



CORE- Worldviews and Ethics
Teaching guide 2025-26

BASIC INFORMATION

Brief Description of the Course:

What does happiness consist in? Is human freedom genuine or only apparent? Is there a way of distinguishing between moral good and evil?

These questions are perennial ones, and have received very different replies in the course of history. The present course focuses on answers offered by a small selection of philosophies and religions, ancient and modern, western and eastern, with the object, firstly, of understanding their different ways of looking at reality; secondly, of critically evaluating their way of thought; and thirdly, of comparing them to see interesting similarities and differences.

This course is actually the second half of a more extensive course lasting two semesters, but may be taken as an independent subject in the second semester. It covers the following worldviews: Aristotle, the Stoics, Buddhism, Islam, Nietzsche, and Mounier (Personalism).

This course belongs to the Core Curriculum of the University of Navarra <http://www.unav.edu/web/core-curriculum/inicio>

Degree: (The course is open to students pursuing a degree in any Faculty)

Module / Subject: Core Curriculum / Cultural Keys

ECTS: 3 (students of ILCE may take this course together with "Worldviews & Texts", for a total of 6 credits)

Year and Semester: 1st year (for exceptions, consult the international exchange office); 2nd semester

Type of Course: Elective

Professor: [J. José Alviar](#)

Medium of Instruction: English

Schedule: Wednesdays, 5:30-6:15 + 6:30-7:15 p.m.

Room: 31 (Central Building)

[Welcoming video](#)

CLASS SCHEDULE & ROOM

Schedule: Wednesdays, 5:30-6:15 + 6:30-7:15 p.m.

Room: Room 31 (Central Building)

COURSE SYLLABUS



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Part. I: Human fulfillment and freedom. Is the human being truly free, or ruled by destiny? Can one do anything one desires? What is does it mean to be free?

Part II: Good and evil. How can an action be qualified as "good" or "bad"? What does it mean to be "good"? The connection between a given worldview (conception of man, the world, God) and moral conduct.

Part III: Critical examination of diverse answers:

Two philosophies of Ancient Greece:

- Aristotle's philosophy. Brief biography of Aristotle. The ingredients of happiness. The quest for human excellence.
- Stoicism: Brief history of stoicism. The logos, rational principle of the universe and the human person. The practice of equanimity (apatheia).

Two religions:

- Buddhism. Brief biography of Siddhartha Gautama. The Four Noble Truths. Buddhism as escape from suffering.
- Islam. Brief biography of Mohammed. Islam's basic doctrines. Islam's Five Pillars. Islam as submission of the human being to God.

Two philosophers of the modern era:

- Nietzsche. Brief biography of Nietzsche. The morals of the superman (Übermensch).
- Mounier and Personalism. Brief biography of Mounier. The material and spiritual dimensions of the human person. Fulfillment through communion with other persons.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

TEXTBOOK

- José Alviar, Dialogue with Worldviews (II), Eunsa, Pamplona 2023. [Localízalo en la Biblioteca](#)

REFERENCE WORKS IN ENGLISH

- Copleston, Frederick Charles, A History of Philosophy, vol. 1: Greece and Rome, Continuum, London 2003. [Localízalo en la Biblioteca](#)
- Copleston, Frederick Charles, A History of Philosophy, vol. 7: Fichte to Nietzsche, Continuum, London 2003. [Localízalo en la Biblioteca](#)
- Copleston, Frederick Charles, A History of Philosophy, vol. 11: Logical Positivism and Existentialism, Continuum, London 2003. [Localízalo en la Biblioteca](#)
- Maritain, Jacques, Moral Philosophy: An Historical and Critical Survey of the Great Systems, Scribner, New York 1964. [Localízalo en la Biblioteca](#)
- Spaemann, Robert, Basic Moral Concepts, Routledge, London 1991. [Localízalo en la Biblioteca](#)
- Yarza, Ignatius, History of Ancient Philosophy, Sinag-Tala, Manila 1994. [Localízalo en la Biblioteca](#)
- "Islam", in Collier's Encyclopedia, Macmillan, New York 1979, vol. 13. [Localízalo en la Biblioteca](#)

REFERENCE WORKS IN SPANISH



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- Ayllón, José Ramón, En torno al hombre, Rialp, Madrid 1997. [Localízalo en la Biblioteca](#)
- *Copleston, Frederick Charles, Historia de la filosofía, vol. I: Grecia y Roma, Ariel, Barcelona 1969 y 1980. [Localízalo en la Biblioteca](#)
- *Copleston, Frederick Charles, Historia de la filosofía, vol. IX: De Maine de Biran a Sartre, Ariel, Barcelona 1969 y 1980. [Localízalo en la Biblioteca](#)
- *Copleston, Frederick Charles, Historia de la filosofía, vol. VII: De Fichte a Nietzsche, Ariel, Barcelona 1969 y 1980. [Localízalo en la Biblioteca](#)
- Cruz Prados, Alfredo, Historia de la filosofía contemporánea, EUNSA, Pamplona 1992. [Localízalo en la Biblioteca](#)
- Chozza, Jacinto / Vicente, Jorge, Filosofía del hombre, Rialp, Madrid 1995. [Localízalo en la Biblioteca](#)
- *Gambra, Rafael, Historia sencilla de la filosofía, Rialp, Madrid 1997. [Localízalo en la Biblioteca](#)
- *Guerra, Manuel, Historia de las religiones, EUNSA, Pamplona 1984/85. [Localízalo en la Biblioteca](#)
- *Leclercq, Jacques, Las grandes líneas de la filosofía moral, Gredos, Madrid 1977. [Localízalo en la Biblioteca](#)
- Llano, Alejandro, La vida lograda, Ariel, Barcelona 2002. [Localízalo en la Biblioteca](#)
- Maritain, Jacques, Filosofía moral: examen histórico-crítico de los grandes sistemas, Morata, Madrid 1966. [Localízalo en la Biblioteca](#)
- Polo, Leonardo, Quién es el hombre, Rialp, Madrid 1993. [Localízalo en la Biblioteca](#)
- *Spaemann, Robert, Ética: cuestiones fundamentales, EUNSA, Pamplona 1995. [Localízalo en la Biblioteca](#)
- *Yarza, Iñaki, Historia de la filosofía antigua, EUNSA, Pamplona 1992. [Localízalo en la Biblioteca](#)
- *Yepes Stork, Ricardo - Aranguren, Javier, Fundamentos de antropología, EUNSA, Pamplona 2001. [Localízalo en la Biblioteca](#)

(*obras especialmente recomendadas)

GRADING SYSTEM

- 35% = First exam (mid-semester (February 24, Room 31, 5:30-6:15 pm), covering the first 3 worldviews)
- 40% = Second exam (at the end of the semester (April 27, Room 34, 12:00-2:00 pm), covering essentially the last 3 worldviews)
- 25% = Class participation & attendance

OBJECTIVES

- To identify the most relevant issues of human existence as found in the great religious, humanistic, and scientific systems, and to develop a personal, reasoned response to these issues.
- To learn a critical and reflexive approach to the interconnected character of philosophical, religious, anthropological, social, and economic perspectives.
- To discover and evaluate the anthropological foundations as well as the ethical implications of economic thought.

LEARNING OUTCOMES (Competencies)



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- Familiarity with multiculturalism, appreciating diversity and developing the capacity to comprehend different points of view and ways of life
- Understanding and critical evaluation of different ideas regarding the human person and society
- Understanding of historical, philosophical, religious, linguistic, artistic aspects of specific worldviews
- Application of ideas from the course to current ethical and social issues

CONSULTATION HOURS

- Wednesdays: 5:15-5:30, 6:15-6:30, 7:15-7:30 pm (Room 31, Central Building)
- Fridays: 11:30-12:00 a.m. (Room 1280, School of Theology)
- other days / hours: by appointment (jalviar@unav.es)

FORMATIVE ACTIVITIES

- Reading of selected texts from various philosophical and religious systems
- Analysis of the concept of happiness and suffering in selected philosophies and religions
- Critical evaluation and discussion of the answers of different worldviews to the question of the meaning of life and the question of good and evil