

CUYAMACA COLLEGE
COURSE OUTLINE OF RECORD

PHILOSOPHY 160 – AMERICAN PHILOSOPHY

3 hours lecture, 3 units

Catalog Description

Study of the main traditions of American philosophical thought with an emphasis on the philosophers, their works, and systems of philosophy peculiar to the United States. Includes American philosophy from the earliest time to the present.

Prerequisite

None

Course Content

A historically comprehensive selection of reading from the acknowledged major “periods” of American philosophy: the Founding Fathers, the Transcendentalists, the Pragmatists, and the Contemporary Period.

Course Objectives

Students will be able to:

- 1) Identify and describe the major themes of American philosophy and how they differ from other traditions.
- 2) Identify and describe the major American philosophers and their theories.
- 3) Analyze and evaluate the impact of American philosophy on American culture and vice versa.
- 4) Analyze and evaluate the influence of other philosophical traditions on American philosophy and vice versa.
- 5) Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of American philosophical systems as regards their validity, coherence, and legitimacy.
- 6) Discuss the role of democracy in shaping American philosophy.

Method of Evaluation

A grading system will be established by the instructor and implemented uniformly. Grades will be based on demonstrated proficiency in subject matter determined by multiple measurements for evaluation, one of which must be essay exams, skills demonstration or, where appropriate, the symbol system.

- 1) Exams and quizzes that measure the students’ ability to correctly identify and describe the unique contributions made by American philosophers, how they relate to other traditions, and how they relate to American life more broadly speaking.
- 2) Research papers that measure the students’ ability to analyze and evaluate American philosophical systems either by comparing them with those of other traditions, or critiquing them on their own merits.
- 3) Critical reading journals that measure the students’ ability to incorporate American philosophical thought into their daily lives.

Special Materials Required of Student

None

Minimum Instructional Facilities

Smart classroom

Method of Instruction

- 1) Lecture and discussion
- 2) Audiovisual, multimedia presentations

Out-of-Class Assignments

- 1) Writing assignments, including essays
- 2) Reading assignments

Texts and References

- 1) Required (representative examples):
 - a. Stanlick, Nancy. *American Philosophy: The Basics*. Routledge, 2013.
 - b. McKenna, Erin and Scott Pratt. *American Philosophy from Wounded Knee to the Present*. Bloomsbury, 2015.
- 2) Supplemental: None

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- 1) Identify and describe the major themes of American philosophy and how they differ from other traditions.
- 2) Identify and describe the major American philosophers and their theories.
- 3) Analyze and evaluate the impact of American philosophy on American culture and vice versa.