PHILOSOPHY
Teacher in Charge: Colin McKenzie

Year 7  PHILOSOPHY - Core Subject

As an introduction to Philosophy, an environment is provided where students are encouraged to think in different ways and at different levels. Students develop their creative and critical thinking by responding to ideas with new alternatives and possibilities. Students are nurtured to value and respect the ideas of others, while at the same time being encouraged to look for reasons for what they think, say and do.

By teaching students to think carefully about ethics, moral questions and philosophical issues, we enable them to make sound judgments based on good reasons.

These skills and values are embedded in a variety of texts and experiences such as stories, poems, films and newspaper articles.

Students are expected to interact and contribute to class discussions with comments that are inquiring, show sound reasoning and are creative. Weekly homework tasks are also assessed.

Year 8 - 9 PHILOSOPHY Elective Subject – One Semester

This semester course is designed to give students a taste of Philosophy and an engagement with some of the Big Questions of life.

For those who have never studied Philosophy before this course will introduce key ideas and important thinking skills. For those who have undertaken Philosophy in younger years, it will be an opportunity to deepen an understanding of important philosophical content and skills.

Success, wisdom, balance
The specific questions/units to be studied include:

- The Branches of Philosophy
- Tools of the Trade - Argument Analysis
- Metaphysics – What is The Nature of Reality?
- What is Time?
- What is Civilisation?
- What does it mean to be ‘human’?
- Does Science hold all the Truth?
- What is Justice?
- What does a Good Life entail?
- How should human societies be organised?

A crucial part of this course is a weekly open discussion forum which students have always found to be a highlight of Philosophy.

The course, complete with resource materials and assignments, can be accessed from the following Web address:

http://stjohnsbigquestions.wikispaces.com

This is an exciting course for both those new to Philosophy, as well as those already hooked.

**Year 10 PHILOSOPHY - Elective Subject - One Semester**

This course traces philosophical themes from the Ancient Greeks to modern philosophers. It includes a mixture of the Philosophy of Science, Religion, Politics and Ethics. The course encourages students to think critically about issues, to see other viewpoints, to appreciate the concept of a worldview, and to identify their own worldviews.

Critical and creative thinking skills are encouraged. Students are also encouraged to examine the evidence for their beliefs and to appreciate sound reasoned arguments. Discussions are obviously very important as students explore their ideas. Assessment focuses both on factual knowledge of the ideas of some of the philosophers and on the sound development of each student’s own ideas.

The web address for this course is:

10philosophycm.wikispaces.com

**Stage 1 PHILOSOPHY - Elective Subject - One Semester (10 Credits)**

This practical Year 11 course emphasises Philosophical Inquiry skills within 3 key areas; Ethics, Epistemology and Metaphysics. The course is intended to be practical, rather than theoretical in nature. Students will learn to identify philosophical issues, and to think critically, creatively and independently about them.

For their assessment students will undertake two Practical Issue Studies, one of which involves an ethical emphasis. There are no prerequisites for the course. However, students who know that they would like to study Philosophy in senior years are encouraged to study it at earlier year levels too.

Success, wisdom, balance
The course Wikispace is well worth a visit: www.st1philosophy.wikispaces.com

**Stage 2 PHILOSOPHY – Full year (20 Credits)**

This course continues the skills of Year 11 but will provide more depth in each of the Key Learning Areas of Ethics, Epistemology and Metaphysics.

Students will learn to analyse philosophical positions, to identify assumptions, to apply critical thinking skills and to communicate their ideas clearly. The course focuses on elements of a negotiated study programs built around philosophical issues of interest to students, rather than a strictly prescribed content.

Assessment will involve argument analysis, response to issues, and a Philosophical Issue Study on a negotiated topic. Work is school assessed and moderated with other schools. There are no prerequisites for the course. However, students who know that they would like to study Philosophy in senior years are encouraged to study it at other year levels too.

The course Wikispace is st2philosophy.wikispaces.com