



PHIL*1050 Ethics, Knowledge, and Reality

Winter 2020

Section(s): C01

Department of Philosophy

Credit Weight: 0.50

Version 1.00 - December 09, 2019

1 Course Details

1.1 Calendar Description

This course introduces students to philosophy through the exploration of basic perennial philosophical problems and questions, such as whether there is free will, a God, objective right and wrong, genuine knowledge of the world, and other topics. The readings for the course will consist primarily of 20th century philosophical writing.

1.2 Course Description

This course traces fundamental questions through the history of philosophy by engaging with typical philosophical texts as well as works of popular culture. Through the dialogue between these various texts, issues in ethics, epistemology, and ontology will be explored. The philosophical texts used in this course aim to strike a balance between historical and contemporary works. The works from popular culture engage with media as diverse as film, graphic novels, prose, and video games. No previous knowledge of philosophy is assumed. Students will contribute to seminars where the synthesis of class materials will take place under the guidance of a TA. Grades will be determined based on seminar participation, two short papers, and a final exam.

1.3 Timetable

All Sections: Mondays and Wednesdays 9:30-10:20, MCLN (J.D. MacLachlan Building) 102.

Check WebAdvisor for the time and location of your tutorial section.

Timetable is subject to change. Please see WebAdvisor for the latest information.

1.4 Final Exam

Final Exam: Wednesday, April 8, 2020 7:00PM - 9:00PM

Room TBA

Exam time and location is subject to change. Please see WebAdvisor for the latest information.

2 Instructional Support

2.1 Instructional Support Team

Instructor: Brady Fullerton
Email: bfullert@uoguelph.ca
Office: MCKN363

2.2 Teaching Assistants

Teaching Assistant: Austin Blackwell
Email: ablack11@uoguelph.ca
 TA for Sections 01 and 02.

Teaching Assistant: James Belford
Email: jbelford@uoguelph.ca
 TA for Sections 03 and 04.

Teaching Assistant: Nour Abuhsan
Email: nabuhsan@uoguelph.ca
 TA for Sections 05 and 06.

3 Learning Resources

This course makes use of a variety of resources available through the campus bookstore, library, and ARES on Courselink. Make sure you familiarize yourself with how to access the material before the course gets underway. Please email if you are confused about how to access anything after thoroughly reviewing the course outline and Courselink.

3.1 Required Resources

The Republic (Readings)

Plato - The Republic, Book 2 (Available through ARES on Courselink.)

Watchmen (Textbook)

Moore, Alan (Available at the campus bookstore and on course reserve at the Library.)

The Trolley Problem (Article)

Thomson, Judith Jarvis (Available through ARES on Courselink.)

Papers, Please (Software)

<http://www.papersplea.se>

Pope, Lucas (Available for purchase through www.papersplea.se)

Meditations on First Philosophy (Textbook)

Descartes, Rene (Available at the campus bookstore and on course reserve at the Library.)

The Doors of Perception (Textbook)

Huxley, Aldous (Available at the campus bookstore and on course reserve at the Library.)

The Problems of Philosophy (Readings)

Russell, Bertrand - The Problems of Philosophy, Chapters "1 Appearance and Reality" and "11 On Intuitive Knowledge" (Available through ARES on Courselink.)

Memento (Film) (Other)

Nolan, Christopher (Available through ARES on Courselink.)

What is it Like to be a Bat? (Article)

Nagel, Thomas (Available through ARES on Courselink)

Her (Film) (Other)

Jonze, Spike (Available through ARES on Courselink.)

The Second Sex (Readings)

Beauvoir, Simone de - The Second Sex, Introduction (Available through ARES on Courselink.)

Blue is the Warmest Color (Textbook)

Maroh, Julie (Available at the campus bookstore and on course reserve at the Library.)

4 Learning Outcomes

4.1 Course Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

1. Be introduced to the use of key tools for sound justification and rational persuasion.
2. Be introduced to the main subfields of philosophy, including moral philosophy, social and political philosophy, metaphysics [the theory of reality], epistemology [the theory of knowledge], and the history of philosophy.
3. Understand, explain and assess the significance of basic concepts in philosophy, such as the appearance-reality distinction, the fact-value distinction, validity and soundness, free-will, knowledge, nature and community, and so on.
4. Present a philosophical position and engage with others in discussion of the merits of the position.
5. Argue competently for one's own view and be able to identify and critically evaluate patterns of argumentative reasoning in the work of others.
6. Compose a piece of clear philosophical writing in which basic philosophical problems are

supported by arguments.

5 Teaching and Learning Activities

Module One: "Ethics" includes all lectures from weeks one to four.

Module Two: "Knowledge" includes all lectures from weeks five to nine.

Module Three: "Reality" includes all lectures from weeks ten to thirteen.

This schedule is subject to change with notice.

5.1 Lecture

Week 1

Topics: (ETHICS)

Introduction to the course, and Plato's Republic

References: The Republic, Book 2 - Plato (Available through ARES on Courselink)

Week 2

Topics: (ETHICS)

Watchmen

References: Watchmen - Alan Moore (Required Textbook)

Week 3

Topics: (ETHICS)

The Trolley Problem

References: The Trolley Problem - Judith Jarvis Thomson (Available through ARES on Courselink)

Week 4

Topics: **(ETHICS)**

Papers, Please (Video Game)

References: Papers, Please (Video Game) - Lucas Pope (Required Software)

Week 5

Topics: **(KNOWLEDGE)**

Meditations on First Philosophy

References: Meditations on First Philosophy (Meditations 1 and 2) - Rene Descartes (Required Textbook)

Week 6

Topics: **(KNOWLEDGE)**

The Doors of Perception

References: The Doors of Perception - Aldous Huxley (Required Textbook)

Week 7

Topics: **Reading Week: No Classes**

Week 8

Topics: **(KNOWLEDGE)**

The Problems of Philosophy

References: The Problems of Philosophy (Chapters 1 and 11) -

Bertrand Russell (Available through ARES on Courselink)

Week 9

Topics: **(KNOWLEDGE)**

Memento (Film)

References: Memento (Film) - Christopher Nolan (Available through ARES on Courselink)

Week 10

Topics: **(REALITY)**

What is it Like to be a Bat?

References: What is it Like to be a Bat? - Thomas Nagel (Available through ARES on Courselink)

Week 11

Topics: **(REALITY)**

Her (Film)

References: Her (Film) - Spike Jonze (Available through ARES on Courselink)

Week 12

Topics: **(REALITY)**

The Second Sex

References: The Second Sex (Introduction) - Simone de Beauvoir (Available through ARES on Courselink)

Week 13**Topics:** (REALITY)

Blue is the Warmest Color

References: Blue is the Warmest Color - Julie Maroh (Required Textbook)**5.2 Seminar****Weekly****Topics:** Seminars will take place every week starting in **Week 01**. Consult WebAdvisor for the time and place of your seminar.**6 Assessments****6.1 Assessment Details****First Essay (25%)**

This essay is due either at the end of the Ethics module or the Knowledge module. Depending on which topic students choose to write on the paper is either due on Sunday, February 2, 2020 at 11:59pm or Sunday, March 8, 2020 at 11:59pm. If students choose to write on Ethics their essay will be due on the first deadline. If they choose to write on Knowledge their essay will be due on the second deadline.

Paper instructions will appear as an assignment on Courselink. Papers will be a maximum of 4 pages long with double spaced 12 pt font.

Second Essay (30%)

This essay is due either at the end of the Knowledge module or the Reality module. Depending on which topic students choose to write on the paper is either due on Sunday, March 8, 2020 at 11:59pm or Sunday, April 5, 2020 at 11:59pm. If students choose to write on Knowledge their essay will be due on the first deadline. If they choose to write on Reality their essay will be due on the second deadline.

Paper instructions will appear as an assignment on Courselink. Papers will be a maximum of 4 pages long with double spaced 12 pt font.

Participation (10%)

Participation is determined by your activity in seminars. You will be assessed on the quality of your contributions and not merely attendance or quantity of contributions. Students who are nervous about speaking in seminar or otherwise experience anxiety should talk to their TA immediately.

Final Exam (35%)

The final exam will be comprised of short answer and essay answer questions. The final exam will be cumulative and cover the entire course.

6.2 Essay Assignments

There are three essay topics in this course and three essay deadlines. However, students will only write two essays. Depending on which topic interests them most they will write these essays for the appropriate deadline. Since the course is divided into three modules (Ethics, Knowledge, Reality) students can write two papers on two of these three modules. Students must write a paper on the appropriate module for the appropriate deadline. This is absolutely not negotiable. Papers submitted on a subject that had a previous deadline will be counted as late.

7 University Statements

7.1 Email Communication

As per university regulations, all students are required to check their e-mail account regularly: e-mail is the official route of communication between the University and its students.

7.2 When You Cannot Meet a Course Requirement

When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or compassionate reasons please advise the course instructor (or designated person, such as a teaching assistant) in writing, with your name, id#, and e-mail contact. The grounds for Academic Consideration are detailed in the Undergraduate and Graduate Calendars.

Undergraduate Calendar - Academic Consideration and Appeals

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-ac.shtml>

Graduate Calendar - Grounds for Academic Consideration

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/current/genreg/index.shtml>

Associate Diploma Calendar - Academic Consideration, Appeals and Petitions

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/diploma/current/index.shtml>

7.3 Drop Date

Students will have until the last day of classes to drop courses without academic penalty. The deadline to drop two-semester courses will be the last day of classes in the second semester. This applies to all students (undergraduate, graduate and diploma) except for Doctor of Veterinary Medicine and Associate Diploma in Veterinary Technology (conventional and

alternative delivery) students. The regulations and procedures for course registration are available in their respective Academic Calendars.

Undergraduate Calendar - Dropping Courses

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-drop.shtml>

Graduate Calendar - Registration Changes

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/current/genreg/genreg-reg-regchg.shtml>

Associate Diploma Calendar - Dropping Courses

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/diploma/current/c08/c08-drop.shtml>

7.4 Copies of Out-of-class Assignments

Keep paper and/or other reliable back-up copies of all out-of-class assignments: you may be asked to resubmit work at any time.

7.5 Accessibility

The University promotes the full participation of students who experience disabilities in their academic programs. To that end, the provision of academic accommodation is a shared responsibility between the University and the student.

When accommodations are needed, the student is required to first register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS). Documentation to substantiate the existence of a disability is required; however, interim accommodations may be possible while that process is underway.

Accommodations are available for both permanent and temporary disabilities. It should be noted that common illnesses such as a cold or the flu do not constitute a disability.

Use of the SAS Exam Centre requires students to book their exams at least 7 days in advance and not later than the 40th Class Day.

For Guelph students, information can be found on the SAS website

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/sas>

For Ridgetown students, information can be found on the Ridgetown SAS website

<https://www.ridgetownc.com/services/accessibilityservices.cfm>

7.6 Academic Integrity

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity, and it is the responsibility of all members of the University community—faculty, staff, and students—to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring. University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff, and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that encourages academic integrity. Students need to remain aware that

instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection.

Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor.

Undergraduate Calendar - Academic Misconduct

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-amisconduct.shtml>

Graduate Calendar - Academic Misconduct

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/current/genreg/index.shtml>

7.7 Recording of Materials

Presentations that are made in relation to course work - including lectures - cannot be recorded or copied without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a student, or guest lecturer. Material recorded with permission is restricted to use for that course unless further permission is granted.

7.8 Resources

The Academic Calendars are the source of information about the University of Guelph's procedures, policies, and regulations that apply to undergraduate, graduate, and diploma programs.

Academic Calendars

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/academics/calendars>
