



CORE-Worldviews and Texts
Teaching guide 2025-26

BASIC INFORMATION

Brief Description of the Course:

- This course studies a selection of worldviews (ancient and modern, Western and Eastern) using short narratives (fictional and historical) as starting points for discussion.
- More specifically, the following worldviews are considered: absolute Hedonism (Aristippus) and mitigated Hedonism (Epicurus); Platonism; Hinduism; Thomism; Existentialism (Sartre).
- This course belongs to the Core Curriculum of the University of Navarra: <http://www.unav.edu/web/core-curriculum/inicio>

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

Module / Subject: Core Curriculum / Cultural Keys

ECTS: 3 (note: for ILCE students this course may be combined with "Worldviews & Ethics" to yield a total of 6 credits)

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

Type of course: Elective

Professor: [J. José Alviar](#)

Medium of instruction: English

Schedule: Tuesdays, 5:30-6:15 + 6:30-7:15 pm.

Room: 31 (Central Building)

LEARNING OUTCOMES (Competencies)

- Understand how the narrative genre (in the form of short fiction stories and brief real-life accounts) reveals an author's perspective on life
- Know and appreciate diversity and multiculturalism, developing the values of respect and the capacity to comprehend different points of view and ways of life
- Understand and critically evaluate different ideas on the human person and society
- Understand the various aspects -historical, philosophical, religious, linguistic, artistic- that integrate specific worldviews
- Employ ideas from the course to reflect on current ethical and social issues

COURSE SYLLABUS

0. Introduction

- Text: Bob Moorehead, The Paradox of Our Age

1. Pleasure as happiness (Aristippus)

- Text 1: Interviews with Kim Novak / Melissa Gilbert / Cameron Diaz /



Universidad de Navarra

- Text 2: Lyrics of the song Chandelier
- Text 3: Summary of the life and thought of Aristippus (Diogenes Laertius, Lives, Opinions and Sentences of the Most Illustrious Philosophers, II)
- Text 4: Critique by Aristotle and Epicurus

2. Tranquility as a form of happiness (Epicurus)

- Text 1: Leo Tolstoy, How Much Land Does a Man Need?
- Text 2: Life of Epicurus (excerpt from Diogenes Laertius, Lives, Opinions, and Sentences of the Most Illustrious Philosophers, Book X, 1-15)
- Text 3: Epicurus' Letter to Menoeceus

3. The eternal return (Hinduism)

- Text 1: Steve Jobs' account of his stay in India
- Text 2: Selected texts from the Upanishads and Smriti

4. In search of an ideal world (Plato)

- Text 1: Plato's story of the cavern, The Republic, Book VII
- Text 2: Texts on Plato's life and more selected texts by Plato

5. Happiness beyond self (Thomas Aquinas)

- Text 1: Dostoyevsky's short story, The Grand Inquisitor
- Text 2: Sayings of Teresa of Calcutta published on the occasion of her canonization in 2016 (<https://www.crossroadsinitiative.com/saints/quotes-from-blessed-mother-teresa-of-calcutta/>)
- Text 3: excerpts from Thomas Aquinas' Summa Theologica, parts I and II-1

6. Life without meaning (Sartre)

- Text 1: The Myth of Sisyphus
- Text 2: Sartre's short story, The Wall
- Text 3: More selected texts from Sartre

FORMATIVE ACTIVITIES

- Reading and discussion of brief narratives (selected short stories and real-life accounts)
- Reading and discussion of texts taken from different philosophical and religious systems
- Analysis of the concept of happiness and suffering in various philosophies and religions
- Critical assessment and discussion of the responses of different worldviews to the question of the meaning of life

GRADING SYSTEM

- 30% First exam (mid-semester, Feb. 24, covering the first half of the course matter)
- 35% Second exam (at the end of the course, April 27, covering the second half of the course matter)
- 20% Written work (homework / class work) (late submissions = less points)
- 15% Attendance and participation in class

BIBLIOGRAPHY



Textbook

- J. José Alviar, *Dialogue with Worldviews* (I), Eunsa, Pamplona 2020 [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. 11: Logical Positivism and Existentialism, Continuum, London 200 [Localízalo en la Biblioteca](#)
- Elder, Joseph W., "Hinduism", *Collier's Encyclopedia*, Crowell-Collier & Macmillan, New York 1966, vol. 12, pp. 127-133 [Localízalo en la Biblioteca](#)
- Kerr, Fergus, *Thomas Aquinas: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford : Oxford University Press. 2009 [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](#)

Reference works in Spanish

(*obras especialmente recomendadas)

- 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](#)
- Cruz Prados, Alfredo, *Historia de la filosofía contemporánea*, EUNSA, Pamplona 1992 [Localízalo en la Biblioteca](#)
- Choza, 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](#)
- Grenet, Paul, *Historia de la filosofía antigua*, Herder, Barcelona 1992 [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](#)
- Merino, José Antonio, *Historia de la filosofía medieval*, BAC, Madrid 2001 [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](#)
- Verneaux, Roger, *Historia de la filosofía contemporánea*, Herder, Barcelona 1989 [Localízalo en la Biblioteca](#)



Universidad de Navarra

- *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](#)

CONSULTATION HOURS

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