

Fall 2013

PHIL 100W
Introduction to Philosophy: Knowledge and Reality
Prof. L. Shapiro
MW 11:30-12:20 Images Theatre

Contact Information

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TAs: Duncan Barhardt, Rosalind Chaplin, Katie Creel, Nicholas Dunn, Michaela Manson, Brent Stewart

Course Description

Philosophy starts with asking a slew of questions about things most people take for granted. By answering these questions (or at least trying to) we gain understanding of both ourselves and the world. In this course, we will address questions outlined below (questions proper to what is referred to as Metaphysics (what exists) and Epistemology (knowledge)) through readings of both historical and contemporary philosophical writings.

Central questions guiding this course include: What sorts of things exist? Does God exist? What about bodies? Minds? What do we know about what exists? Should we simply go by how things appear to us? Or can appearances be deceiving? But what about appearances? Is there something distinctive about the way things appear to us, the way in which we humans are aware of the world (as opposed to, ay, the way it appears to our pet dog or cat or hamster or frog)? What about the way I see the world? Is there something distinctive about me? What makes each of us the individual persons we are?

Students will:

- Become familiar with some basic philosophical terminology (including what an argument is!)
- Be exposed to some foundational philosophical questions and their answers through readings of canonical and contemporary writings
- Learn to evaluate arguments addressing those questions by raising objections
- Respond to those questions with arguments of their own
- Improve their writing skills in this writing intensive course, by learning how to construct a philosophical essay and improving the clarity and conciseness of their prose

Course Requirements

1 3-4 pp paper, constructed in parts	20%
1 4-5 pp paper, with revisions	30%
Midterm Exam	20%
Final Exam	20%
Participation (including low-stakes writing)	10%

Texts

Bertrand Russell, *The Problems of Philosophy* (available online)
René Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy* (Cambridge UP)
David Hume, *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* (Oxford)
Custom Courseware (McGraw Hill) (CC)
Additional readings available through CANVAS (indicated as 'online' on the schedule of readings)

Tutorials will begin the second week of term.

Late Paper Policy

Explicit extensions are required from your TA for any late paper. Medical documentation must be provided in the case of a medical reason for lateness. Papers handed in late without an extension or medical reason will be penalized.

Nota Bene: THE FINAL EXAM FOR THIS COURSE IS SCHEDULED FOR TUESDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2013 at 8:30AM. You must contact me within the first two weeks of class regarding any conflicts. Make up exams will only be scheduled in EXCEPTIONAL circumstances.

Note also: This course is on CANVAS, where you will be able to find the syllabus, should you lose yours, and all overheads/power point presentations for the course. See <http://canvas.sfu.ca>

Plagiarism Policy: Plagiarism is a serious breach of academic dishonesty. Students who plagiarism can expect to fail the assignment plagiarized *at minimum*. University policy on academic dishonesty can be found at <http://www.sfu.ca/policies/Students/>.

Turnitin.com: Students will be required to submit both draft and final essays to Turnitin.com, a third party service licensed for use by SFU. Turnitin is used for originality checking to help detect plagiarism. Students will be required to create an account with Turnitin, and to submit their work via that account, on the terms stipulated in the agreement between the student and Turnitin. This agreement includes the retention of your submitted work as part of the Turnitin database. Any student with a concern about using the Turnitin service may opt to use an anonymous identity in their interactions with Turnitin. Students who do not intend to use Turnitin in the standard manner must notify the instructor at least two weeks in advance of any submission deadline. In particular, it is the responsibility of any student using the anonymous option (i.e. false name and temporary e-mail address created for the purpose) to inform the instructor such that the instructor can match up the anonymous identity with the student. For more information see the Protection of Privacy section of the SFU calendar at <http://students.sfu.ca/calendar/student-info/privacy.html>.

Instructions on how to do so will be available with the first paper assignment.

Schedule of Readings (subject to change)

Sept 4	Introduction	Russell, Ch 15: "The Value of Philosophy" (Online)	No tutorials this week
Sept 9-11	What exists? Does God exist? [note: in considering whether God exists, we will also become familiar with an array of argument strategies]	Anselm (CC), Pascal (CC) Descartes, Meditation 3	
Sept 16-18	What can we know? Skepticism	L Zagzebski: "What is Knowledge?" (online) Sextus Empiricus (CC), Descartes, Meditation 1	paper topics distributed Sept 16
Sept 23-25	How the two questions intersect Case 1: Descartes: Using	Descartes, Meditations 2, 6 (second half) (reminder of Meditation 3,	

	the skeptical method to determine what exists: Dualism	quick overview of Meditation 4)	
Sept 30/Oct 2	Where are we left with regard to knowledge? Case 2: Materialism	Descartes, Meditation 6 C Elgin, "True Enough" (online) Epicurus, Lucretius (CC) D Armstrong (CC)	Papers due Oct 2
Oct 7-9	A Problem for Materialism: Consciousness	D Armstrong (CC) D Chalmers (CC) T Nagel "What is it like to be a bat?" (online)	
Oct 14-16		Catch up/Review	Thanksgiving: No class Oct 14
Oct 21-23	Midterm Case 3: Idealism	Berkeley (CC)	Midterm Oct 21
Oct 28-30	The Science of Man: Hume's Naturalism	Hume, Sections 1-3, Sections 4-5	paper topics distributed Oct 30
Nov 4-6	Human Beings and Animals	Hume, Section 8, Descartes Meditation 4, Discourse Part 5 (online) Hume Section 9	
Nov 11-13	Persons and Personal Identity	Locke, <i>Of Identity and Diversity</i> , (online)	Remembrance Day: No class Nov 11 Draft due Nov 13
Nov 18-20	Personal Identity	A Baier, "Cartesian Persons" (online) M Schechtman, "Personal Identity and the Past" (CC)	
Nov 25-27	Testimony	Hume, Section 10 J Lackey, "Testimony: Acquiring Knowledge from Others" (online)	revision second paper due November 27
Dec 2	Review		
DEC 10 @ 8:30am	FINAL EXAM		