

THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY
Undergraduate Course Outline 2018-19
Philosophy 1020
Introduction to Philosophy

Term: Autumn & Spring
Class Hours: T/Th, 2:30-3:30
Class Location: NS 145
Tutorials: One hour per week

Instructor: Anthony Skelton
Office Location: WIRB 7178
Office Hours: T, 3:30-4:30 & Th, 9:30-10:30
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Phone: 519-661-2111, 87953

Description

This course will be devoted to a selection of problems in the following areas of philosophy:

1. Epistemology or the theory of knowledge. We shall consider such questions as: Is knowledge possible? Are any of our beliefs justified?
2. Metaphysics or the theory of what exists. We shall consider such questions as: Does God exist? Do we possess freedom of the will?
3. Ethics or the study of the nature of right and wrong, good and bad. We shall consider such questions as: What makes an action right or wrong, permissible or impermissible? What makes something good or bad?
4. Practical Ethics or the study of how one ought to live. We shall consider such questions as: Is it permissible to eat non-human animals? Ought I to do something to combat poverty in developing nations? Is abortion permissible?

Texts

All readings found on-line through the OWL site for this course.

Objectives

This course has four main objectives.

1. To acquaint students with some important problems in philosophy, their articulation and their attempted resolution.
2. To provide students with a deeper appreciation of the ways in which philosophy matters to daily life.
3. To equip students with some of the skills required for conducting philosophical research.
4. To help students develop the ability to express philosophical concepts and arguments clearly and economically in writing and in speaking.

Requirements

1. Tutorial Participation

Point: Each student is required to sign up for and attend a weekly tutorial; it is an opportunity to reflect on and to discuss course material with peers.

Value: 10 percent of final grade (5 percent per term)

2. Essay 1

Due date: TBD

Length: No more than 800 words

Value: 10 percent of final grade

3. Essay 2

Due date: TBD

Length: No more than 800 words

Value: 10 percent of final grade

4. Mid-term Examination

Due Date: To be determined by the Office of the Registrar

Length: Two Hours

Value: 20 percent of final grade

5. Essay 3

Due date: TBD

Length: No more than 800 words

Value: 10 percent of final grade

6. Essay 4

Due date: TBD

Length: No more than 800 words

Value: 10 percent of final grade

7. Final Examination

Due Date: To be determined by the Office of the Registrar

Length: Three Hours

Value: 30 percent of final grade

Regulations

1. Classroom Etiquette

In order for our course to run effectively and to everyone's benefit it is important that each student adheres to some basic norms respecting classroom behaviour. Here are some things you should not do:

- (a) During the lecture carry on private conversations with your peers. This is distracting to all.
- (b) During the lecture use electronic devices for purposes unrelated to the course material (e.g., shopping, watching Netflix, Facebooking, etc). This is rude and distracting.
- (c) During the lecture get up and walk out. This is rude and distracting.
- (d) During the lecture bark out commands or questions not related to the content of the lecture. This is distracting.

2. Audit

Students wishing to audit a course should consult with the instructor prior to or during the first week of classes.

3. Submission of essays

Please submit your assignments electronically. Do not submit a paper copy.

In order to submit your assignment, visit the OWL site for this course. On the left-hand navigation menu you will find the assignment tool. Click on this tool and you will find the assignment guidelines and basic instructions for submitting your assignment. To submit your assignment upload it and click on the submit button at the bottom of the page.

A corrected version of your paper will be returned to you through the OWL site.

4. Turnitin.com

All required papers will be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted will be included as course documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

5. Accommodation

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10 percent or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or the department. Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the Office of the Dean of the student's Faculty of registration, together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested. The UWO Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness and further information regarding this policy can be found at: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf.

6. Late essays and penalties

An essay will be considered late if it is handed in after the due date without a prearranged extension (or after the extended date, in the case of an extension). Late essays will be penalized at the rate of three percentage points per day late. Essays more than ten days late will not be accepted.

7. Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a form of cheating. Plagiarism is unacknowledged copying or paraphrasing of the words or ideas of another person. In general, anyone who learns something from a source (other than course lectures or general background knowledge any student of the course could reasonably be expected to have) and then presents that knowledge as their own discovery is considered to have plagiarized, even if the words used to express the ideas are not exactly the same.

Examples of plagiarism include: misrepresenting co-authored or group work as individually done, cutting and pasting copied or paraphrased work by others in with your own work, paraphrasing or otherwise altering the order of words or phrases and/or substituting words or phrases of similar meaning without acknowledgement that you are doing so, aiding and abetting such offences, among others.

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations.

Scholastic offences are taken very seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

8. E-mail policy

I am not able to respond to philosophical concerns or questions over e-mail. I will deal with such concerns or questions during my office hours only. If you have a problem turning in an assignment on time or you need to make an appointment with me or you have some private issue you wish to communicate to me, feel free to use e-mail. Otherwise, please attend my office hours or make an appointment to see me.

9. Statement on Use of Electronic Devices

Feel free to use electronic devices in class but please use them for academic purposes only.

10. Prerequisites

Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission form your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

11. Department of Philosophy Policies

The Department of Philosophy Policies which govern the conduct, standards, and expectations for student participation in Philosophy courses is available in the Undergraduate section of the Department of Philosophy website at <http://www.uwo.ca/philosophy/undergraduate/policies.html>. It is your responsibility to understand the policies set out by the Senate and the Department of Philosophy, and thus ignorance of these policies cannot be used as grounds of appeal.

12. Mental Health

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwoom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help. Immediate help in the event of a crisis can be had by phoning 519-661-3030 (during class hours) or 519-433-2023 (after class hours and on weekends and holidays).

The policy on Accommodation for Mental Illness is here:
http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf.

13. Support Services

Registrarial Services: <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>
Student Support Services:: <https://student.uwo.ca/psp/heprdweb/?cmd=login>
Services provided by USC: <http://westernusc.ca/services/>
Student Development Centre: <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>