquiry.
- Examine key concepts such as scientific method, falsifiability, and the demarcation problem.
- Analyze the ethical implications of scientific advancements.

Unit 9: Eastern Philosophy

- Study the core ideas of Eastern traditions such as Buddhism, Confucianism, and Taoism.
- Explore concepts of harmony, the self, and enlightenment.
- Compare Eastern philosophical ideas with Western thought.

Unit 10: Contemporary Philosophy

- Examine modern philosophical movements, including analytic philosophy and postmodernism.
- Discuss current issues such as the philosophy of language, ethics in technology, and environmental philosophy.
- Engage with contemporary philosophers and their contributions to the field.

Unit 11: Philosophy and the Arts

- Explore the intersection of philosophy and the arts, including literature, music, and visual arts.
- Analyze how philosophical ideas are reflected in artistic expression.
- Discuss aesthetics, beauty, and the role of art in society.

Unit 12: Philosophy in Practice and Final Reflection

- Apply philosophical ideas to real-world situations and personal experiences.
- Develop and present a final project that demonstrates an understanding of key philosophical themes.
- Reflect on how the study of philosophy has influenced personal thinking and decision-making.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Understand and articulate key philosophical ideas and the contributions of major philosophers.
- Develop critical thinking and reasoning skills, applying them to everyday situations.
- Analyze and evaluate ethical dilemmas, political systems, and social issues using philosophical frameworks.
- Reflect on their own beliefs and values and understand the diversity of thought across cultures and time periods.

Conclusion:

Philosophy, Semesters 1 & 2, offers students an opportunity to engage deeply with the foundational questions of existence, knowledge, ethics, and society. Through a combination of classical and contemporary texts, discussions, and critical thinking exercises, students will cultivate a more thoughtful and reflective approach to the world.

By challenging assumptions and considering multiple perspectives, students will not only enhance their intellectual skills but also develop a deeper understanding of themselves and the world around them. This self-paced course fosters the ability to think independently and engage in reasoned debate, preparing students for thoughtful participation in the complex issues of the modern world.