Main Branches of Philosophy

Dr Desh Raj Sirswal,
Assistant Professor(Philosophy),
P.G. Govt. College for Girls, Sector-11,
Chandigarh

http://drsirswal.webs.com
Introduction

- Philosophy is the study of general and fundamental problems, such as those connected with existence, knowledge, values, reason, mind, and language. It is distinguished from other ways of addressing such problems by its critical, generally systematic approach and its reliance on rational argument. The word "philosophy" comes from the Greek *philosophia*, which literally means "love of wisdom"
Socrates
Our Concern

- In order to narrow the aims of discussion philosophy was broken into branches. Traditionally philosophy has been broken into four main branches:
  - Metaphysics
  - Epistemology
  - Ethics
  - Logic
- Here are also some other branches of philosophy, we will discuss in the end.
Think...Think...Think...

- ????????????????
Let’s Start

- We will discuss here only the main branches of philosophy as Metaphysics, Epistemology, Ethics and Logic.
Metaphysics investigates the nature, structure and value of reality.
Defining Metaphysics

**Metaphysics**: Metaphysics is the branch of philosophy that goes beyond the realms of science. It is concerned with answering the questions about identity and the world. The name is derived from the Greek words, Meta which means beyond or after, and Physika which means physics. Aristotle, one of the most well known philosophers, acknowledged Thales as the first known meta physician. The main branches of metaphysics are ontology, natural theology and universal science.
Problems of Metaphysics

There is a basic question about the ultimate substance as to how many substances are required to constitute this world? Here are some theories regarding this:

- Dualism
- Monism
- Materialism
- Spiritualism
- Pluralism
Epistemology literally means “science of knowledge.”
Defining Epistemology

Epistemology: It deals with the definition of knowledge and its scope and limitations. It translates from Greek to mean 'theory of knowledge'. It questions the meaning of knowledge, how we obtain knowledge, how much do we know and how do we have this knowledge? Some of the famous epistemologists are Descartes, Kant and Hume.
Problems of Epistemology

- What is the nature of Knowledge?
- What is the nature of the process of knowledge?
- What are the sources of Knowledge?
  - Rationalism
  - Empiricism
  - Intuitionism
- What is the criteria of determining truth?
  - The Correspondence Theory of Truth.
  - The Coherence Theory of Truth.
  - The Pragmatic Theory of Truth.
Ethics

- **Ethics**, also known as **moral philosophy**, is a branch of philosophy that addresses questions about morality—that is, concepts such as good and evil, right and wrong, virtue and vice, justice, etc.
Defining Ethics

- **Ethics:** It is concerned with questions on morality and values and how they apply to various situations. It can be divided into the branches of meta-ethics, normative and applied ethics. Ethics seeks to understand the basis of morals, how they develop and how they are and should be followed. Famous works on ethics are by philosophers as early as Plato, Aristotle, Kant and Nietzsche.
Problems of Ethics

- The central questions raised in this course in ethics are:

  - (1) What is the nature of the life of excellence?
  - (2) What is the ultimate worth of the goals you seek?
  - (3) What specific courses of conduct, in keeping with these goals, will help lead to the life of excellence?
Logic

- Logic is the system or principles of reasoning applicable to any branch of knowledge or study.
Defining Logic

**Logic**: Among the branches of philosophy, logic is concerned with the various forms of reasoning and arriving at genuine conclusions. It includes the system of statements and arguments. It is now divided into mathematical logic and philosophical logic. It tries to avoid the imaginary or assumptions without real logical proof.
Problems of Logic

- Consistency, validity, soundness, and completeness
- Among the important problems that logic can have:
  - **Consistency**, which means that no theorem of the system contradicts another.
  - **Validity**, which means that the system's rules of proof will never allow a false inference from true premises. A logical system has the property of soundness when the logical system has the property of validity and only uses premises that prove true (or, in the case of axioms, are true by definition).
  - **Completeness**, which means that if a theorem is true, it can be proven.
  - **Soundness**, which means that the premises are true and the argument is valid.
Conclusion…

- **Philosophy** is the study of general and fundamental problems, such as those connected with existence, knowledge, values, reason, mind, and language. Here we have discussed all branches in short.

- **Reference:**