

United States International University –Africa  
Phil 1104: Introduction to Philosophy  
Day/Time:  
Instructor:

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### **Course description**

A general introduction to the discipline, method, concepts and theories in philosophy. An application of the same to interpreting reality will be attempted.

### **Course Objective**

At the end of this course, the student should be able to;

1. Discuss the concept philosophy both as an academic discipline and human activity
2. Identify and deal with philosophical problems.
3. Appreciate the importance of studying philosophy

### **Course Content**

Week 1 &2: General Introduction

- Meaning of Philosophy
- Nature of philosophy

Methods of Philosophy

- Analytic
- Moral/ethical
- Metaphysical

Week 3: The Fundamental Questions in Philosophy

- a) The moral question
- b) The Logical question
- c) The Epistemological question
- d) The Theological question
- e) The Metaphysical question

**Assignment 1: In your own words state what you think philosophy is. Name any five works that you consider philosophical and why?**

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Week 4: Epistemological Issues in Philosophy

Sources of knowledge  
Nature of knowledge  
Validity of knowledge

Week 5&6: The philosophy of reasoning

Meaning of an argument  
Premises and Conclusion  
Deduction and Induction

***Week 7: Mid- Quarter Exams:***

Week 8&9: Moral Issues in Philosophy  
Standards for Ethical judgment  
Deontological vs. teleological theories  
Immanuel Kant's Categorical Imperative  
Week 10: Some contemporary ethical problems

**Term Paper: Otieno's girl friend Wambui's fallopian tube is closed. In a bid to please her boyfriend, she quietly gets a doctor who performs an IVF procedure on her to get a baby. Do you agree with her action? Explain your answer.**

Week 11&12: Metaphysical Issues in Philosophy  
Freewill and Determinism  
Existence of God and the problem of evil  
Mind-body relationship

Week 13: African Philosophy  
Problems involved in defining and conceptualizing Philosophy in Africa  
Theories in African Philosophy

#### **Week 14 Final Exams**

#### **Reference Materials**

1. Ewing CA, 1995, *The Fundamental Questions of Philosophy*. New Delhi: Allied Publishers, (Cap 1).
2. Harrison Barbet, 1995, *Mastering Philosophy*. London: Macmillan (Cap1).
3. Nyasani J M., 1996, *The Metaphysics of Cosmos and Related Recurrent Issues of Metaphysics*. Nairobi, SoJ (Cap 1).
4. Russell, B., 1991, *The Problems of Philosophy*. Bombay: OUP (Cap15)
5. Wolf R. P., 2000, *About Philosophy*. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, (Cap1).
6. Odera-Oruka, "Philosophy and Other Disciplines", in *Thought and Practice, A Journal of Philosophical Association of Kenya*, eds H O Oruka, O Donders & Esmail Aziz, Vol 1, No 1, 1974, (pp 27-36).

#### **Assessment**

Attendance and participation	10%
Assignment 1	20%
Term Paper	20%
Mid-Quarter	20%
Final Exams	30%
Total	100%

#### **Grading**

USIU system applies.

#### **Course requirements**

1. Regular class attendance
2. Five classes missed is automatic F (Ref. student Handbook).
3. Assignments are due when they are due.

