**120 Philosophy Introduction and Assessment Options**

**Branches of Philosophy:**

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| [**Metaphysics**](http://www.importanceofphilosophy.com/Metaphysics_Main.html) | Study of Existence | What's out there? |
| [**Epistemology**](http://www.importanceofphilosophy.com/Epistemology_Main.html) | Study of Knowledge | How do I know about it? |
| [**Ethics**](http://www.importanceofphilosophy.com/Ethics_Main.html) | Study of Action | What should I do? |
| [**Politics**](http://www.importanceofphilosophy.com/Politics_Main.html) | Study of Force | What actions are permissible? |
| [**Aesthetics**](http://www.importanceofphilosophy.com/Esthetics_Main.html) | Study of Art | What can life be like: the good, the bad, and the ugly? |

1. **Metaphysics**

*Metaphysics is the study of what exists and the structure within which the objects that make up the world operate. S*tudents will summarize the main questions, concepts, and theories of metaphysics; demonstrate the relevance of metaphysical questions and theories to everyday life. They will demonstrate an understanding of some of the main questions in metaphysics as they relate to: free will and determinism, the meaning of life, egoism and altruism, mind and body, responsibility, personal identity, consciousness.

Inquiry/issues:

What is time?

What is the nature of change?

What does it mean for one event to cause another event?

Could everything exist only in my mind?

Existential questions:

Do I have a soul? Or am I just a material body?

Am I the same person today that I was yesterday, or five years ago?

What makes someone/something alive?

Discover two current issues that deal with metaphysics:

Issue A: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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1. **Logic**

*Logic is the study of abstract symbolic reasoning. It works from axioms and seeks to prove theorems, but it does not involve numbers. It is also self-reflective. Namely, it questions the truth of its own axioms.* Students willidentify the main questions in formal and informal logic and apply logical and critical thinking skills in practical contexts, and in detecting logical fallacies. They will evaluate the responses to some questions of natural and social sciences, and justify/support through reasoned argument, their own responses. They will demonstrate an understanding of the main themes in logic: observation and theory, inductive and deductive reasoning, formal and informal logic, validity and soundness in arguments, fallacies in arguments, discovery and justification, realism and phenomenalism.

Inquiry/Issues:

What makes an argument a good argument (consistency, logic, reason, contradiction, deduction, induction, validity)?

What is truth? What is falsity?

Can something be both true and false? Or neither?

What is nonsense?

Discover two current issues that deal with logic:

Issue A: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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1. **Epistemology**

*Epistemology deals with questions about what we know, under what conditions we have knowledge, and what counts as a reason to believe something.* Students will identify key questions, concepts, and theories of epistemology: knowledge and belief, truth, evidence and proof, skepticism, rationalism and empiricism, ways of knowing, intuition and idea, bias, philosophy of language. They will evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of responses to some of the main questions of epistemology and demonstrate the relevance of philosophical theories of epistemology to concrete problems in everyday life.

Inquiry/Issues:

Is there anything that we can never know?

When should we believe something just because someone else told us it was true?

What counts as evidence for a claim? How much evidence do you need in particular cases?

How much can I learn just by thinking on my own?

How do I know that the world as I see it is real, and not just an illusion?

Discover two current issues that deal with epistemology:

Issue A: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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1. **Ethics**

*Ethics deals with the question of how people ought to act with regard to themselves, other people, and the world.* The students will demonstrate an understanding of key questions, concepts, and theories of ethics. They will evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of responses to ethical questions and moral problems and illustrate the relevance of philosophical theories of ethics to concrete moral problems in everyday life. Concepts to explore are: pleasure and desire, morality and reason, good and evil, the self and others, virtue and “the good life”, ethics and the professions, relativism and objectivity, rights and duties.

Inquiry/Issues:

What are good and evil? What is right and what is wrong?

What is the good life?

What is virtue?

What is morality? Moral? Why be moral?

What obligations do people have to one another?

Discover two current issues that deal with ethics:

Issue A: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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1. **Social and Political Philosophy**

Students willdemonstrate an understanding of the main questions of social and political philosophy: freedom and autonomy, violence and power, justice and equity, the community and the individual, the state and citizenship, rights and duties, biases based on gender and culture, humans and the environment

Inquiry/Issues**:**

What is authority? Who has it? Why do they have it?

What is justice? How do we achieve it?

Is war ethically permissible?

Why should we obey the law?

Is it okay to rebel against the government?

How should political institutions treat historically separated or differentiated groups?

Discover two current issues that deal with Social/political philosophy:

Issue A: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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1. **Aesthetics**

*Aesthetics is the study of art and beauty as well as how we ought to evaluate potential instances of beauty and artistic creation.* The students will demonstrate an understanding of philosophical questions of aesthetics: taste and judgment, standards of criticism, creativity and creation, art and society, genre, beauty.

Inquiry/Issues:

What is beauty?

Are judgments about what is beautiful or ugly subjective?

Should art have social value?

Discover two current issues that deal with aesthetics:

Issue A: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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**Please note:**

**Any work not completed on time (without a reasonable excuse) or not up to the quality of the percentage range indicated, may result in an assessment in a lower percentage range. In addition to this, it is the responsibility of the student to maintain the focus, attention, participation, and behaviour expected in an academic environment. If the student does not meet this standard, the assessment may fall into a lower percentage range. If the student does not meet the general standard for any assignment (i.e. plagiarism) a zero will be assigned until the student meets the standard.**

**Assessment:**

**Participation**: 20 % - The purpose of the participation mark is to ensure that all students are engaging in the process of **DOING PHILOSOPHY**. It is an active process, where students must be engaged in discussion, during class time.

Philosopher’s Log Book **20%**

The Philosophy Log is a tool that can be used for both summative and formative assessment. It may measure the degree to which you are understanding concepts and it may offer an opportunity for individualized feedback.

…to be recorded:

1. Sections representing the branches of philosophy
2. questions and issues that you would like to explore under each branch
3. conclusions regarding dilemmas discussed
4. memorable quotations
5. visual representations of key ideas: articles, photographs, art, power-points, editorial cartoons, sketches, etc.
6. specialized vocabulary and your explanations (I do not want to see any definitions)

Entries will be discussed at the round (or rectangular) table periodically to ensure that the responses reflect profound exploration, examination, and comments. The responses to key questions will indicate a consideration of both the views of philosophers and your personal views/reflections.

**Essay: MLA Format 25 %**

All essays must focus on a particular **philosophical issue** from one of the branches outlined in the course syllabus. The essay is not a review of historical information, but an **examination** and **interpretation** of a field of philosophy pertaining to that particular issue, an **application** (real life scenario, for example), and a **discussion of personal relevance.** Students should strive to do the following:

Introduce a major question from a branch of philosophy. Introduce the major schools of thought on the subject. Present a current, real world, or personal relevance for this discussion. Simply put, take an idea, examine what past thinkers have said, and discuss how it is relevant in our current society. Look to the past and bring it into the present.

**Seminar: 25%**

Seminars will present a major branch of philosophy covered in class for 30 -45 minutes, no less. The approach is open-ended and will require a conversation with the teacher. A seminar may resemble the following:

* Historical context on the philosophy/philosopher (what was happening at the time?)
* Explanation of the philosophical idea in bite-sized pieces for the class (create an easy to grasp analogy)
* hands-on activity in which the class will participate (this is necessary)
* Leave the class with something they can write/respond to (in their logs): a quotation to explore, a take-away thought, a visual, etc.

**Project/Presentation: 10 %**

* Projects/Presentations are shorter than the seminar length. They are approximately 10 minutes long. They focus on a philosophical dilemma or paradox. Information is supported by visuals, and power-point. Present the origin of the paradox / dilemma, and give background to the philosopher / branch of philosophy related.

Each of you will write up a contract that will indicate:

a) the mark that you wish to receive in the course and

b) the tasks that you are willing to complete in order to receive that mark. You will select one of the options below. These options represent the **minimum requirements** to meet in order to land within the percentage range indicated.

**120 Philosophy**

**Assessment Contract**

This agreement between J.Standring and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is to take effect at Kennebecasis Valley High School on the 5th day of February, 2016.

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| 1. **General responsibility of the student** | To be an attentive, open-minded, and engaged participant. |
| 1. **Assessment details** | J. Standring will issue a final mark within the student-identified percentage range. Students select from three options (please circle the option):  **Option 1** 86-90% **+** range   1. Write three 1000-word essays 2. Lead two seminars 3. Complete two projects/and or presentations 4. Philosopher’s Log Book   **Option 2** 76-85% range   1. Write two 1000-word essays 2. Lead one seminar 3. Complete one project/and or presentation 4. Philosopher’s Log Book   **Option 3** 60-75% range   1. Write one 1000-word essay 2. Lead one seminar 3. Philosopher’s Log Book |
| 1. **Clauses** | 1. Any work not completed (and without a reasonable excuse) by identified due dates, may result in an assessment in a percentage category that is lower than the one initially identified by the student.  2. Students will understand that they are to address all in-class and out-of-class activities in a manner commensurate with an academic community (attentiveness, participation, punctuality, etc.). Behaviour that is not in line with what is reasonably expected in an academic environment may result in an assessment in a percentage category lower than the one initially identified by the student.  3. All completed tasks must attain a standard commensurate with the percentage range indicated. If this is not the case, J. Standring and the student will discuss the standard required and if adjustments are not made, this may result in an assessment in a percentage category lower than the one initially identified by the student.  4. A student may adjust the details of the contract up until March 1, 2016 (for example, if a student wishes to discuss raising or lowering the identified percentage range and associated tasks). |
| 1. **Intellectual Property** | The student retains complete ownership of all of their ideas, products, and innovations generated during the course. |
| 1. **Confidentiality** | The contents of this contract should be shared with parents or guardians. Apart from this, the details herein shall remain confidential. The student may share its contents with others, however, with the exception of parents/guardians and the KVHS administration (if requested), J. Standring will not share the details of this contract. |

I do hereby agree to the contents and details of this contract signed at Kennebecasis Valley High School on this \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ day of February, 2016.

**Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Student: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Witness: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**