**Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Philosophy Elective**

**Maoriello Course Description**

**Course Description:**

What is the purpose of life? What is truth? What is wisdom? How can you prove that you really know something? What is real? What makes something wrong or right? What is Justice? What is happiness? And finally – If a tree falls in the woods and there is no one around to hear it, does it make a sound?

In this philosophy course, we will address all of the preceding questions in various ways. However, these questions have already been pondered by some of the greatest minds in humankind. First we will explore how philosophers like Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Descartes, Kant, and Nietzsche attempted to answer these timeless questions. They certainly did not have all the answers, but their ideas will help us to formulate, or rethink, our own answers to these questions both individually and as a class. Students will read primary and secondary sources related to these major philosophers, participate in several interactive activities and Socratic seminars that relate to the most profound philosophical problems, and investigate how contemporary popular culture continues to be influenced by these relevant philosophical conundrums.

**Course Materials:**

- One black and white composition book for notes and journal entries.

- One two-pocket folder for handouts

- Your Brain – and a pen

**Objectives:**

- Compose substantial reflections to in-class activities in their journals (see back)

- Participate in Socratic seminars, class discussions, and small group discussions. (see back)

- Examine and interpret some of the most prominent philosophical writings.

- Complete quizzes and exams that will contain some variation of identifications,

short answer questions, matching, or essays.

- Create a second semester Pop Culture and Philosophy project

- Debate some of the most compelling ethical queries of the modern world

**Communication:**

Email – scott.maoriello@wcsdny.org

Webpage – Consult the John Jay website and find my page under Teachers

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**Grade Breakdown:**

Journals/Homework– 30%

Quizzes and Exams – 35%

Projects –15%

Participation – 20%

**Resources:**

<http://www.iep.utm.edu> Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy

<http://sqapo.com> Squashed Philosophers

The Giants of Philosophy – YouTube (Long but comprehensive)

**A note on Journal Entries and Participation:**

Journal Entries – Students will be expected to complete one entry per week in their journals. Each entry should be at least one page and explain a specific topic or discussion addressed that week in class. Each entry should demonstrate concise reflection and analysis of the particular topic or discussion chosen. The journals will be collected at the halfway point, and at the close of each marking period. While journal entries will comprise most of the homework grade, throughout the semester students will also consult and analyze the writings of at least two philosophers.

Participation – Includes, but is not limited to participating in whole-group and small group discussions, proposing and answering questions in class, being prepared for each day’s activities, and overall degree of engagement in whole group and small group activities.