

Course ID:	Course Title:	Fall 2017
PH 125	Introduction to Philosophy	Prerequisite: none
		Credits: 3

Class Information		Instructor Information		Important Dates	
Days:	T & Th	Instructor:	Ken Nickel (PhD)	First day of classes:	Wed., Sept. 6
Time:	9:45 – 11:00 AM	Email:	knickel@ambrose.edu	Last day to add/drop, or change to audit:	Sun, Sept. 17
Room:	2210	Phone:	410-2000 ext 6903	Last day to request revised exam:	Mon, Oct. 23
Lab/ Tutorial:	TBA	Office:	2103	Last day to withdraw from course:	Mon, Nov. 13
		Office Hours:	Drop in or upon request	Last day to apply for coursework extension:	Mon, Nov. 20
Final Exam:	Saturday, December 16: 9:00		Twitter: Ken Nickel@Nometa4u	Last day of classes:	Mon, Dec. 11

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.

- ✓ Students are encouraged, though not required, to read all fifty chapters. Some chapters will attract more of our focus than others.

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:

- ✓ I will be posting downloadable pdf summaries (Chapter Drafts) 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 depicted in the work 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* : 'The Cave' and 'The Divided Line' (Reading 13)

SEP 7

SEP 12

SEP 14

SEP 19

SEP 21

- ✓ Over the next few weeks we will consider Epistemology: *What is knowledge? How is it acquired? What can 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)
- ✓ Searle, John R. *The Construction of Social Reality*. New York, NY: The Free Press, 1995.¹
- ✓ Quine, W.V. "Two Dogmas of Empiricism." Chap. 2 In *From a Logical Point of View*. 20-46. New York, NY: Harper Torchbooks, 1951/1961.²
- ✓ Rorty, Richard. "The World Well Lost." *Journal of Philosophy* 69 (1972): 649-65.
- ✓ Feminist Epistemology: Alison Jaggar (Reading 18)

SEP 26

SEP 28 Spiritual Emphasis Days – NO CLASS

OCT 3

OCT 5

OCT 10

OCT 12 Midterm Exam

- ✓ We'll devote roughly two lectures to fundamental metaphysical questions: *Metaphysics I: What is reality? Of what is reality constituted? How should we think about reality and time?*
- ✓ Materialism vs Idealism: John Locke (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/>)
- ✓ Linguistic Idealism (SEP <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/relativism/supplement2.html>)

OCT 17

OCT 19

- ✓ We'll devote roughly two lectures to the Mind-Body Problem: *Metaphysics II: Of what does a human being consist? 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, 2015.³

OCT 24

OCT 26

- ✓ 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 Biological Account: Daniel Dennett (Reading 25)

¹ *Construction of Social Reality* (1995) is on two-hour reserve in the Library.

² Quine's chapter is on two-hour reserve in the Library. There are many links to this paper on the internet. It is one of the most famous and most cited works of twentieth-century analytic philosophy.

³ *Metaphysics* (2015) is on two-hour reserve in the Library.

OCT 31

NOV 2

NOV 7 NO CLASS

NOV 9 NO CLASS

- ✓ We'll devote roughly two lectures to the Problem of Human Action: *Metaphysics IV: Are my choices real or illusory? 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**)

NOV 14

NOV 16

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

NOV 21

NOV 23

- ✓ 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**)
- ✓ Aesthetic Existentialism: Friedrich Nietzsche (**Reading 37**)

NOV 28

NOV 30

- ✓ We'll devote our last 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**)

DEC 5

DEC 7

Requirements:

1. **Attendance & Participation** 10%
 - Please make every effort to be seated and prepared for class by **9:45**. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of most, if not all classes. Students are expected to attend each class session with an engaged frame of mind. Students should be prepared to contribute thoughtful conversation to the topics under discussion. Under most circumstances absence from class results in a deduction of 1 mark. Class participation is assessed on the balance. Students whose attendance is perfect but who are otherwise minimally engaged with lecture material should anticipate a B- (7.3/10) for this portion of their grade. Students may enhance their participation grade by contributing discussion and analysis to online **discussion forums** found weekly on Moodle.
 - Students physically in class but otherwise engaged in non-class activities (e.g., sleeping, texting, chatting, reading) are simply in the same room and may be assessed as absent. This will also negatively influence participation evaluation as well. Students who regularly arrive late, leave in the middle, or depart early may be marked as absent.
 - **Twelve absences** immediately results in a **failing grade** for the course.

2. **Précis (short writing assignment)** 10%
 - Due Thursday, October 5th @ 9:45 AM
 - A separate document regarding topics, format and submission guidelines, and late policy will be available on Moodle. Papers will be submitted by the instructor to **“Turnitin”** for originality assessment. Personal privacy is protected.
 - Students must submit a précis to be eligible to write the Final Exam.

3. **Midterm Examination** 15%
 - Thursday, October 12

4. **Research Paper** 25%
 - Due: Monday, December 11th @ 4:00 PM
 - A separate document regarding topics, format and submission guidelines, and late policy will be available on Moodle. Papers will be submitted by the instructor to **“Turnitin”** for originality assessment. Personal privacy is protected.
 - Students who have not submitted research papers prior to the Final Exam will not be permitted to write the Final Exam.

5. **Final Exam** 40%
 - Date: Saturday, December 16th @ 9:00 AM in Airhart
 - 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 if he or she fails the Final Exam.
 - Students should refrain from scheduling 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		96-100 %
A	4.0	Exceptional	91-95 %
A-	3.7		86-90 %
B+	3.3		82-85 %
B	3.0	Exceeds Expectations	75-81 %
B-	2.7		72-74 %
C+	2.3		68-71 %
C	2.0	Meets Expectations	63-67 %
C-	1.7		60-62 %
D+	1.3		56-59 %
D	1.0	Minimal Pass	50-55 %
F	0.0	Failure	≤ 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. Printed grade sheets are not mailed out.

Other: (On a more personal note)

- ✓ **Classrooms are not public spaces.** When you pay tuition you become temporarily entitled to a private audience with me, your Professor. That audience occurs in a classroom only because my office isn't big enough. Therefore, please behave in *my* class as you would if you came to *my* office for the same instruction. You are free throughout the semester to (strongly!) disagree with me and your fellow students, on the condition that you do so with civility and an appropriate degree of respect. Guests may be welcome, provided you confirm their attendance with me first and they too agree to respect the culture of our unique intellectual exchange.
- ✓ **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. E-mail, Moodle, and/or twitter may be used to notify you of cancelled classes or other important and immediate details relating to the course.
- ✓ **Use recording devices, head phones,** and all other non-essential technology is **prohibited** – unless a Learning Services contract is provided.
- ✓ **Text messaging** during class is prohibited. Please, **put cell phones away during class.**
- ✓ **Lap top computers, I-pads, tablets, etc., are prohibited** from general use during class. Exceptions may be made on an individual basis for students with relevant disabilities. Students wanting to use lap tops in class must discuss this with me personally. Lap tops used for purposes unrelated to taking lecture notes are prohibited. Repeat offenders may be asked to leave the class.

Ambrose University Academic Policies:

Communication

All students have received an Ambrose e-mail account upon registration. It is the student's responsibility to check this account regularly as the Ambrose email system will be the professor's instrument for notifying students of important matters (cancelled class sessions, extensions, requested appointments, etc.) between class sessions. If students do not wish to use their Ambrose accounts, they will need to forward all messages from the Ambrose account to another personal account.

Registration

During the **Registration Revision Period** students may enter a course without permission, change the designation of any class from credit to audit and /or voluntary withdraw from a course without financial or academic penalty or record. Courses should be added or dropped on the student portal by the deadline date; please consult the List of Important Dates. After that date, the original status remains and the student is responsible for related fees.

Students intending to withdraw from a course after the Registration Revision Period must apply to the Office of the Registrar by submitting a "Request to Withdraw from a Course" form or by sending an email to the Registrar's Office by the **Withdrawal Deadline**; please consult the List of Important Dates on the my.ambrose.edu website. Students will not receive a tuition refund for courses from which they withdraw after the Registration Revision period. A grade of "W" will appear on their transcript.

Students wishing to withdraw from a course, but who fail to do so by the applicable date, will receive the grade earned in accordance with the course syllabus. A student obliged to withdraw from a course after the Withdrawal Deadline because of health or other reasons may apply to the Registrar for special consideration.

Exam Scheduling

Students, who find a conflict in their exam schedule must submit a Revised Examination Request form to the Registrar's Office by the deadline date; please consult the List of Important Dates. Requests will be considered for the following reasons only: 1) the scheduled final examination slot conflicts with another exam; 2) the student has three final exams within three consecutive exam time blocks; 3) the scheduled final exam slot conflicts with an exam at another institution; 4) extenuating circumstances. Travel is not considered a valid excuse for re-scheduling or missing a final exam.

Electronic Etiquette

Students are expected to treat their instructor, guest speakers, and fellow students with respect. It is disruptive to the learning goals of a course or seminar and disrespectful to fellow students and the instructor to use electronics for purposes unrelated to the course during a class session. Turn off all cell phones and other electronic devices during class. Laptops should be used for class-related purposes only. Do not use iPods, MP3 players, or headphones. Do not text, read, or send personal emails, go on Facebook or other social networks, search the internet, or play computer games during class. Some professors will not allow the use of any electronic devices in class. The professor has the right to disallow the student to use a

laptop in future lectures and/or to ask a student to withdraw from the session if s/he does not comply with this policy. Repeat offenders will be directed to the Dean. If you are expecting communication due to an emergency, please speak with the professor before the class begins.

Academic Policies

It is the responsibility of all students to become familiar with and adhere to academic policies as stated in the Academic Calendar. 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.

Extensions

Although extensions to coursework in the semester are at the discretion of the instructor, students may not turn in coursework for evaluation after the last day of the scheduled final examination period unless they have received permission for a course Extension from the Registrar's Office. Requests for course extensions or alternative examination time must be submitted to the Registrar's Office by the deadline date; please consult the List of Important Dates. Course extensions are only granted for serious issues that arise "due to circumstances beyond the student's control."

Appeal of Grade

An appeal for change of grade on any course work must be made to the course instructor within one week of receiving notification of the grade. An appeal for change of final grade must be submitted to the Registrar's Office in writing and providing the basis for appeal within 30 days of receiving notification of the final grade, providing the basis for appeal. A review fee of \$50.00 must accompany the appeal. If the appeal is sustained, the fee will be refunded.

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 college. 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.

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