



Western University

Department of Philosophy

Philosophy 1020 (200): Introduction to Philosophy 2023-24

Full year, asynchronous on-line lectures with weekly synchronous in person tutorials

Description

A look at some central questions in philosophy, including: Does God exist? What is knowledge? Truth? How do we distinguish between right and wrong? What justifies political authority? Does morality ever permit or require us to break the law? Specific topics will include: race and racism, fake news, and the justification and limits of rights in property. Examples and case studies will be drawn from a wide range of disciplines and areas, from the natural and social sciences to art and music.

Objectives

This course has three main objectives. The first is to introduce students to a number of core issues in philosophy and to some historically and conceptually significant answers to enduring philosophical questions concerning, for example, the existence of God, the principles of morality and justice, and the nature of reality and of knowledge. The second is to show how philosophical questions are inescapable, and raised throughout our lives. The third is to help students develop the skills philosophy requires: careful reading, critical thinking, and clear writing.

Format

In place of traditional, live lectures, I will provide two narrated slide shows per week. These will be organized in weekly “lessons” on the course OWL page. Each lesson will also include some readings. These will be released on a weekly basis, at noon Monday. You will meet for an hour a week in a tutorial led by a teaching assistant, in person on campus.

Texts

All readings will be available online, on the course OWL page.

Requirements and evaluation

- 1) Four short papers (750 words each): $10\% \times 4 = 40\%$
- 2) Two non-cumulative exams, one at the end of each term: $20\% \times 2 = 40\%$
- 3) Participation in on-line forum discussions: $5\%/\text{term} \times 2 = 10\%$
- 4) Participation in tutorials (may include short in-class writing exercises): $5\%/\text{term} \times 2 = 10\%$

More details on each of these requirements will be made available on the course OWL page.

There will also be optional weekly online quizzes (very short: 4 multiple choice questions) with which you can test your understanding of the week's readings and lectures.

Late papers

Late papers will be subject to a penalty of 2%/day, to a maximum of 10%. We will accept papers after they have accumulated the full penalty. The last day we will accept papers assigned in first term is the last day of classes in first term, December 8, 2023. The last day we will accept papers assigned in second term is the last of classes in second term, April 8, 2024.

If you need an extension on a paper, you will need to see an academic counsellor in the office of the dean of your faculty. Your counsellor will get in touch with your TA and me with any recommendations they have. We are not permitted to accept any documentation, medical or otherwise; please submit those to your counsellor. See below, under "Accommodation" under "Department Policies" for more information.

Communication

I will regularly post announcements on the course OWL page. These will also be sent as e-mails to your uwo e-mail accounts. They will stay on the OWL page until the course is over. You can always e-mail me with questions, at klimchuk@uwo.ca

Auditing

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

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://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.

Accommodation

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% 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 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://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf.

Evaluation of academic performance

At least three days prior to the deadline for withdrawal from a course without academic penalty, students will receive assessment of work accounting for at least 15% of their final grade.

Course assignments: final deadlines

The last day of scheduled classes in any course will be the last day on which course assignments will be accepted for credit in a course. Instructors will be required to return assignments to students as promptly as possible with reasonable explanations of the instructor's assessment of the assignment.

Academic offences

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

Plagiarism checking

All required papers may 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 for such checking will be included as source 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>.

Support Services

Registrarial Services <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

Student Support Services <https://student.uwo.ca/psp/heprdweb/?cmd=login>

Services provided by the USC <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

Student Development Centre <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/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.