

Spring 2018
Basic Philosophical Questions
UCOR 132-19
T, R 1:40-2:55
Magdalena Figiel
figielm@duq.edu



This course will be an encounter with selected texts and with the thought of some major philosophers, who have greatly influenced our culture. We will identify some important philosophical questions and concepts which they spoke about and learn from them how to think philosophically and how to develop strong philosophical arguments.

We will start with the thought of Ancient Greece, where Philosophy was born as cosmology, offering an explanation of our world, and also developing the theoretical sciences of Ethics and Politics. We will study Plato (*Republic*) and Aristotle (*Nichomean Ethics*). We will see how the modern philosophy tried to give new foundations to science reading one of the most famous texts of all history of Philosophy: Descartes's *Meditations*. With Kant, we will consider in a critical way the questions of knowledge, reason and freedom. Hegel will appear to us as the author of a great philosophical system; together with him we will think about beauty and about God. We will also read some short texts from contemporary Philosophy in order to inspire our own thinking and views on philosophical questions.

The course shall help to see what Philosophy is about, to engage into discussion with the ideas of great philosophers, and to exercise some critical and creative thinking.

Final grade based on:

2 very short papers and 1 a little longer (1000-1500 words) paper

Midterm and Final Exam: closed book exam of the themes covered in class

Attendance and Participation.