

## PHIL\*2370-01

### INTRODUCTION TO METAPHYSICS [0.50]

**Instructor:** J. Lampert

**Brief course synopsis:**

This course introduces basic issues in metaphysics. There are many such issues, but this course will focus on the concepts of unity and multiplicity. Some of our concerns are highly abstract, for example those concerning the relations between universals and particulars, or between substance and quality, or between being and becoming. Others have more obvious pertinence for understanding human action, such as the relation between free will and determinism, or between theory and practice. But all of the concepts we deal with have important consequences for understanding the kinds of reality that make up our actual lives.

We begin the course with a brief background in the ancient Greek metaphysical speculations of Plato and Aristotle, but we will focus on four approaches to metaphysics: beginning with Leibniz's rationalism and Heidegger's existentialism, followed by readings of metaphysical work by analytic philosophers and by post-structuralist philosophers.

To prepare to take this course, one should ask oneself, "What does it mean 'to be'?" "Are all things essentially one, or essentially many?" And finally, "What sort of a being asks itself what it means 'to be'?"

Texts:

- Leibniz, Discourse on Metaphysics
- Heidegger, Introduction to Metaphysics Coursepack

Grading scheme:

One textual paper	25%
Term paper, 2500 words	40%
Final exam	25%
Class participation (may include short presentations of the readings)	10%