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**2019/2020**

### Philosophy: Questions and Theories

**Social Sciences Department**

## Earl Haig

SecondarySchool

# **HZT4U**

**Evaluation Profile & Outline**

**Course Description/Rationale/Overview:** This course addresses three (or more) of the main areas of philosophy: metaphysics, logic, epistemology, ethics, social and political philosophy, and aesthetics. Students will learn critical-thinking skills, the main ideas expressed by philosophers from a variety of the world’s traditions, how to develop and explain their own philosophical ideas, and how to apply those ideas to contemporary social issues and personal experiences.

**Class Requirements:** Students should have materials specified by the subject teacher at the beginning of the year.

There is no textbook for this course. The course will be supplemented with photocopied material, specific supplies for classroom activities, and videos, which will be used to enrich certain topics from the textbook or to explore other issues pertaining to the course.

**Assessment and Evaluation Strategies**

Students will also be expected to complete assessment activities of a formative nature in order to learn and to practice the specific expectations that will compose the summative evaluations. Examples of formative assessment may include homework checks, quizzes, peer assessment, presentations, reflection writing, role-play scenarios and observation.

Each unit or strand of the course will be evaluated using summative evaluations. Examples of summative evaluations are tests, case studies, interviews, reports, presentations, seminars, debates, research and other writing assignments.

**Late and/or Missed Evaluation**

##### Late Assignments\*

For each assignment, the teacher will inform students of the due date. The teacher may decide to create an ultimate deadline. If an assignment is submitted after the deadline, the teacher may deduct marks up to and including the full value of the assignment.

**Missed Tests**

It is the student’s responsibility to make arrangements, ahead of time, for any tests/quizzes that are missed. If a student misses a test/quiz for an unforeseen reason such as illness, the student must bring a note signed by a parent or guardian**. Alternatively a medical certificate may be requested by the teacher.** The student must be prepared to write the test/quiz immediately upon return to school at a time determined by the teacher. Once the tests/quizzes have been evaluated and returned, students will not be able to make up a missed test - a mark of zero will be assigned.

**Subject-Specific/Department Information**

Teachers in the Social Sciences Department can be reached at (416) 395-3210, ext. 20075 or 20085. Parents wishing to meet with a teacher are requested to make an appointment with the teacher prior to coming to the school.

**Learning Skills**

**Responsibility** – meets deadlines; takes responsibility for own behaviour

**Organization** – establishes priorities and manages time; uses information, technology and resources top complete tasks time management

**Independent Work** – follows instruction with minimal supervision; uses class time appropriately to complete tasks

**Collaboration** – accepts an equitable share of work in a group; builds healthy peer relationships; works with others to achieve group goals

**Initiative** – looks for opportunities for learning; demonstrates curiosity; approaches new tasks with a positive attitude

**Self-regulation** – sets own goals and monitors own progress; seeks assistance with needed; makes an effort with responding to challenges

###### Final Mark

The final mark for this course will be determined based upon an accumulation of marks from unit summative activities and from a final summative evaluation

**Year’s Work 70%**

This is a culmination of evaluations that have been completed throughout the year. It may include tests, presentations, research, or topic specific assignments.

**Final Summative Evaluation 30%**

This will be completed during the final six weeks of the course and may include a variety of summative activities including an exam, project presentation, seminar or a writing assignment.

**Achievement Categories and Weighting**

* **Knowledge / Understanding – 25%**

Knowledge of facts and terms; understanding of concepts, principles, guidelines and strategies; understanding of relationships among concepts.

* **Application – 25%**

Synthesizing knowledge and understanding into new and familiar contexts as well as making connections between various contexts.

* **Thinking Inquiry – 25%**

Formulating questions; planning, selecting strategies and resources; analyzing and interpreting information, and forming conclusions.

* **Communication – 25%**

Communication of information and ideas, communication for different audiences, use of various forms of communication.

\*From: Ontario Ministry of Education. *Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting in Ontario Schools*. Toronto: Ministry of Education, 2010, 11.

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**Course Outline:**

## **Unit 1: Metaphysics**

In this unit, students explore the main questions, concepts, and theories of metaphysics. Metaphysics is generally concerned with defining the ultimate constituents of reality and how we perceive them. The world appears to be structured by space and time. It is proliferated by matter and minds, things and their properties. Beyond an examination of the basic concepts of metaphysics, an investigation into historical approaches to metaphysical questions is essential. Throughout this unit, students evaluate classic texts, philosophers, and schools of philosophy to formulate their own opinions and to demonstrate the applicability of metaphysical thought to everyday life.

## **Unit 2: Logic and the Philosophy of Science**

This unit is comprised of two related areas of philosophy. Students will examine the development of formal and informal logic from this point and beyond; they learn to define and to correctly use the core terminology of logic and to demonstrate an understanding of the main questions in logic. Students will also be give opportunities to apply their knowledge to distinguish valid from invalid arguments and sound from unsound arguments in a variety of sources and context. Students will explain the relevance of logic to mathematics, computer science, and artificial intelligence, all the while learning to apply logical and critical thinking skills in practical contexts and in detecting logical fallacies. Finally, students formulate and defend their own responses to some fundamental questions in the philosophy of science.

## **Unit 3: Epistemology**

In this unit, students explore the main questions, concepts, and theories of epistemology, as well as evaluate the responses of philosophers and schools of philosophy to the major issues in this area. Students formulate and defend their ideas concerning epistemology and demonstrate the applicability of epistemological theories to everyday life and other subject areas. Beyond an examination of these preliminary epistemological concerns, students investigate the empiricist/rationalist debate from its ancient incarnation with Plato and Aristotle through Descartes and Locke to the scepticism of Hume and the transcendental idealism of Kant. Differences in Eastern and Western approaches are explored, along with the relevance of epistemology to the artificial intelligence project.

**Unit 4: Ethics**

Students uncover the main questions, concepts, and theories of ethics. Various methods of determining right from wrong are explored. Students use critical-thinking skills to explore and evaluate a variety of ethical questions and moral problems and read primary source material by major philosophers. Connections are made between the ethical theories and dilemmas in everyday life. Students analyse and apply philosophical theories to create and defend their own ideas about ethical issues. Research and philosophical reasoning skills are used to prepare for class discussions and written papers.

**Unit 5: Social and Political Philosophy**

In this unit, students explore social and political philosophy by analysing various philosophical theories and questioning their validity. Students begin with a discussion that focuses on the need for government and social justice. Students critically analyse various forms of government and uncover conflicts between the rights of the state and the rights of the individual. With information from primary source materials, students use critical-thinking and philosophical reasoning skills to summarize and evaluate philosophical concepts and formulate their own views. The theories of political and social philosophy are applied to contemporary political policy making.