after:hours Centre for Languages, Culture and Communication

**Course Descriptor**

**Course Title:** Themes in Western Philosophy

**Type of Course:** Adult Education

**Credit:** Not credit bearing

**Weekly Session Titles and Descriptions**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Week | Session Title |
| 1 | Metaphysics: What is Reality? What exists? How? Why? When? |
| 2 |  Epistemology - What is knowledge? What are its limits and how do we come to know things? |
| 3 | Philosophy of Mind - What is consciousness? Is there a Mind? If so how does it relate to the body? |
| 4 | Politics - The relationship between people and states; Laws, disobedience and rights |
| 5 | Philosophy of Religion - Does God(s) Exist? What is religious belief? Faith, knowledge and truth |
| 6 | Aesthetics and Art - What is art? What is beauty? How do we judge? |
| 7 | How to be Good? Why Be Good? Judging by rules vs. judging by consequences |
| 8 | Philosophy of Science - What is Scientific Method? Is science about truth? How is it different to non-science? |
| 9 | Metaphilosophy: What is Philosophy For? How is to be done? Is it a doomed (imperialist) project? |
| 10 | The Philosophy of the Future - The coming debates: Anthropocene, Post-human and the breakdown of our worlds |

|  |
| --- |
| Course OverviewIn this course we will explore some of the more fundamental problems philosophers have tried to address, from the question *what is a good life?*to*does the world really exist?*Over ten sessions, Matthew will look at how some of the greatest thinkers in the Western philosophic tradition, from Plato to de Beauvoir and more, have sought to raise the questions they believed to be of importance to human understanding and to answer those questions.We will learn about the one-upmanship of philosophers as they each tried to outdo their contemporaries and predecessors, but also how philosophy and the questions it asks were modified over almost 3,000 years of history. These questions include:* What is a good life?
* Does the world really exist?
* How do individuals relate to society?
* Does God exist and does it matter?
* Is there such a thing as good and evil?
* What is freedom?
* Why are women excluded from the philosophical canon?

Required Previous Experience (if any)NoneRequired Reading Material or Special Equipment Needed (if any)NoneLearning OutcomesAt the end of this course you should be able to1. Understand a number a number of the common themes debated and discussed by philosophers, both from the past and more recent times
2. Understand the basic methodology of phlosophy and how philosophers reach the conclusions they come to
3. Identify aspects of philosophy that impact in the wider world.

**Possible Further Study**Further courses on the after:hours programme might be useful to you.Additional informationThis course descriptor may be subject to change during the delivery of the course, depending on the specific direction and nature of the learner cohort, and is intended to be responsive to the group dynamics as they emerge during the delivery of the course. |