

West Linn–Wilsonville School District
Social Studies Department – Course Statement

Course Title: Honors Humanities: History of Philosophy and Art

Length of Course: Year
Number of Credits: 2
Grade Level: 12
Prerequisites: None
CIM Work Samples
Offered in Course: Persuasive speaking/writing, informative speaking/writing, narrative writing, and imaginative writing work samples

Date of Description/Revision: October 2005

Course Overview

This course will explore the most important tenets of Philosophy: Metaphysics, Epistemology, Ethics, and Aesthetics. Students will study the history of philosophical thought in the Western Tradition from the sophists to late 20th Century philosophers and the post-modern age. As students grapple with the great questions of philosophy they will look to the “answers” found in both art and music as well as through the traditional dialogues, theses, and constructs of philosophers. Ultimately, students will posit their own response to basic philosophic questions/issues through production of original art (in various forms) or exegesis that will be presented in a celebratory evening to parents and the community. Other elements of research and community involvement will also be essential to this course.

Essential Questions

Concepts providing focus for student learning

- What is the nature of reality? What is “really real?” (Metaphysics)
 How do we know? (Epistemology)
 How then, shall we live? (Ethics)
 What is the beautiful? The good? How can I express *myself*? (Aesthetics)
- How do I know what I believe?
 What impact might I have on the world? *Can* I have an impact on the world?
 How do I express what I really know to be true? Beautiful? Hopeful? Worthy?
- Why do bad things happen to good people?
 What is the nature of humanity? Are we born Good? Evil? A blank slate?
 What is the role of society in our lives? What should it be?
 How shall we best learn?
- What is the role of art in our lives?
 How does art express truth?
 Can music carry a message beyond the lyrics?
 What is [this artist] saying about the world?
- What is the difference between knowledge and wisdom?
 What is my world view?

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Proficiency Statements	
<p>Upon completion of course, students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have gained a solid overview of the “story of philosophy” from a Western point of view. • Have deeply explored their own world view and contemplated their response not only to the essential questions listed above, but to the canon of philosophic questions generated over the past 3000 years. • Posit their own response to the above both through exposition and creative synthesis. • Delight in discussion with others who have varying views, coming to accept different points of view while defining and defending their own. • Develop tolerance for ambiguity. • Hone critical writing and thinking skills through logic and classical rhetoric modes. • Appreciate the history of art and its movements in response to/as a catalyst for political, social, religious, and historic events as well as an expression of aesthetics and truth. • Understand great music as another genre of the above. 	
General Course Topics/Units & Timeframes	
<p>A. <u>Introduction to Major Concepts of the Ancient World</u> To include: The Pre-Socratics and sophists; The Greek world: Art, Architecture, and Balance, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Hebraism and Hellenism, Augustine, Aquinas</p> <p>B. <u>From Renaissance to Enlightenment</u> To include: From Statuary to Science: Italian and Flemish Masters; Bach, Meister Eckhart, Machiavelli, More, Calvin, Bacon, Descartes, Hobbes and Locke, Newton, Voltaire, Hume, Kant</p> <p>C. <u>Romanticism and Realism: The Road to the Modern World</u> To include: The English School; French Impressionism; Beethoven and Mozart, Wagner, Darwin, Marx and Hegel, Freud, Frankl, William James, Dostoevsky, Kierkegaard</p> <p>D. <u>The Break-Up: Modernism and Post Modernism and <i>Man’s Search for Meaning</i></u> To include: Dadaism, Cubism, and other Modern Art Forms; Stravinsky and Dvorzak, Eliot, Pound, Joyce, Sartre, Einstein, Wittgenstein, Barth, Langer</p> <p>E. <u>Where are we now?</u> Linguistics, Physics, and Systems Thinking ... and being 18 in the 21st Century</p>	
Resources	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Texts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ <i>Sophie’s World: A Novel about the History of Philosophy</i>, Jostein Gaarder, Berkley Publishing Group, 1996 ◦ <i>Classics of Western Thought Series - The Ancient World, Volume I, 4th Edition</i>, Wadsworth Publishing, 1988 	

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Social Studies Department – Course Statement

- *Classics of Western Thought Series – Middle Ages, Renaissance, and Reformation, Volume II, 4th Edition*, Wadsworth Publishing, 1988
- *Classics of Western Thought Series - The Modern World, Volume III, 4th Edition*, Wadsworth Publishing, 1988
- *Franny and Zooey*, J.D. Salinger, Little, Brown & Company, (Paperback) 1991
- *The River Why, 20th Anniversary Edition*, David James Duncan, University of California Press, 2002
- Reference Texts (to include, but not be limited to):
 - *Socrates to Sartre: A History of Philosophy*, Samuel Stumpf, Mcgraw-Hill College, 1992
 - *A History of Knowledge: Past, Present, and Future*, Charles Van Doren, Ballantine Books, 1992
 - *The Philosopher's Handbook: Essential Readings from Plato to Kant*, Stanley Rosen, Random House Reference, 2003
 - *The Passion of the Western Mind: Understanding the Ideas that Have Shaped Our World View*, Richard Tarnas, Ballantine Books, 1993
 - *History of Art*, Anthony Janson, Prentice Hall
- Other: Various CDs and DVDs of art and music (e.g. *Masterworks from the Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art*)
- Other: Internet resources