

Course ID:	Course Title:	Winter 2024
PH 125-2	Introduction to Philosophy	Prerequisite: None
		Credits: 3

Class Information		Instructor Information		Important Dates	
Delivery:	IN-PERSON	Instructor:	KEN NICKEL, PHD	First Day of Class:	JAN 10
Days:	W & F	Email:	knickel@ambrose.edu	Last Day to Add/Drop:	JAN 21
Time:	8:15 – 9:30	Phone:	403 410 2000 ext. 6903	Last Day to Withdraw:	MAR 28
Room:	2131	Office:	2103		
Lab/Tutorial:	NONE	Office Hours:	DROP-IN / UPON REQUEST	Last Day of Class:	APR 12
Final Exam:	APR 18 9:00 Airhart				

Course Description

The course introduces students to the broad survey of the Western philosophical tradition. Special attention will be given to enduring philosophical issues including, but not limited to, the nature of reality and knowledge, the existence of God, the mind/body problem, freewill and determinism, value theory and ethics.

Expected Learning Outcomes

1. Students should learn and understand the classical and enduring philosophical issues related to metaphysics, epistemology, and axiology.
2. Students should gain knowledge of the most prominent and significant contributors to the Western philosophical tradition.
3. Students should develop an appreciation for the invaluable contribution that philosophy has made to other disciplines and fields such as natural science, social science, politics, law, education, and theology.

Textbooks

Abel, Donald C. (Ed.). (2012). *Fifty Readings in Philosophy* (4th ed.). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Recommended:

Vaughn, Lewis, and Jillian Scott McIntosh. *Writing Philosophy: A Guide for Canadian Students*. 2nd ed. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2013. [This is an excellent resource, especially if a student plans to take additional courses in the discipline of Philosophy.]

Online Resource: *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (SEP) Our textbook of primary readings does not contain information/readings on all the important philosophers and philosophical ideas we will be covering during the term. The *SEP* is an excellent resource! <http://plato.stanford.edu/contents.html>

Professor Commentaries: For certain topics I will be posting downloadable pdf summaries/monographs on Moodle. Students are highly encouraged to read these.

Course Schedule

"The safest general characterization of the European philosophical tradition is that it consists of a series of footnotes to Plato." – Alfred North Whitehead

- ✓ For the first couple of weeks students will be introduced to the historical origins of Philosophy primarily through the character of Socrates as represented in the works of Plato. These lectures will set up virtually all of the big questions that will occupy us for the remainder of the semester.
- ✓ Plato's *Apology* (Reading 1)
- ✓ Plato's *Crito* (Reading 41)
- ✓ Plato's *Euthyphro* (Reading 11)
- ✓ Plato's *Republic* : Book V: 'One-and-the-many'; Book VI: 'The Divided Line'; Book VII: 'The Cave' (Reading 13)

JAN 10 FROM MYTHOLOGY TO PHILOSOPHY: THE SOCRATIC & PLATONIC LEGACY
JAN 12 FROM MYTHOLOGY TO PHILOSOPHY: THE SOCRATIC & PLATONIC LEGACY

JAN 17 FROM MYTHOLOGY TO PHILOSOPHY: THE SOCRATIC & PLATONIC LEGACY
JAN 19 FROM MYTHOLOGY TO PHILOSOPHY: THE SOCRATIC & PLATONIC LEGACY

JAN 24 FROM MYTHOLOGY TO PHILOSOPHY: THE SOCRATIC & PLATONIC LEGACY
JAN 26 FROM MYTHOLOGY TO PHILOSOPHY: THE SOCRATIC & PLATONIC LEGACY

- ✓ We'll devote roughly SIX lectures to Epistemology AND Metaphysics: *What is knowledge? What is reality? Can reality be known? What is truth?*
- ✓ Gettier, Edmund. "Is Justified True Belief Knowledge?". *Analysis* 23 (1963): 121-23.
- ✓ Rationalism: Rene Descartes (Reading 14)
- ✓ Spinoza (SEP <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/spinoza/>)
- ✓ Empiricism: John Locke & David Hume (Readings 15 & 16)
- ✓ Constructivism: Immanuel Kant (Reading 17)

- ✓ Materialism vs Idealism: Plato *Republic* Book V (in Reading 13: John Locke (in Reading 15: 161-164), George Berkeley (SEP <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/berkeley/>)
- ✓ G.W.F. Hegel (SEP <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/hegel/>)
- ✓ Richard Rorty (SEP <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/rorty/>)
- ✓ Relativism: (SEP <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/relativism/>) (Beginning at 4. Varieties of Relativism up to 4.4.1 Relativism about Rationality)

- ✓ Russell, Bertrand. *The Problems of Philosophy*. London, UK: Oxford University Press, 1912.
- ✓ Searle, John R. *The Construction of Social Reality*. New York, NY: The Free Press, 1995.
- ✓ Quine, W.V. "Two Dogmas of Empiricism." Chap. 2 In *From a Logical Point of View*. 20-46. New York, NY: Harper Torchbooks, 1951/1961.
- ✓ Rorty, Richard. "The World Well Lost." *Journal of Philosophy* 69 (1972): 649-65.¹

¹ This cluster of readings (Russell, Searle, Quine, Rorty) are all intended to illuminate our discussion of **Truth Theory**. PDF excerpts will be available on Moodle.

JAN 31 EPISTEMOLOGY AND METAPHYSICS I
 FEB 2 EPISTEMOLOGY AND METAPHYSICS I

 FEB 7 EPISTEMOLOGY AND METAPHYSICS I
 FEB 9 EPISTEMOLOGY AND METAPHYSICS I

 FEB 14 EPISTEMOLOGY AND METAPHYSICS I
 FEB 16 **MIDTERN EXAM**

 FEB 21 READING WEEK
 FEB 23 READING WEEK

 FEB 28 EPISTEMOLOGY AND METAPHYSICS I

- ✓ We'll devote roughly two lectures to the Mind-Body Problem: *Metaphysics II: Of what does a human being consist? Do I have parts or am I one thing? How is consciousness explainable?*
- ✓ Dualism: Rene Descartes (**Reading 19**)
- ✓ Physicalism: Peter Carruthers (**Reading 20**)
- ✓ Thomas Nagel (**Reading 21**)
- ✓ Should Christians be dualists or physicalists?
- ✓ Plantinga, Alvin. "Against Materialism." *Faith and Philosophy* 23 (2006): 3-32.
- ✓ van Inwagen, Peter. "The Nature of Rational Beings: Dualism and Physicalism." Chap. 10 In *Metaphysics* edited by Peter van Inwagen. 223-48. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2015.²

MAR 1 METAPHYSICS II: MIND/BODY PROBLEM
 MAR 6 METAPHYSICS II: MIND/BODY PROBLEM

- ✓ We'll devote roughly two lectures to the Problem of Self-Identity: *Metaphysics III: What am 'I'? How do 'I' endure through time?*
- ✓ Classical Psychological Account: John Locke (**Reading 22**)
- ✓ Contemporary Psychological Account: Marya Schechtman (**Reading 23**)
- ✓ Buddhist/Humean No-Self Account: James Giles (**Reading 24**)
- ✓ Contemporary Biological Account: Daniel Dennett (**Reading 25**)

MAR 8 METAPHYSICS III: SELF-IDENTITY
 MAR 13 METAPHYSICS III: SELF-IDENTITY

- ✓ We'll devote roughly two lectures to the Problem of Human Action: *Metaphysics IV: From what do my actions derive? Are my choices free or determined? Could they be both?*
- ✓ Baron d'Holbach (**Reading 26**)
- ✓ W.T. Stace (**Reading 28**)
- ✓ Richard Taylor (**Reading 29**)
- ✓ Nancy Holmstrom (**Reading 30**)

MAR 15 METAPHYSICS IV: HUMAN ACTION
 MAR 20 METAPHYSICS IV: HUMAN ACTION

- ✓ We'll devote roughly two lectures to Philosophy of Religion: *"What can I reasonably believe about God and God's relationship to the world we live in?"*
- ✓ The Ontological Argument: St. Anselm (**Reading 3**)

² PDF excerpts from **Plantinga** and **van Inwagen** will be available on Moodle.

- ✓ Cosmological Arguments: St. Thomas Aquinas (**Reading 4**)
- ✓ David Hume (**Reading 5**)
- ✓ Religious Rationality: Blaise Pascal (**Reading 12**)
- ✓ The Problem of Evil: J.L. Mackie (**Reading 9**)
- ✓ John Hick (**Reading 10**)

MAR 22 GOD
 MAR 27 GOD
 MAR 29 NO CLASS

- ✓ We'll devote roughly two lectures to Moral Philosophy: *What is morality about? What is the good life? Is there a right kind of moral motivation?*
- ✓ Virtue Ethics: Aristotle (**Reading 32**)
- ✓ Natural Law Theory: St. Thomas Aquinas (**Reading 33**)
- ✓ Deontology: Immanuel Kant (**Reading 34**)
- ✓ Utilitarianism: John Stuart Mill (**Reading 35**)
- ✓ Christian Existentialism: Soren Kierkegaard (**Reading 36**)
- ✓ Friedrich Nietzsche (**Reading 37**)

APR 3 MORALITY
 APR 5 MORALITY

- ✓ We'll devote roughly two lectures to Political Philosophy: *From what or whom does a State get its authority? What is the relationship between law and morality? What are rights?*
- ✓ Thomas Hobbes (**Reading 42**)
- ✓ John Locke (**Reading 43**)
- ✓ Karl Marx & Friedrich Engels (**Reading 45**)
- ✓ John Stuart Mill (**Reading 46**)
- ✓ John Rawls (**Reading 48**)

APR 10 POLITICS
 APR 12 POLITICS

Requirements:³

1. **Attendance & Participation** 10%
 - Please make every effort to be seated and prepared for class by **8:14**. Attendance will be taken before each class.
 - Participation is welcomed in the form of in-class questions or comments, but all students are expected to give evidence of participation in Moodle Discussion forums, in-person or Zoom meetings, etc. These participation markers will be documented through the semester.
 - Students lose 1 mark for every absence. Two 'lates' is equivalent to one absence. Students who repeatedly abbreviate class attendance (e.g., arrive late, depart early, etc.) may also be deemed absent. Students who feel the need to put their heads down for nap-time in class are demonstrably absent.
 - Students whose 'attendance' is **perfect** but whose quality of engagement is negligible should anticipate nothing better than **C (6.5 out of 10)** for this portion of their grade.
 - When a student has **missed 12 classes** the Registrar's office will be notified and a failing grade will be immediately entered in the student's portal. He or she will not be permitted to write the Final Exam.

2. **First Writing Assignment** 12.5%
 - **Due: FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 9 @ 8:14 AM** *before* class (electronic **and** paper submissions)

³ The Professor reserves the right to modify requirements, assignments, and exams in the event of extenuating circumstances.

- A separate document regarding topics, format and submission guidelines, and late policy will be available on Moodle.
- At the instructor’s discretion papers will be submitted to, for example, “Turnitin”, for originality assessment. Other online platforms may also be used to assess A.I. reliance.
- Students may be required to meet with the professor to discuss the content of the assignment before a final grade is attributed. Failures to meet in a timely fashion and failures to orally substantiate one’s writing may result in a reduced or failing grade for the assignment.
- Students must submit this assignment to be eligible to write the Final Exam.

3. **Midterm Exam** 15%

- Due: FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 16

4. **Second Writing Assignment** 22.5%

- Due: MONDAY, APRIL 15 @ 4:00 PM (electronic only – no physical copy required)
- A separate document regarding topics, format and submission guidelines, and late policy will be available on Moodle.
- At the instructor’s discretion papers will be submitted to, for example, “Turnitin”, for originality assessment. Other online platforms may also be used to assess A.I. reliance.
- Students may be required to meet with the professor to discuss the content of the assignment before a final grade is attributed. Failures to meet in a timely fashion and failures to orally substantiate one’s writing may result in a reduced or failing grade for the assignment.
- Students who have not submitted all assignments prior to the exam or have made no arrangements with the Professor to do so will not be permitted to write the Final Exam.

5. **Comprehensive / Cumulative Final Exam** 40%

- Date: THURSDAY, APRIL 18 @ 9:00 -- AIRHART
- The Final Exam will cover all the material covered in the course from the first day to the final day. Students must pass the Final Exam to ensure a passing grade in the course. Even if a student’s accumulated grades are above 50%, the Professor reserves the right to withhold a passing grade for the course if the student fails the Final Exam.
- Students should refrain from scheduling all other commitments (e.g., flights or travel of any sort) that will conflict with the Final Examination schedule. Final examinations will not be rescheduled to accommodate travel arrangements.

Attendance:

(See requirements)

Grade Summary:

Letter Grade	GPA	Description	Percentage
A+	4.0	EXCELLENT	96-100 %
A	4.0		91-95 %
A-	3.7		86-90 %
B+	3.3	GOOD	82-85 %
B	3.0		75-81 %
B-	2.7		72-74 %
C+	2.3	SATISFACTORY	68-71 %
C	2.0		63-67 %
C-	1.7		60-62 %
D+	1.3		56-59 %
D	1.0	MINIMAL PASS	50-55 %
F	0.0	FAIL	≤ 49 %

Because of the nature of the Alpha 4.00 system, there can be no uniform University-wide conversion scale. The relationship between raw scores (e.g. percentages) and the resultant letter grade will depend on the nature of the course and the instructor's assessment of the level of each class, compared to similar classes taught previously. Please note that final grades will be available on student registration system.

Other: (On a more personal note)

- ✓ **Students are responsible to check the Moodle** course site and their **Ambrose e-mail** accounts regularly. I like to use Moodle and/or e-mail to remind students of upcoming topics and readings, or to pose questions in light of readings or lecture topics. E-mail and Moodle may be used to notify you of cancelled classes or other important and immediate details relating to the course.
- ✓ Please, **put cell phones away during class**. Please try to avoid non-essential technology use during class.
- ✓ Students should not be confused about what paying tuition entitles them to. Paying tuition entitles no one to a **passing grade**. Passing grades, indeed all grades, are *earned*—not paid for.
- ✓ No university student consents to any small amount of violence or harassment in any classroom, but paying tuition and enrolling in a Philosophy course **implies consent** to a variety of things you may or may not like. If students have learned elsewhere to be confused about what 'violence' or 'harassment' are they should anticipate learning about 'reality' in this class. '**Academic freedom**' means you *will be* exposed to words and ideas, some of which will be distasteful to some students and possibly to all. It is impossible to identify and appreciate 'good' ideas without carefully considering 'bad' ideas. Students should consider *why* they are 'bad' or incorrect and not merely 'forbidden'.
- ✓ Philosophy students consent to the possibility that they might read and hear things that offend their sensibilities. You have every right *not* to be harmed in my class, but you have **NO right not to be offended**. The **pursuit of wisdom** equips students to better **cope** with life's inevitable challenges. No one on the planet—not God and certainly no Philosophy Professor at Ambrose—bears a duty to make things **perfect** for you. Perfection is the enemy of the good. If you remain in *this* Philosophy class you **consent** to be intellectually challenged. You **consent** to think carefully about, among other things, Truth, Beauty, and Goodness in a world that is all too often deceptive, ugly, gritty, and unjust. The work of Philosophy takes **courage**, though, frankly, not very much.

Ambrose University Important Policies & Procedures:

Registration

Registration is the process of selecting and enrolling in classes for upcoming semesters. Only students who are registered will be permitted to attend class and receive a grade for the course. You are responsible for ensuring that the courses you take are appropriate for your program, that they do not have any scheduling conflicts, that they have the necessary prerequisites and that they meet all degree requirements.

Withdrawal From A Course

Prior to the Add/Drop deadline: through the student registration system whereby course(s) will be removed with no academic or financial penalty. After the Add/Drop deadline and until the Withdrawal deadline: through submission of the 'Withdrawal from Course' form whereby course(s) will remain on the permanent academic record/transcript with the symbol 'W'. (See ambrose.edu/registrar/request-forms.) Students who withdraw from more than 30 credits attempted at Ambrose University will be required to withdraw from their program. Students considering withdrawing from courses are encouraged to discuss with their Faculty Advisor and/or the Office of the Registrar questions relating to their withdrawal decision specifically relating to financial assistance, study permit requirements, prerequisites for subsequent courses, readmission, and/or graduation timeline. Students who do not formally withdraw from a course are still considered registered in the course, even if they are no longer attending classes. In this case, students will be assigned a grade based on coursework

completed as per the course syllabus and are responsible to pay the tuition and fees assessed for the course. Under extenuating circumstances, students may request from the Office of the Registrar a course(s) withdrawal after the Withdrawal deadline and until the last day of classes. Extenuating circumstances typically consider situations such as medical emergencies, compassionate grounds, or unforeseen conditions/situations beyond the students' control that arise after the start of the semester and are considered on a case-by-case basis. Supporting documentation from a physician or Registered Health Professional must accompany this request.

Coursework Extensions

Should a request for a time extension on coursework exceed the end of the term, a *Coursework Extension Application* must be completed and submitted to the Office of the Registrar. The extension (if granted) will be recorded on the student record. Extensions are granted at the discretion of the instructor and registrar. If granted, time extensions do not excuse you from a final examination where one has been scheduled for the course. More conditions apply.

Exam Scheduling

Students who find a conflict in their exam schedule must submit a *Revised Final Exam Time Application* to the Office of the Registrar by the deadline noted in the Academic Calendar. Requests will be considered for the following reasons only: 1) the scheduled final examination slot conflicts with another exam; or 2) the scheduled final examination slot results in three consecutive examination

periods. Travel is not considered a valid excuse for re-scheduling or missing a final exam.

Communication

Your Ambrose email account is the University's primary and official mode of communication with you. Information delivered to your Ambrose email is considered official notification. Ambrose University is not responsible for your failure to receive important information delivered to your Ambrose email.

Lecture Recording

The recording of lectures or any other classroom academic activity, other than an audio recording as an accommodation, is prohibited except at the discretion of the instructor. Any use other than that agreed upon with the instructor constitutes academic misconduct and may result in suspension or expulsion. Permission to allow a lecture recording is not a transfer of any copyrights, so such recordings may be used only for individual or group study with other students enrolled in the same class and may not be reproduced, transferred, distributed or displayed in any public or commercial manner. Student must destroy recordings in any, and all formats at the end of the semester in which they are enrolled in the class. All students recording lectures, must sign the Permission Form to audio record lectures which is available through the Office of the Registrar.

Standards of Behaviour in the Classroom Setting

Learning is an active and interactive process, a joint venture between student and instructor and between student and student. Some topics covered within a class may lead to strong reactions and opinions. It is important that Students understand that they are entitled to hold contradictory beliefs and that they should be encouraged to engage with these topics in a critical manner. Committing to this type of "active learning" significantly increases the learning experience for both teacher and student, and reflects the Christian imperative to pursue truth, which lies at the heart of the Ambrose educational experience. However, active discussion of controversial topics will be undertaken with respect and empathy, which are the foundations of civil discourse in the Classroom Setting. Primary responsibility for managing the classroom rests with the instructor. The instructor may direct a student to leave the class if the student engages in any behaviour that disrupts the classroom setting. If necessary, Ambrose security will be contacted to escort the student from class.

Academic Integrity

We are committed to fostering personal integrity and will not overlook breaches of integrity such as plagiarism and cheating. Academic dishonesty is taken seriously at Ambrose University as it undermines our academic standards and affects the integrity of each member of our learning community. Any attempt to obtain credit for academic work through fraudulent, deceptive, or dishonest means is academic dishonesty. Plagiarism involves presenting someone else's ideas, words, or work as one's own. Plagiarism is fraud and theft, but plagiarism can also occur by accident when a student fails or forgets to acknowledge to another person's ideas or words. Plagiarism and cheating can result in a failing grade for an assignment, for the course, or immediate dismissal from the university. Students are expected to be familiar with the policies in the current Academic Calendar that

deal with plagiarism, cheating, and the penalties and procedures for dealing with these matters. All cases of academic dishonesty are reported to the Academic Dean and become part of the student's permanent record.

Academic Policies

It is the responsibility of all students to become familiar with and adhere to academic policies as stated in the Academic Calendar. The academic calendar can be found at <https://ambrose.edu/academics/academic-calendar>

Privacy

Personal information (information about an individual that may be used to identify that individual) may be required as part of taking this class. Any information collected will only be used and disclosed for the purpose for which the collection was intended. For further information contact the Privacy Compliance Officer at privacy@ambrose.edu.

Academic Success and Supports

Accessibility Services

Academic accommodation is provided to Ambrose students with disabilities in accordance with the Alberta Human Rights Act and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Provision of academic accommodation does not lower the academic standards of the university nor remove the need for evaluation and the need to meet essential learning outcomes. Reasonable accommodations are tailored to the individual student, are flexible, and are determined by considering the barriers within the unique environment of a postsecondary institution. It can take time to organize academic accommodations and funding for disability-related services. Students with a disability who wish to have an academic accommodation are encouraged to contact Accessibility Services as early as possible to ensure appropriate planning for any needs that may include accommodations. Staff can then meet with students to determine areas to facilitate success, and if accommodations are required, ensure those accommodations are put in place by working with faculty.

Ambrose Writing Services

Ambrose Writing services provides academic support in the four foundational literacy skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing. It also assists students with critical thinking and the research process. Throughout the academic year, students can meet with a writing tutor for personalized support, or they can attend a variety of workshops offered by Academic Success. These services are free to students enrolled at Ambrose University. Academic Success serves all students in all disciplines and at all levels, from history to biology and from theatre to theology. To learn more, please visit <https://ambrose.edu/sas/writing-services>

Ambrose Tutoring Services

Ambrose Tutoring Services provides support in specific disciplinary knowledge, especially in high-demand areas such as chemistry, philosophy, math and statistics, and religious studies. These tutors also coach students in general study skills, including listening and note-taking. During the academic year, Ambrose Tutoring Services

offers drop-in tutoring for courses with high demand; for other courses, students can book a one-to-one appointment with a tutor in their discipline. These services are free to students enrolled at Ambrose University. To learn more, please visit <https://ambrose.edu/tutoring>.

Mental Health Support

All of us need a support system. We encourage students to build mental health supports and to reach out when help is needed.

On Campus:

- Counselling Services: ambrose.edu/counselling
- For immediate crisis support, there are staff on campus who are trained in Suicide Intervention Skills and can help you access mental health support. See <https://ambrose.edu/student-life/crisissupport> for a list of staff members.
- For additional wellness resources go to the Ambrose wellness page: <https://ambrose.edu/wellness>

Off Campus:

- Distress Centre - 403-266-4357
- Alberta Mental Health Helpline - 1-877-303-2642 (Toll free)
- Sheldon Chumir Health Care Centre - 403-955-6200
- Emergency - 911

Sexual Violence Support

We are committed to supporting students who have experienced gender based sexual violence in the past or while at Ambrose. Many of the staff, faculty, and student leaders have received Sexual Violence Response to Disclosure training. We will support you and help you find the resources you need and you can access information about reporting. Information about the Sexual Violence policy and on and off campus supports can be found on our website– ambrose.edu/sexual-violence-response-and-awareness.

Off Campus:

- Alberta's Oneline for Sexual Violence - 1-866-403-8000 call or text
- Clinic: Sheldon Chumir Health Centre - 403-955-6200
- Calgary Communities Against Sexual Abuse - 403-237-5888
- Chat: www.calgarycasa.com

Note: Students are strongly advised to retain this syllabus for their records.