

# PONTIFÍCIA UNIVERSIDADE CATÓLICA DO RIO DE JANEIRO

CENTRO DE TEOLOGIA E CIÊNCIAS HUMANAS

DEPARTAMENTO DE FILOSOFIA



**FIL 1006 - 1CA** History of thought

PERÍODO: 2026.1 Course load: 60 hours Credits: 4

CLASS TIME:  
Tues. and Thurs.  
from 15h to 17h

Instructor: Maria Priscilla Coelho

<b>OBJECTIVES</b>	The course intends to foster critical thinking by: promoting acquaintance with key philosophical questions and a few attempts to discuss them; and by encouraging reflection upon the connections between the ontological, epistemological and ethical aspects of those questions.
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	This course intends to address some of the main questions raised along the history of philosophy: [unit I] “What makes us think?”; “Why is there something rather than nothing?”; “How do we make the present heroic?”; [unit II] “What can I know? What must I do? What may I hope?”; [unit III] “What is the meaning of life?”; “What is the relationship between our subjectivity and the structures of power that permeate our life in society?”. The course will follow a thematic approach, going back and forward in the history of thought. Different thinkers, as Arendt, Benjamin, Heidegger, Kant and Hadot, will help conduct the discussions.
<b>SYLLABUS</b>	The course will be split into 3 units: Unit I – What makes us think?; Unit II – What can I know?; Unit III – What is the meaning of life?.

<b>ASSESSMENTS</b>	<p><b>Criteria 3</b></p> <p>AVERAGE = ( G1 + G2 ) / 2</p> <p>If G2 &lt; 3, thus average = ( ( G1 +(G2*3) ) / 4</p>
<b>ASSESSMENTS DETAILS</b>	<p>There will be two main assessments: G1 and G2. First, for G1, one week in advance, a list of questions will be shared with students and students will pick one of them to write a 1200 words essay on it. (Format requirements: Times 12, 1.5 spaced, text justified). Students will submit it through Google Classroom (or email). The second main assignment, G2, will be a group project. Students will present a seminar about one of the topics to be shared in advance. Exceptions must be discussed individually with the course instructor.</p> <p>The calendar and the types of assessments are subject to change according to class agreements.</p>
<b>REQUIRED READINGS</b>	<p>ARENDT, H. <b>The life of the mind</b>. San Diego, New York, London: Harcourt, Inc, 1978.</p> <p>BENJAMIN, W. <b>The work of art in the age of its technological reproducibility and other writings on media</b>. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2008.</p> <p>HADOT, P. <b>Philosophy as a way of life</b>. Spiritual exercises from Socrates to Foucault. Ed. Arnold Davidson. Translated by Michael Chase. Oxford, UK &amp; Cambridge, USA, 1995.</p> <p>HEIDEGGER, M. <b>Introduction to metaphysics</b>. Translators: Gregory Fried and Richard Polt. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2000.</p> <p>KANT, I. <b>Critique of pure reason</b>. Translated by Paul Guyer and Allen Wood. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.</p> <p><b>OBS:</b> The references are subject to change according to the pedagogical needs of the course.</p>
<b>SUPPLEMENTAL REFERENCES</b>	<p>ANNAS, J. <b>The Morality of Happiness</b>. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993.</p>

ARENDT, H. **Between the past and the future**. New York: The viking Press, 1961.

BANICKI, K. "Philosophy as Therapy: Towards a Conceptual Model." **Philosophical Papers** 43/1: 2014, p. 7-31.

BAUDELAIRE, C. **The flowers of evil**. Translated by James McGowan. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1993.

BENJAMIN, W. **The writer of modern life**. Essays on Charles Baudelaire. Translated by Howard Eiland, Edmund Jephcott, Rodney Livingston, and Harry Zohn. Massachusetts and England: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2006.

CHASE, M. "Observations on Pierre Hadot's Conception of Philosophy as a Way of Life." **Practical Philosophy** 8/2: 2007, p. 5-17.

DAVIDSON, A. "Spiritual Exercises and Ancient Philosophy: An Introduction to Pierre Hadot." **Critical Inquiry** 16/3: 1990, p. 475-482.

ENGSTROM, S.; WHITING, J. **Aristotle, Kant, and the stoics**: rethinking happiness and duty. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

FOUCAULT, M. **The Care of the Self**. New York: Pantheon, 1986.

\_\_\_\_\_. **The Courage of the Truth** (The Government of Self and Others II): Lectures at the College de France 1983-1984. Edited by Arnold I. Davidson. Translated by Graham Burchell. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.

GUYER, P. "The Unity of Reason: Pure Reason as Practical Reason in Kant's Early Conception of the Transcendental Dialectic". **Kant on Freedom, Law and Happiness**. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000, p. 60-97.

KANT, I. **Practical Philosophy**. Translated by M. Gregor. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

KIRK, G.; RAVEN, J. **The presocratic philosophers**: a critical history with a selection of texts. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960.

NUSSBAUM, M. **The Therapy of Desire**: Theory and Practice in Hellenistic Ethics. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994

SELLARS, J. **The Art of living**. The Stoics on the Nature and Function of Philosophy. London: Bristol Classical, 2009.

WITTGENSTEIN, L. **Philosophical Investigations**. Translated by G. E M. Anscombe. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1988.

**RESEARCH  
REFERENCES**

Home - Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy, [www.rep.routledge.com/](http://www.rep.routledge.com/). Accessed 07 July 2025.

Perseus Digital Library, [www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/). Accessed 07 July 2025.

Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, Stanford University, [plato.stanford.edu/](http://plato.stanford.edu/). Accessed 07 July 2025.