



GENERAL STUDIES SCHEME OF WORK FOR FIRST SEMESTER 2017/2018
ACADEMIC SESSION.

COURSE CODE: GST 112

COURSE TITLE: Logic, Philosophy and Human Existence (2 Credits)

LEVEL: 100

COURSE LECTURER: Rev. Fr. Dr P. Egielewa

Course description: Logic, philosophy and human existence is an effort to explain the following: A brief survey of the main branches of Philosophy, Symbolic Logic, Special symbols in symbolic Logic-conjunction, negation, affirmation, disjunction, equivalent and conditional statements law of thought. The method of deduction using rules of inference and bi-conditionals qualification theory. Types of discourse, Nature of arguments, Validity and soundness; Techniques for evaluating arguments, Distinction between inductive and 15 deductive inferences, etc. (Illustrations will be taken from familiar texts, Including literature materials, Novels, Law reports and newspaper publications).

COURSE CONTENT/OUTLINE

General Introduction and setting the tone, Defining Philosophy and Etymology.

History of Philosophy, Concept of Critical Reflection, thinking and/or Reasoning.

Means and methods of transmission and preservation of philosophical ideas.

The Main Branches of Western Philosophy.

Introduction to Discourse & Types of Discourse.

The Logic and the concept of Logical reasoning; Inductive and Deductive reasoning.

Arguments; Nature, Validity, soundness and structure of Inferences, rules of, conditional and bi-conditional argument .

Introduction to Symbolic Logic.

Making arguments with symbols.

Methods of Deduction and Induction in symbolic logic.

Techniques for identifying and evaluating arguments.

COURSE ASSESSMENT MARKING SCHEME

Assessment	Marks
Written test	30 marks
End of semester examination	70 marks
Total	100%
Attendance compulsory	75% to enable candidate seat for exams

FIRST SEMESTER COURSE SCHEDULE

Istsemester (12 weeks)	Date	Topic	Lesson content	Resources	Assessment
Week 1		Philosophy: Definition, what is Philosophy	Definition of Philosophy. Etymology: Philo, Sophia- Love of wisdom, quest for knowledge, continuously critical search, yearning to reach and understand the ultimate truths of reality. It is critical reflection on human experience, attempting to understand the fundamental principles in reality, critically engaging the things in reality that evoke wonder and incite human admiration and thought	Textbooks/Multi-media	Question and answer with all students
Week 2		History of Philosophy, Philosophizing, critical reasoning/reflection	Understanding philosophy from the lens of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. Philosophy as continuous questioning, Socratic dialectics, critical thinking,	Textbooks/Multi-media	Question and answer with all students

			formation of arguments, critique of arguments, assertions, and existing knowledge		
Week 3		Means and methods of transmission and preservation of philosophical ideas	Writing, folklores, mythology, formulae of wise-sayings, stories and religion	Textbooks/Multi-media	Question and answer with all students
Week 4		Main Branches of Western Philosophy: Metaphysics, Epistemology, Ethics and Logic	a) Epistemology, Study of knowledge, Is knowledge attainable or not. Constituents of human knowledge b) Metaphysics- study of being as being, essence and existence. c) Ethics- study of fundamental principles of morality, rules of morality, what are moral statements, moral issues d) (Logic) Principle of human reasoning, processes of reasoning, sound and weak reasoning, premises and statements, arguments, validity and invalidity of arguments	Textbooks/Multi-media	Question and answer with all students
Week 5		Introduction to discourse. Types of discourses	Arguments, statements, questions, propositions and assertions. Not all depositions are arguments. Distinguishing between argumentative	Textbooks/Multi-media	Question and answer with all students

			discourses and non-argumentative discourses		
Week 6		Logic and logical reasoning:	What is Logic, study and application of the principles of human reasoning What do we mean by Inductive and deductive reasoning, the validity and soundness of inductive and deductive reasoning	Textbooks/Multi-media	Question and answer with all students
Week 7		Arguments; Nature, Validity, soundness and structure of	a)What are arguments, b)what must be present for a discourse or assertion to be called an argument c) Rules of argumentative discourse d) Premises as important pieces of argument e) Premises and conclusion in argument f) Conditional statements and bi-conditional statements, if and only if g)Validity and soundness of arguments, weak and strong arguments	Textbooks/Multi-media	Question and answer with all students
Week 8		Introduction to Symbolic Logic	Familiarization with concepts and symbols in symbolic logic Negation Affirmation Disjunction Copula Conjunction Conditional Bi-conditional Conclusion/inferen	Textbooks/Multi-media	Question and answer with all students

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Week 9		Making arguments with symbols	In classes exercises of using the symbols of conjunction, disjunction, negation, conditional and bi-conditional to represent and formulate arguments	Textbooks/Multi-media	Question and answer with all students
Week 10		Methods of Deduction in symbolic logic	In class exercises on transiting from premises of arguments to their conclusions using rules of inference,	Textbooks/Multi-media	Question and answer with all students
Week 11		Techniques for identifying and evaluating arguments	Determining whether an inference logically flows from an argument's premises, Engaging the rules of validity in logical reasoning Evaluating the validity of an argument Evaluating the soundness of an argument When an argument is valid or invalid When an argument is strong or weak True and false premises Nonsensical statements	Textbooks/Multimedia	Question and answer with all students
Week 12		All course content	Revision	Lecture note	Question and answer with all students

Recommended Literature

Christian, James (2012), *Philosophy: An Introduction to the Art of Wondering*, Boston, Wadsworth Cengage Learning.

Maduka, Chukwugozie (1996), *Philosophy and Logic: A First Course*, Iliad Publishers.

Ujomu, P. et al (2011), *Philosophy and Logic: An Introduction*, Benin City, University of Benin Publication.

General Introduction and setting the tone, Defining Philosophy and Etymology.

What is Philosophy? The first task of most disciplines is to find a commonly acceptable definition for the subject. In most cases, experts achieve this. But this is not so with the subject of philosophy. It is difficult to provide a definition that is satisfactory to every philosopher. Philosophers are not agreed on a general definition of philosophy. One can say that there are as many definitions of philosophy as there are philosophers. In other words, a philosopher would rather define philosophy in line with their philosophical schools of thought, culture and tradition. Indeed, attempting to define philosophy according to Popkin is already doing philosophy. Daniel Sullivan believes a definition of philosophy should first be attempted after a student has finished the studies of philosophy (Sullivan, 2009:4). Basically, everybody philosophizes (does philosophy) whether consciously or unconsciously.

In spite of the peculiar difficulty of defining philosophy, we need to attempt a definition at the minimum. We shall do this from two perspectives: the layman view and the professional view.

A Layman Perspective

For the point of view of the layman (a person who has not studied philosophy), philosophy is understood from its day to day application.

First, it is common to hear people talk of “my philosophy of life” which means “a general view of life or a general theory or principles about how we ought to conduct our lives (Halverson, 1964:4). One could hear people say, for instance, my philosophy of life is honesty understood to mean that the individual wants to be honest in everything he does. Another could say my philosophical life is God first, man second, understood to mean that the person wants his religious convictions to guide his/her actions before the consideration of man. Also, we hear people talk about the “capitalist philosophy”, an understanding of a modelled after Karl Marx in which maximisation of profits drive people’s actions.

Also, when people talk about taking things philosophically, it implies that people tend to take things from the broader perspective. If one loses a very close friend, people might likely admonish the bereaved to take the loss philosophically, that is to say it is an event one has no control over, the believers may advise him to see it as the “act of God”. Non-believers might tell the person as a natural event over which man has no control. Nature must take its course they say, as Joseph Omoregbe would say “whatever happens, happens necessarily” (1989:26).

Furthermore, when someone explains an argument that is systematic, logical and coherent, people ascribe the title of “philosopher” to the person. The reason is because the person has demonstrated wisdom and knowledge in the process of arguing a point.

But generally, the term “philosopher is traced to Pythagoras, who in the 6th century BC founded a community of scholars in southern Italy. He resisted the term Wise (sophists) because he believed only God was wise.

Academic definition of Philosophy

Apart from the layperson point of view of defining philosophy, there is also the academic or technical definition of philosophy. This is, however, controversial. Most philosophers are agreed on the

That the world can be seen from a unified viewpoint through the principle of generalization. Indeed all sciences operate on the principle of generalization.

That philosophy is distinguished from religion in that religion deals with truth as revealed by God, but philosophy deals with truth arrived at through rationalization.

Generally, philosophy is from the Greek words φιλοσοφία “Philo” (love) and “Sophia” (wisdom). Philosophy can thus be defined as love of wisdom. It is a higher curiosity whereby one endeavours to dig down to the very roots of things and through the exercise of reason try to find out why we hold our basic, most fundamental convictions about the nature of reality” (Sullivan, 2009). It is also the critical examination of the ideas that we live by (Sogolo, 1993).

Upper Case	Lower Case	Letter Name
A	Α	Alpha
B	Β	Beta
Γ	Γ	Gamma
Δ	Δ	Delta
E	Ε	Epsilon
Z	Ζ	Zeta
H	Η	Eta
Θ	Θ	Theta
I	Ι	Iota
K	Κ	Kappa
Λ	Λ	Lamda

Μ	Μ	Mu
Ν	Ν	Nu
Ξ	Ξ	Xi
Ο	Ο	Omicron
Π	Π	Pi
Ρ	Ρ	Rho
Σ	σ,ς	Sigma
Τ	Τ	Tau
Υ	Υ	Upsilon
Φ	Φ	Phi
Χ	Χ	Chi
Ψ	Ψ	Psi
Ω	Ω	Omega

Table 1: Showing the Greek Alphabet. Source: <https://www.thoughtco.com> (25.11.2017)

History of Philosophy

Philosophy began from wonder about death, life, universe, the unknown, beauty, powerlessness, etc.

Thales is the first known philosopher who lived in the 6th century at Miletus, a Greek Colony and was one of the seven wise men of ancient Greek and was close to the Chaldeans who read the planet. They used this information to cast horoscopes. They tried to find explanation for natural occurrences. They also tried to find out what everything comes from. Thus, we have philosophers positing as follows: Thales believes everything comes from water, while Anaximenes says its from air. Also, Heraclitus says its from fire while Empedocles says everything comes from four elements; earth, water, air and fire. They were more interested in the interconnectedness between these elements and natural elements. Is there a unity?

These early Greek Philosophers were referred to as Cosmogonists because they tried to find out the matter that makes up the cosmos and the external world (philosopher of nature). They are also called sensists because they take into account only what falls within the senses, namely what they could see and touch.

Pythagoras (572-497 BC) was the first to argue that there is more to only what the senses can perceive. He used numbers to try to explain nature. He says everything emanates from number and that numbers were more stable than water or fire. He emigrated from his home

town of Samos to Croton in southern Italy due to persecutions and established a community of men who were dedicated to live the ideals of philosophy as a way of life rather than a body of knowledge. He made discoveries in the field of arithmetic in Mathematics and geometry. Pythagoras' theorem were later harmonised by Euclid. The Pythagoreans taught the doctrine of transmigration of souls, a belief that souls pass from one animal body to another. The soul can only be freed by self-discipline and purification. He likened the body to music and just as music comes out well when the tones are harmonised, so also a healthy body.

Historical Perspectives in Philosophy

Philosophy has developed through different eras

Ancient Philosophy

Why do we study Philosophy?

Philosophy is studied for its sake. There is an inner satisfaction that comes from the fact that one can think critically and subject out thoughts and ideas and beliefs to critical examinations. This is satisfactory in itself. Philosophy began in wonder. Therefore, being able to ask ourselves fundamental questions about everything we think is satisfactory just as it is to appreciate the work of an art in itself.

Also, all men philosophise. What do you think before the bank gives a loan? What do companies ask for referees? Why do courts ask for sureties? These happen as a result of philosophising. People have had experience and come to the conclusion that these procedures need to be put in place to guarantee that their investments are secured or that employees will not run away with company goods or defendants fail to appear to appear before court proceedings after bail is granted.

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The City of Athens

Around the 490 BC, the Greek cities of Sparta and Athens fought against the Persian empires and won. They made great strides in Arts, public speaking. Artists were renowned at the time particularly sculptors.

With the Persians defeated, Athens took control of maritime leadership of the Eastern Mediterranean. As a result, Athens became a centre of commercial and naval dominance.

Athens was very known for its political position in the world at the time. It had a robust democracy that guaranteed majority vote, justice and respect for the rich and the poor.

Athens, particularly became a place for training in public speaking especially those run by Socrates, Plato and Aristotle as well as many others.

Age of Sophists

With the growth and influence of Athens, there grew the need to have some kind of professional training to meet the challenges of such a 'modern' city. This demand was heard by the sophists: by Socrates, Plato and Aristotle and others. Sophists are called the wise men or teachers who travelled from place to place teaching people courses in such fields as grammar, rhetoric, literature, statesmanship, the military and public speaking. The term was originally used to mean men of usual learning and teach people and collect money for their services. They were, therefore, considered to be among the rich and powerful.

Protagoras, born around 480BC was the first known such Sophist. He is from Thrace (Northeast of Greece) and came to Athens in his middle age. He was entrusted by Pericles to draw up a constitution for a Greek Colony. On the heated question of truth to which ideas were conflicting, Protagoras posited that "man is the measure of all things, of things that are that they are, and of things that are not, that they are not." In other words, man is the judge of

what is true and false about reality. It is the way the individual perceive reality that reality is such that there is not absolute truth and falsehood.

Since knowing truth cannot be known independently, good and evil could therefore not be distinguished. They taught that what is called good and evil, right and wrong are products of arbitrary convention about how people feel at the time. They argue also that law and justice are illusions and what people call justice and laws are simply products of self-interest and custom and climate. Also, the Sophists attacked morals.

The Sophist soon tended towards Scepticism and with time their influence started to wane due also to over twenty years of war with Sparta (exploited by politicians) which drained her resources, coupled with internal disorder in government led to it finally being succumbed and under the empire of Philip of Macedon and his son Alexander the Great.

Ancient Greece

Greece was a small and harsh land, full of mountains but only a few fertile lands. Although closely knitted together, the terrain made movements between the cities difficult and therefore, sea became the easiest form of transportation as a result. Though they were a health people, they had only a few vegetable and fruits, goat meat, olive oil. They had plenty of wine. The Greeks were naturally intelligent, tough and enterprising.

Greek no unified government structure but each city was an independent state. Athens, known for architecture, literature and arts, had about 240, 000 inhabitants, including many slaves. Sparta was a military state with a policy of conscripting young male children into the army.

Socrates (470BC-399BC)

His Life

Socrates is one of the earliest and greatest philosophers of all time. He is born to a sculptor father Sophroniscus and a midwife mother Phaenarete.¹ He lived in Athens. He served in the

¹ **Christian**, James (2012), *Philosophy: An Introduction to the Art of Wondering*, Boston, Wadsworth Cengage Learning.

Athenian army and fought in the Peloponnesian War² and got married his wife Xanthippe who had three children³. He is thought to have saved a friend Alcibiades who was wounded during a war. He is said to have worn the same dress always and walk barefoot. He is known to probably meditate for up to 24 hours without moving even in awkward in postures to the amazement of fellow soldiers. Socrates is considered a wise perform and affirm this by saying that he knew that he knew nothing. He was a moral philosopher that was mixed with sarcasms. He would ask people how they know what they thought to know to be right. He questioned the thoughts of those before him. He was the first to be credited with developing ethical guidelines on deciding goals in life and setting a process to achieve them.

Socrates lived at a time when Athens was at the peak of its fame: existence of rich democratic institutions with court systems where judges were chosen by ballot. The ruler was chosen by rich public-spirited aristocrats.

Socrates left no writing. He is known through the writing of Plato. Two main sources reveal what is known about him. The first is Xenophon: He is learned man who attempted to help clear Socrates from the charge of corruption levelled against him. The second is Plato, Plato's pupil and one of the greatest philosophers of all time. He tried to systematize philosophy. Socrates raised many philosophical questions in the form of dialogues, himself presumed to be one of them. Many doubt that all the dialogues represented Plato's views. Some believe that his first dialogues represented the views of Socrates and that it was the later dialogues that represented his own views.

At 70th Socrates was brought before the court on two counts (1) not believing in the gods and (2) corrupting the youths of Athens. Some scholars believe the real reason for his trial is political rather the published offences because he was very critical of the political class of his time especially as he tried to reveal their lies and exception. He was brought before the group of judges numbering five hundred. He argued that he was not a danger to Athens and Athens needed him and that death was not a reason to be scared and not to philosophize. He appealed passionately to be let free but was sentenced by a small majority (281 for guilty and 220 for not guilty). According to the Athenian law, one condemned to death can seek an alternative punishment such as life imprisonment or exile. It was the Jury's prerogative to decide which of the two alternatives they would accept to. When Socrates was asked for an alternative, he instead started to lecture the judges on why he should be honoured and not condemned. In anger, in the second vote, he got more votes for his death (361 for death and 140 for acquittal) than in the first vote.

As he left, he wrote: "The hour of departure has arrived, and we go our separate ways-I to die, and you to live. Which is better God only knows?" A month before his execution by

² The Peloponnesian War was fought between 431 and 404 BC between the ancient Greek city-states of Athens and Sparta as result of the struggle for power and influence. The war is named for the Peloponnesus, the peninsula on which Sparta is located.

³ <https://www.pearsonhighered.com/assets/samplechapter/0/1/3/7/0137080387.pdf>. Accessed on 12.12.2017.

poison, Socrates discussed the topic of immortality of the soul and the blessing of death with his fellow inmates.(Sullivan, 2009)

His Main Teaching

Socrates lived at a time when the Sophists held sway in Athens. He came to counteract the teachings of the Sophists and felt out against them. He argued that justice and injustice, right and wrong, truth and falsity were supremely important and were to be thought as such.

Knowledge is Virtue

Socrates argued that virtue is the supreme good no man would willingly want to injure himself. He said there was a difference between. No one would want to chop off his hands for instance. He said bad as that it may seem, injustice is even a higher damage, because it damages not the body this time but the soul. He believed that if men when thought the power of knowledge, they would less likely want to do anything that would make them do damage to their souls. In addition, he said, knowledge would make a man avoid injury to his body if he knew it would have adverse effect. Correct action will follow from rational thought.

For Socrates, the best way to know these virtues is to search for knowledge and the best way to do this was to consult men of knowledge and learning in the community. So he would ask lawyers questions if he wanted to find out what justice was all about. He would ask priests of the temple about religion. If he wanted to know about beauty, he would ask painters. He went about the streets of Athens asking experts questions. In the course of his going round, he soon discover that some of the experts he consults didn't also have the answers to his questions. If one does evil, it is because such a person does not know or have knowledge. He argues that his duty was not to teach knowledge but to force everyone to examine their opinions, beliefs and presuppositions. His famous saying is: "An unexamined life is not worth living"

This made the oracle of Delphi to refer to Socrates as the wisest man in Athens. Socrates disagreed but the oracle said because "he was the only one that knew that he did not know anything".

2. Socratic Irony

Socrates thought that the first step to knowledge was to acknowledge one's ignorance. So a Socrates main effort was to help people realize that they don't know. He would tell his hearers he doesn't know and ask for their opinions but soon Socrates would demonstrate to his hearers his superior knowledge. This Socrates thought was help minimize error and draw one

closer to the truth. But Socrates didn't have friends because of this method of proving people's ignorance.

3. Socratic Dialectic

Socrates referred to himself as the "gadfly" of Athens. By this Socrates, would go to public places such as market squares and question anyone he finds, rich, poor, young, old, friend stranger. He normally starts with very simple questions. E.g. He may ask a carpenter, how to make table. He would thereafter ask more questions in order to prove the limitation of what the carpenter says he knows and the limitations of his materials

Socratic Method

For one to be good in what he does, one has to know what it is in the first place. One needs to ask the question who needs the table, why does he need the table, how much is he willing to pay? Once one discovers what makes a good table, it becomes binding on all carpenters. There are limits then that are peculiar to all things and these are self-evident. If you walk into a store and ask for a table and the shop attendant hands you a broom, you would know that it is either he is insane or he doesn't know. Either ways something is wrong.

The Art of Good Living

To live good lives, according to Socrates, there are certain laws that must govern our actions. Finding these set of law is not an easy task but when they are found, they will be self-evident and binding on all. Will you call someone charitable a soldier who kills a soldier on the basis of suspecting of being a traitor and not patriotic, courageous? Is a man who drinks 10 bottles of Schnapps' in order to win N2,000 courageous? It may be difficult to explain courage, in the understanding of Socrates. But once we know what courage is, it will apply to all humans. One can ask the same of what being temperate would mean. Is a man who comes home drunk every night temperate? For Socrates, we can ask the question also in the case of justice. Knowing, therefore, the rule of good living is important good living.

Critique from Aristotle

Aristotle disagrees with Socrates on this point. Aristotle says there are other factors that must be factored for good living e.g. instincts, feelings, and passions. He argues that knowing what courage is is not as important as being courageous. Know what justice means doesn't mean that one would be just.

Plato (427- 347 BC)

Life

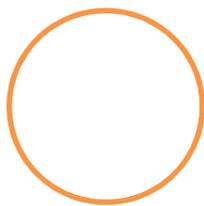
Plato was born in 427 BC from a popular and high ranking family in Athens. Plato was one of the very few committed friends of Socrates. After the death of Socrates and for his own safety, he left Athens. The death of Socrates pained Plato and he felt it was both a loss for Athens and humanity. He stayed aloof from the politics of the time because he felt Athens could not be redeemed. Instead he travelled widely to Egypt, Italy and Asia Minor and cities within Greece. He lived within the court of Dionysius, the tyrant in Syracuse in Sicily but because he was outspoken he was dismissed from the courts. : Returning to Athens, he founded a Philosophical school called “The Academy”., named after Academus”, owner of the garden where the school was founded. The Academy existed for about 900 years. He returned again to Syracuse as adviser to Dionysius II, son of Dionysius I. With no impact in Dionysius II, he returned to Athens. He died in 347 BC at the age of 80. He was eulogized by his pupil Aristotle. Most of his works are in form of dialogues, for instance “The Republic”, which contained most of his thoughts. Earlier dialogues contained thoughts of Socrates.

His Main Teachings

The Dialectics of Plato

While socrates concerned himself with questions only on moral issues like virtue, justice, temperance, Plato was more interested in knowledge itself. He would ask, for example question like: What is Number? What is up? What is down? What is “Is”? He wanted to know meaning. Why do people give a certain name to a thing and a different name to another? He believe, it that thing that is our mind that is our minds that matters and not the spoken words.

What is this?



English= Circle, German= der Kreisscheibe, Yoruba=, Hausa=, Igbo

Plato's Method

Plato believes that naming thing should be clear. When we say the paper is white and the ceiling is white, do we mean the same thing by the word white? Are the “white” of all the

roofs in this building same? If yes then time, quantity and place makes no difference. And if yes, then we probably we need to name those things differently. Whiteness is a single entity and is therefore not affected by time, place or quantity. If all the papers and all the ceilings in the world were destroyed, would there still be white in the world? For Plato it is yes for whiteness has not been affected by the destruction. Since whiteness is not in any place, it is not in this world. This board is rectangle. Is rectangularity limited only to this board? Before the board was created, there was rectangularity. And if all the boards in this world were destroyed, would there still be rectangularity? The same applies to number. Where is three plus two equals five. Where is five? Is there anything left if one cannot tie down whiteness or rectangularity to any object? Those remain permanent and unchanging.

The Two Worlds

Plato argued that there are two worlds. The world is unchanging things like whiteness, rectangularity and the number five. This world is known only by the eye of the soul. The other is the imperfect world, the changing world. This world can only be discovered with the sense, the eye of the body. The two worlds are so tied together that only the philosopher knows that two worlds exist.

For Plato, the real world is not the changing world in which everything is under constant change but the the real world is the world of idea or form. These ideas exist by themselves. For Plato, the worlds of bodies are unreal in the sense that change continue to affect them, to the extent they lose their beingness.

The Allegory of the Cave

This was dedicated to Plato. He explained that the human race is like a generation of human beings who have being chained in a large cave with their backs to the entrance of the cave and high wall blocking the entrance. Inside is a high way of people in a procession marching with statues representing all the objects of our world. Sun shines through the entrance and cast a shadow of the statues being carried by the prisoners on the wall. These shadows are all the people see. One of the prisoners is brought to the entrance. He retreats, wanting the comfort of the darkness and also because the rays of the lights hurt his eyes. He gets used to the beauty and real world but must go back to share the knowledge with his fellow prisoners. Uncomfortable as this may seem, The Philosopher sees the beauty of the real world but must reenter the cave to rescue his fellow prisoners.

Plato's thought about man

Plato believes that the real part of man is the soul which is connected to world of Ideas. Man fell and as punishment was meant to be imprisoned. The body is therefore the prison of the soul. When man says he remembers, it is a playback of the events as they have happened in the real world. This doctrine of remembering the real world he called "Reminiscence". Our

knowledge is not clear but they are distorted by the changing things of this world. The state of being connected with the real and unchanging world is what Plato calls “wisdom”.

Plato’s Republic

Plato explains his concept of ideal state where justice would be the ruling code. He believes that there should be three classes of citizens:

Guardians (Philosopher Kings)- those with reason (rational beings), who should be treated equally. They should be the ones to rule the state after proper mental training. This training means they would live together in a community with less attraction to property and wealth. After the training, each intake was to specialise as either rulers or soldiers.

Solders- Are those who would be taken from those with the highest spirit of motivation and courage and guard the state.

Workers-Those of desiring appetitive soul. Theirs will be to produce wealth and food of the state. Thus, division of labour would be the guiding principle.

Justice obtains when each class carries out the duty as it relates to its class. The state must supervise education insisting on teaching only what is true and good. Since Poets use beautiful language to try to convince people and Plato believing they could use such talent to mislead other, he banished them from his ideal state.

Marriage was to be done by lot. But the lot should be rigged so that the best breeders would marry themselves in order to generate improved genetic stock and produce healthy citizens. Children were not to be raised by their parents but taken away and raised by the state because they belong primarily not to their parents but to the state.

The Symposium (platonic love)

A symposium from Greek “Symposia” means “to drink together” (“banquet”) because people use banquets to give speeches. Plato’s used symposium to teach the highest form of love. What is Platonic love?

Aristotle (384-322 BC)

Born to a renowned physician from Thrace in 484BC. He became a pupil of Plato at the age of 17 until Plato’s death about 20 years after. Called to the court of Philip of Macedon in 347 BC he was called upon to tutor his son, the future Alexander the Great. In the reign of Alexander, Aristotle established a school in Athens called Lyceum where he taught for 12 years. He fled to Chalcis in Northern Greece for fear of being killed.

Like Plato, he wrote most of his thoughts in the form of dialogues, most of which have been lost. Many, however, have come down mutilated, discovered in a well where they were probably hidden due to war at the time. Most of the so-called prose treatises that have survived include;

Organon-treatise on logic

Meteorology & History of animals- treatise of natural science

Physics-treatise on the philosophy of nature

Metaphysics (First Philosophy)-Nichomachean Ethics & politics-ethical treatise

Poetics & Rhetoric-

Aristotle, a devout pupil of Plato and promoted Plato's ideas. But Aristotle disagreed with Plato on the question of Plato's ideas of two worlds. Instead, he argued that there are no two worlds but one world- the world made known to us by the sense. Also, Aristotle agreed on the point of "whiteness" in all white boards and white papers and "triangularity" in all triangular items but that they are not ideas existing in themselves but present in all white boards or white papers and in all triangular shapes. For Aristotle's they are forms and not ideas.

Aristotle teachings

Substance and Universals

Substance refers to things that are unique and has a proper name such as Peter, the white chair. Universals on the other hand refer to names which refer to something that is common to many things or a class name, what something is but not any particular thing. It is what several things share in common e.g. the chair on my table, the chair in the office, the chair in my kids' room. "Chair" is therefore universal while the chairs in the different rooms are substances.

Doctrine of Form and Matter

There are two basic principles in all the things in the world:

Form: That which makes things what they are, that which gives them their being: Femaleness, maleness, Tableness, Bookness, Humaness, triangularity, whiteness, etc. Tableness does not exist on its own but individual tables do. Femaleness does not exist on its own but Agnes, Lucy, Mary, Josephine do. Maleness does not exist by itself but Joseph, John, Eric, Cornelius

do. The form of a thing is its essence. Essence is what a thing is in itself without which it cannot exist or without which it ceases to exist. Essence precedes existence.

Matter: is that which limits form. It is that which is quantifiable which can be limited by time and space, that which describes an object in a particular way different from the other. The intellect is able to identify what a triangle is and abstract what holds good forever, the triangularity. It is this second principle of matter that also explains change and individuality as well as imperfection.

Act (Actuality) and Potency (Potentiality)

Aristotle distinguishes between actual existence of things and mere possible existence of that thing. Actuality is the fullness of a being, the complete existence of a thing while potentiality is the possibility that something can exist. It is not yet existing but there is the potential or possibility to exist.

A window is potentially existing here because a window can be built here but its not actual built when the window is constructed in two weeks, then the window is actually existing.

The act of the being, the table, the white board is what Aristotle called the basic and primary way of being which he termed “first act”. Other facts beyond its mere existence he refers to as “second act”.

The complete reality of a being is what it actually is and its potential ways of being. A stone exists and is a being but it is a also potential statue because it can be carved into a statue. A painter can paint even when he is not painting now. Being is therefore a combination of act and potentiality. A being that is pure act without potentiality has the complete act of being. Pure potentiality does not exist, except as an abstraction. Something that is a potentiality is a potentiality in relation to something which has meaning and being, an existing act.

Concept of Change

Aristotle believes that anything existing has exhausted all it could be, otherwise it couldn't have been that thing. Change cannot be explained in a thing itself. It cannot also be explained by a potentiality because it is not yet existing and cannot be used to explain something. Change can be explained in the course of potency, that is what the thing can be under the influence of an appropriate external cause. Change is therefore “the actualisation of the potential as such”. Change is neither the potency nor the act but somewhere in between, it's an incomplete act, its incomplete because the reality towards which the changing is moving has not been fully realised. Change is not said to have taken place until change has taken

place. It is “actuality and not actuality”. It Actuality in so far as there is movement towards perfection and not actuality because the ultimate goal has not being achieved.

Cause and Effect

A cause is that which makes something else that gives rise to a thing or condition. Although Aristotle did not define cause, he explained four types of causes, namely: material cause, formal cause, efficient cause and final cause.

Material cause: This is the physical matter that makes up an object, in most cases physical. In the case of logical reasoning, the evidences that make up a logical conclusion. In such cases, material cause are the things that one can see, touch, taste, etc. the wood is the material cause of this table.

Formal Cause: this is the form that is necessary so that the object can be what it has to be. Formal cause is that which distinguishes it from other objects. What distinguishes a table from a ball? Design? Shape? Air? In the case of a table, the design is the formal cause. This is because it is the design that begins the putting up of the wood together to begin the construction of the table

Efficient Cause: It is that which starts off the first process. This is the thing that brings a thing into being or action. What is the efficient cause of the table to be constructed? Carpenter? Hammer? Nails? In this case, it the carpenter that is the efficient cause.

Final cause: This is the aim or goal to be achieved by the object. The final cause of the table is to have a table to read or eat.

Concept of Knowing

Even though things are constantly changing, knowledge of the world is possible by the nature of things and the laws of change don't change. Man knows through the senses and through the intellect. Both are important for the complete understanding of the world. Senses convey to us the changing aspects of things while the intellect (power of reason) reveals to us the unchanging elements of things. Whiteness, triangularity exists in the intellect but they are explained in the physical individual elements as we perceive them through the senses. The intellect has the ability to thrust into the universals of things by first abstracting what it means to exist, the Unchanging Being.

Doctrine of Man

While Plato held that the soul was man and the body imprisoned man, Aristotle held that man is composed of soul and body, the form and the matter respectively. The form, the soul is limited and individuated by the body. Without such limited of time and space, man would simply not be man.

Aristotle's Ethics: The Golden Mean

Aristotle based most of his teaching on the *Nicomachean Ethics* (from the son Nichomachos) on principles of what is right and wrong and on happiness (*eudaimonia*), that is living well and doing well. A good life for a person is a life of happiness. Happiness is an activity of the soul in accord with perfect virtue. The golden mean, where mean is the comfortable balance, is the act of finding a balance between two extremes. In the principle of golden mean, each extreme is always bad, finding the mean is where behaviour should be centred. What should I need to do in order to act moderately? Between cowardice and rashness, courage is the mean just as generosity is the mean between meanness and prodigality. Finding the golden mean is also not easy. There is no simple fixed rule. Correct action or behaviour is the mean between right and wrong. What is right is known to the person of wisdom and reflection (reasoning).

In order for an action to be ethical it must meet certain standards: it has to be teleological (based on goals or targets), the proposal is good or just in itself, must have a good or just cause, proposed with the right intentions, must have good consequences.

Politics

Aristotle dwelt on the city state that was the political ideology dominant during his time. Most of his political thoughts are found in his work "politics". He believes the state was the highest political and ethical organ which supersedes family and individuals. Individuals can only fulfil their purposes within the state. He argued for slavery. The weak should be ruled by the superiors, doesn't support trade and making wealth was possible through the prudent management of land. He advocated for private ownership of property. To sustain government, propaganda should be propagated in education, that is, education should be tailored towards what citizens require. However, acquisition of "virtue" (human excellence) should be the ultimate end of education. Respect for law and justice should be upheld to maintain stability in government. Government should be big enough for economic independence and small enough for citizens to know and interact amongst themselves.

3.0 Means and methods of transmission and preservation of philosophical ideas

There are several ways through which philosophical ideas are transmitted. Many of these are oral-based but also in written forms. These include: Writing, folklores, mythology, formulae of wise-sayings, stories and religion.

In general, however, the means and methods of transmission and preservation of philosophical ideas are either oral or written.

3.1 Oral tradition (Folklore)

Oral traditions are creative expressions composed in traditional societies and passed on from one generation to another by word of mouth (Akporobaro, 2005). These refer to heritage of imaginative creations, folklore, proverbs, myths, riddles, legends, and songs. Such creative expressions are composed mentally; stored in the memory and then spoken; recited; chanted or sung during certain occasion or contexts. Oral traditions are man's attempt to explain his daily activities in a way that pleasant and understood, to explain activities such as farming, hunting, fishing. Such narrations capture the joy, sadness, the knowledge, experience and feeling of man at that time and space.

Folklore is generally the orally transmitted traditions, myths, songs, festivals, superstitions and stories of all peoples. The term was first used by William J. Thoms in 1846. Folklore is a pattern of communicating philosophical messages in earliest (and in many modern societies) communities and is regarded as one of the most respected, trusted, and acceptable forms of transmitting vital information in many such communities such as Nigeria.(Remi, 2009) .

In general, folklore deals with issues of survivals but also other issues like bravery, team spirit are covered in folklore. In practice, folklores are generally found in societies that have no writing and passed on orally from one generation to the other. It was originally about the study of the curiosities of culture, but gradually it became specialized as a field study of popular literary activities. (Winick, 1968, p. 217)

Folklores teach moral lessons to children by instilling in them important qualities of life. It transmits to the young accounts which direct the minds of the young audience to the customs, institutions and beliefs of a given society. It inculcates in the young mind society's philosophy, view, cosmology and power of rhetoric.

The environment in which folklores are told is important, namely; the story-teller, the audience, the temperature, the time and the season. There is no standardised or unified way of telling a tale, it simply depends on the mood of the narrator and the level of interest and the participation of the audience. Since most tales are told at night, the dramatic dimension to the story telling is brought in, namely the normal silence and tendency of fear that pervades that time of the day.

Types of Folklores

Berner Nancy has listed some types in Folklore found in Africa, as follows:

Animal-Trickster

This normally describes a situation where a small animal is designated as cunning and of high intelligence who victimises other animals and preys on a particular story. Sooner or later the victim outsmarts the so-called intelligent animal and outsmarts the powerful animal. This depicts that the oppressor animal is not so clever as he thought. The psychological and sociological import of such tales is that the victim must employ all within his power, particularly wisdom to address situations of life as they come every day.

2. Fairy-tale: This contains humour and centres on one hero or heroine who begins as a poor destitute and after a series of adventures, the supernatural dimension is brought into the scene and he or she succeeds at the end. He or she is portrayed as one with exemplary character with no flaws. Here, virtue such as courage, cleverness, presence of mind, generosity, willingness to listen to good advice, kindness and common decency are emphasized. The supernatural element comes in the form of help which could be Magic rings, a cloak of invisibility, or a money bag. The hero must fulfil certain tasks in order to win the reward. Death usually does not come up in the whole narrative.

3. Myths

Generally, myths are stories that are tied or connected to the religious beliefs and practices of a people and related to sacred beings or semi-divine heroes narrating how things came to be through the intervention of the sacred beings. Such myths also tell about the creation of man, life, existence of inanimate objects as well. Myths can be divided into “rationalist” and “romantic” senses. In the Rationalist sense, myths are false or unreliable stories or beliefs. In the romantic sense, a myth is a superior intuitive mode of cosmic understanding. Unlike legends, myths have less historical basis.

4. Riddles

Riddle is a short form of oral literature. It is defined as a verbal instructive device within the peer group enabling young people to acquire categorization of the natural and social world around them. (Onwuekwusi, 2015). Riddles are normally short and brief. It is an allusive statement by an analogy is made between an identified object or phenomenon and some meaning, description, sound, rhythm or tone in an alluded object.

Example:

Gwa m, gwa m, gwa m, mmadu abuo	Tell me, tell me, tell me the two people
Na-aga ije, mmiri na-ama otu, O naghị am anke ozo	who are travelling and one is drenched
	and the other is not.

5. Legends

Legends are short tales that are connected to specific communities and find an abode there. They usually explain some uncommon features about a particular locality or landscape. Legends are historical stories or narratives about origins, migrations that contain historical

facts such as identifiable names of particular characters or places or events. They are different from myths because they concern human beings rather gods and may have some historical basis unlike myths which do not. Legends are generally applied to tales of warriors or dead stars e.g. Awolowo. Legends are often the basis of beliefs, religion and taboos.

7. Proverbs are instruments in the form writing or speech which reflects the deepest values of a people but used paradoxically to warn, admonish, reprove, guide, praise and encourage. It is that which drives and motivates behaviours amongst a people. Proverbs contains self-evident truths which make them easily believed. For this reason, they have a persuasive force.

Examples:

Igbo=Ewu sokata mpi, nani ya eliri n'obu (the troublesome goat stays on the leash alone).

Philosophical idea/content: Philosophy of human existence? How is man a social being? What are the principles guiding peaceful coexistence? Should there be codes?

An old woman running on the road is either being pursued by something or something is pursuing it.

Philosophical idea/content: There is always a reason for what happens. First part (pursued by something) could mean trying to run from danger, someone wanting to attack.

The second part (pursuing something) trying to catch an event, pursuing an animal. It signifies a purpose for what one does. What is man's purpose in life?

“He who brings ant-ridden faggots must be prepared for the visit of lizards”, similar to “as you lay your bed, so you lie on it”.

Philosophical idea/content: One must take responsibility for one's actions.

8. Songs

Songs are also a form of oral tradition which expresses love, sorrow, joy, grief, complaint. In the oral tradition, these include: Lyrics (Song poem), which is an expression of a personal thought sung or as accompaniment of musical instruments such as drums. It may be performed solo or by a group. Examples could be love song, war song, drinking song, hunting song, dirge. The songs can be satirical, pedagogical

Example:

An Isoko Lyric

Ajao.....!

Me gbe wo ori roro hayo

It is pain to my soul

I have neither brother nor sister

Characteristics of Oral literature

1. It accommodates improvisation: unlike in the written literature, oral literature allows for creativity in terms creation, structure, delivery, and context.
2. Difficult to attach authors the Orature (examples. “Our Fathers say”, “Our Elders used to say”).
3. It is contextual and socially based, used among certain peoples and situations. It reflects the total experience of a society.

Functions of Folklore in the society (Remi, 2009)

It provides youth with a sense of community and the knowledge and skills required to handle problems and riddles in life.

Helps people to develop meaningful psychological traits

It exposes one to concepts of physical phenomena,

It inculcates a sense of social organization and collective responsibility

It serves as meaningful forms of intellectual engagement and a sense of belonging.

It serves to sharpen the intellect and the power of memory of the individuals in a community.

Helps one to explain deep truths such as divinity, supernatural forces, life, death, justice, life after death, good and evil in creative ways that captures the audience.

Shows how deeply reflective man in the oral tradition could be.

"Life will always remain for us an enigma" (A. Schweitzer)

Religion

Religion provides a foundation for philosophical wonder. Here, religious concepts, beliefs, terms, and practices of religious adherents are subject of philosophical thought. Such sources of wonder can come in various forms:

Logical Positivism: those who hold the belief that any religious belief or practice that is not verifiable or non-empirical does not exist, e.g. “God is merciful” would be meaningless to the logical positivist. For the logical positivists, a statement is meaningful if it can be verified through experience.

2. Religious Diversity (Pluralism)

In religious diversity, such questions as: Is there one religion or are there more religions? Is there a relationship between the religions of the world: Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Daoism, Confucianism, and African traditional religions?

There have also been growing questions about the place of monotheism in a polytheistic world. What is God or the Ultimate reality. John Hick (1922-2012) has argued that the Ultimate reality is far beyond human Comprehension and that a person's religious experiences depend to a large extent on the interpretive frameworks and concepts through which one's mind structures and comprehends them.

Religious relativism

Is the view that the correctness of a religion is dependent on the worldview of its believers as propounded by Joseph Runzo (1948-). This view holds that religious traditions are made up of various experiences and mutually incompatible truth claims. Such traditions are based on world views which are considered incompatible and sometimes even contradictory to other worldviews (Weltanschauung). Furthermore, such traditions, according to Runzo are products from the plurality of phenomenal realities experienced by the believers of that particular world view of belief.

Herein lies the difference between pluralist and relativist.

On this relativistic view, one's worldview—that is, one's total cognitive web of interrelated concepts and beliefs—determines how one comprehends and experiences Ultimate Reality. Furthermore, there are incompatible yet adequate truth claims that correspond to the various worldviews, and the veracity of a religion is determined by its adequacy to appropriately correspond to the worldview within which it is subsumed. An important difference between the religious relativist and the pluralist is that, for the relativist and not the pluralist, truth itself is understood to be relative.

Terms and clarity of concepts and ideas. Religious language is often vague, imprecise, and couched in mystery. In the twentieth century this linguistic imprecision was challenged by philosophers who used a principle of verifiability to reject as meaningless all non-empirical claims. For these logical positivists, only the tautologies of mathematics and logic, along with statements containing empirical observations or inferences, were taken to be meaningful. Many religious statements, including those about God, are neither tautological nor empirically verifiable. So a number of religious claims, such as "Yahweh is compassionate" or "Atman is Brahman," were considered by the positivists to be cognitively meaningless. When logical positivism became prominent mid-century, philosophy of religion as a discipline became suspect. Themes such as monotheism and polytheism are dominant religions. More recent work often involves a broader, more global approach, taking into consideration both theistic and non-theistic religious traditions.

Religious concept of God, religious language, existence of God, problem of good and evil, miracles, religious diversity.

Written traditions

Writing is the process of representing through conventionally acceptable symbols (letters, punctuations) that are mutually understood and shared by the writer and reader. This is the outward expression of thoughts first conceptualised in a thought process.

Written tradition was made possible with the advent of printing. It is preceded by oral traditions. Written form of tradition is as a result of technological advancement but the basic idea of transmission of man's emotions, remains the same.

Importance of Writing

1. Documents one's thoughts for posterity without adulteration
2. Simplifies explanation without having to repeat things many times
3. Makes the process of feedback easier
4. Furthers research culture by way of knowing what has been done previously
5. Writing helps one to be creative.

<http://www.iep.utm.edu/religion/>

4.0 Main Branches of Western Philosophy

Philosophy, like other disciplines can be divided into several branches. Many authors generally agree that the main branches are four, namely: Metaphysics, Epistemology, Ethics and Logic.

Philosophy as parent discipline

Almost all disciplines being studied today trace their origin to philosophy. Aristotle described Philosophy as "the first and last science". It is first because every other disciplines originate from philosophy. It is the last science because; to understand philosophy one must have basic knowledge of other sciences. Aristotle delved into various sciences such as politics, ethics, nature of man, logic, biology, amongst others. Indeed, his works particularly the encyclopaedia of philosophy was widely used in the middle ages in universities. Thus, today, the highest degree awarded to graduates is called "Doctor of Philosophy" (*"Philosophiae Doctor" = PhD*).

In the 18th century, many disciplines started to break away from philosophy through the different philosophical orientation of Pythagoras, Democritus, Karl Marx, Auguste Comte. Natural Philosophy split into what is today called Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Also Social sciences broke into Anthropology, Economics, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology.

Metaphysics:

From the words “*ta Meta ta physika*”, meaning after and physical meaning physics or nature, metaphysics is the study of the things beyond or after nature, (after physics). It deals with the first principle of the universe. Aristotle described it as the “*prote philosophia*” (first philosophy) to signify the most basic of all philosophy. Basically, metaphysics deals with issues that pertain to the universe, that raise man’s wonder beyond the physical world of the senses. It has variously been described as the “science of being qua being”. It is the study of the fundamental nature of reality, focusing upon problems that are not yet suitably treated by the sciences.

Metaphysics is the search for the ultimate meaning and purpose of existence and beingness. It is an attempt to find answers to human condition

It asks the questions: Why do things exist the way they are? Is there God? Why does evil exist? Who is man?

Pantaleon Iroegbu defines Metaphysics as “the branch of Philosophy that studies reality as such in its most comprehensive scope and fundamental principles. It is the science that tries to discover the true nature of things” (Maduka, 2011).

Two main views in Metaphysics include: Monism and Dualism

Monism is from the Greek *monos*, "one", "alone", "unique" and is the view that reality consists of just one kind of thing. It is the belief that the mind and the brain are the same thing. For the Monists, everything in the universe is an illusion (*maya* in Hindu) as nothing is true other than the supreme soul. Thus, anything that is finite, temporal, and needs to be explained by attributes is unreal. Since the Spirit is without attributes it is real. They posit that sense-knowledge is untrustworthy, and reason alone reliable, arguing that change and plurality do not really exist and that Being is one, immutable, and eternal.

Dualism is from [Latin](#) *duo*, two which is the view that reality consists of fundamentally two different kinds of things; material (physical) and immaterial (spiritual). Dualism was an idea that was first formulated by Plato in his famous **Theory of Forms**, distinct and **immaterial substances** of which the **objects** and other phenomena that we **perceive** in the world are nothing more than mere **shadows**. **Dualism holds** that the existing [universe](#) contains two radically distinct kinds of being or substance — matter and spirit, body and mind.

Pluralism

Pluralism is the doctrine that there is more than one basic substance or principle. It is the belief that reality consists of many different substances.

Epistemology

It is derived from the Greek words “episteme” meaning “discourse” and “logos” meaning study. Thus, literally, epistemology would be understood to be the study of discourse. It is that branch of philosophy that investigates what we know when we say we know. Since man desires to know, how is knowledge distinguishable from opinion. What is truth? Is our knowledge derivable only through experience or knowledge can exist apart from experience? How certain is the knowledge we claim to have?

Basic questions in Epistemology

What is knowledge?

How do we get knowledge?

What justifies belief and makes it knowledge?

There are basically three different types of knowledge or ways of knowing:

1. Practical knowledge: This is knowledge that is skill-based, e.g. being to use a phone or a computer.
2. Knowledge by acquaintance: This is knowledge that does not involve facts but is based familiarity a person or an object, e.g. I know my mother, I know what a laptop looks like.
3. Factual knowledge: This is knowledge based on fact, e.g. I know that the sun rises every morning – I know it is true.

Some main Views on Epistemology include:

1. Rationalism: This is from the Latin, “*ratio*” meaning “reason”. It claims that one can only know reality through the use of reason alone and not through the senses. It is a form of through that asserts that [human reason](#) holds the place of supreme criterion of [truth](#). Rationalism has a religious dimension. It is the direct and [logical](#) outcome of the principles of [Protestantism](#) which started in the 18th century in Germany.
2. Empiricism: From the Greek word *empeiria*, “experience.”, empiricism is the doctrine that says that one knows reality only through the senses. It is the belief that things are known from a posteriori (from the latter) because they are derived from experience. This is opposed to knowledge acquired “a priori” (“from the former”) if they are acquired independently from experience.
3. Skepticism: It is from the Greek word “*skeptikos*” which means “an inquirer,” which portrays someone who dissatisfied with what he thinks he knows and searching still for the truth. Skepticism is the belief which claims that we really cannot know anything. Basically, skeptics doubt knowledge and even challenge those claims people have. They question whether such claims are really indubitable as they are thought to be.
- 4.

Ethics

Ethics is from the Greek word “ethos” which means “custom”. Ethics is therefore the field of philosophy that concerns itself with customs of how man ought to live, what principles should guide what actions. It is the study of the good, and how to act with respect to the good. Ethics is normative in the sense that it is concerned primarily with what “ought or should be” and not what “is”. It deals with human conduct, that is to examine what one does in relation with one ought to do in society. In other words, ethics juxtaposes real conducts of man vis-a-vis what he ought to do. Such as how what is moral responsibility, what is happiness, following Aristotle, what is good and what is evil?

The main division of ethics include:

Absolutism: This the ethical belief that there are **absolute standards** against which moral questions can be **judged** and that certain actions are either **right** or **wrong**, regardless of the **context** of the action. Thus, there are actions are considered inherently **moral** or **immoral** irrespective of the **beliefs** and objectives of the individual, society or culture that engages in those actions. Such fundamental standard morals can be found in **laws of the universe**, the **nature of humanity** or the **will of God**. In other words, absolutism holds that there is one correct ethical system of moral values for all people regardless of the context such as person, place or time in which the act was carried out.

Relativism: Is the ethical belief that actions of man can be judged as right or wrong, moral and immoral depending or relative to the **social, cultural, historical** or **personal** circumstances. It is the view that moral actions are moderated by factors such as persons, place, time.

Discourse

Discourse comes from the Latin word *discursus*, meaning “running to and fro.” It is the physical act of passing across information “to and fro” an audience.

Discourse is a broad term that is used to refer spoken or written language. Discourse is generally based on context and the audience. In other words, discourse is any written or spoken communication. It is the expression of thought through language. It is a speech or writing that is intended to explain something and refers to the aim of a speaker in presenting his ideas. Discourse can, for example, refer to a paper or presentation related to specific subject area.

Types of Discourse

Traditionally, here are four different types of discourse, namely: Argument, narration, description, and exposition. Whole Speeches or written text may depend on just one discourse style or it may combine different types of discourses. In principles, different discourses are suited for different circumstances. The speaker, the audience and the circumstances of the meeting will determine what type of discourse is most suitable.

1. Argument:

This is a form of communication which is meant to convince an audience that the writer or speaker is correct with the aid of evidence and reason. The speaker or writer tries to convince the audience that his opinion is correct, typically using logic. We find arguments in Thesis, Essays, Sermons, Political Manifestoes. In an argument, the arguer begins from a thesis, conviction and tries to offer justification or reasons in a clear and orderly manner. Once he is able to convince the audience to accept his reasons, they will necessarily agree with his conviction or thesis.

There is a difference between argument and persuasion even though they appear similar. Argument gives evidence for the audience to logically agree with the arguer. Persuasion, on the other hand, gives evidence to get the audience to accept one's position or view point to act on it that conviction. For example, a successful argument will make an audience agree with a particular political candidate's manifestoes and programmes, but successful persuasion will make the audience vote for that candidate.

Example:

Our Party is the best because we have provided railways, hospitals, constructed 200 km roads. Vote for our candidate.

2. Narration:

Narration is a kind of discourse that tells a story, often with emotion and empathy involved such that the audience feel different about a certain issue. This could be in the form of a play, novel, folk tale, memoir, or myth. They are told from a single person or character's perspective and usually very descriptive. This kind of discourse appeals to common humanity or experiences. Most narrative will begin with "once upon a time...."

Example:

In a sense we've come to our nation's capital to cash a check. When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir. This note was a promise that all men, yes, black men as well as white men, would be guaranteed the "unalienable Rights" of "Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." It is obvious today that America has defaulted on this promissory note, insofar as her citizens of color are concerned. Instead of honoring this sacred obligation, America has given the Negro people a bad check, a check which has come back marked "insufficient funds." And so even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream. I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal." I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia, the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood. I

have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a state sweltering with the heat of injustice, sweltering with the heat of oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice. I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.

(Narration plus argument)

3. Description:

Description is a kind of discourse that depends on one or more of the five human senses (sight, hearing, smell, taste, or touch) in order to get the audience to visualise what is being communicated to them. Through description, things are memorable and relatable. While this kind of discourse may help audience to visualise people and place, it can also put them in a certain mood or create a certain kind of atmosphere. Nouns and adjectives are commonly used in description in order to make visualization more vivid to the audience.

Example: "I saw the 3 young kids running and I ran after them..."

4. Exposition:

Exposition is a kind of discourse that is used to inform the audience about a topic or theme in a language that is neutral, that is not meant to persuade or evoke emotions. Speakers and writers have many tools to do exposition including definition, analysis, comparism, contrast, problem and solution and cause-and-effect.

Example: "Undergraduates who study in a private university tend to behave differently from undergraduates who study in a private university. Studies have shown that...."

Importance of Discourse

1. Discourse helps to create new ways of understanding the world.
2. Helps deepen our knowledge of literature in general in its different forms
3. Helps the users to know when to apply different discourse depending on the situations.
4. Discourse helps us to think rationally and order our thought process.

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Assignment

Do you think religious diversity is the reason for religious intolerance? Using philosophers view to back your position, explain your view. At the end make recommendations.

