

Course ID:	Course Title:	Fall 2021
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:	Sept 8
Time:	8:15 - 9:30	Email:	knickel@ambrose.edu	Last day to add/drop, or change to audit:	Sept 19
Room:	Airhart	Phone:	403-410-2000 ext 6903		
Lab/ Tutorial:		Office:	2103	Last day to withdraw from course:	Nov 22
		Office Hours:	Drop-in or upon request	Last day to apply for coursework extension:	Nov 23
Final Exam:	Th Dec 16 @ 9:00 Airhart			Last day of classes:	Dec 13

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 (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 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*: 'The Cave' and 'The Divided Line' (Reading 13)

SEP 9 HISTORY & PLATO

SEP 14 HISTORY & PLATO

SEP 16 HISTORY & PLATO

- ✓ We'll devote roughly four lectures to 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)
- ✓ Feminist Epistemology: Alison Jaggar (Reading 18)
- ✓ 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

SEP 21 KNOWLEDGE

SEP 23 KNOWLEDGE

SEP 28 KNOWLEDGE

SEP 30 KNOWLEDGE

- ✓ We'll devote roughly four to five lectures to fundamental metaphysical questions: *Metaphysics I: What is reality really? 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/>)

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.

- ✓ G.W.F. Hegel (SEP <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/hegel/>)
- ✓ Richard Rorty (SEP <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/rorty/>)
- ✓ Linguistic Idealism (SEP <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/relativism/>) (Emphasis on 4.1 Cultural Relativism and 4.2 Conceptual Relativism)

OCT 5 REALITY: BEING/BECOMING

OCT 7 REALITY: BEING/BECOMING

OCT 12 REALITY: BEING/BECOMING

OCT 14 REALITY: BEING/BECOMING (Writing Assignment # 1 DUE)

OCT 19 REALITY: BEING/BECOMING

OCT 21 In-class Midterm EXAM

- ✓ 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

OCT 26 MIND/BODY

OCT 28 MIND/BODY

- ✓ 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)
- ✓ No-Self Account: James Giles (Reading 24)
- ✓ Contemporary Biological Account: Daniel Dennett (Reading 25)

NOV 2 SELF-IDENTITY

NOV 4 SELF-IDENTITY

NOV 9 READING WEEK

NOV 11 READING WEEK

- ✓ We'll devote roughly two lectures to the Problem of Human Action: *Metaphysics IV: Why do I do what I do? 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 16 HUMAN ACTION

NOV 18 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)
- ✓ Cosmological Arguments: St. Thomas Aquinas (Reading 4)
- ✓ David Hume (Reading 5)
- ✓ Religious Rationality: Blaise Pascal (Reading 12)

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

- ✓ The Problem of Evil: J.L. Mackie (**Reading 9**)
- ✓ John Hick (**Reading 10**)

NOV 23 GOD
NOV 25 GOD

- ✓ 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**)

NOV 30 MORALITY
DEC 2 MORALITY

- ✓ 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 7 POLITICS
DEC 9 POLITICS

Requirements:³

1. **Attendance & Participation** 10%
 - Please make every effort to be seated and prepared for class by 8:14. In-person attendance will be taken before each class.
 - In-person participation is welcomed in the form of questions or comments, but all students are invited to give evidence of participation in Moodle Discussion forums, personal e-mails, in-person or Zoom meetings, etc.
 - Students lose 1 mark for every absence. Two 'lates' is equivalent to ONE absence. Students who repeatedly abbreviate class attendance (e.g., arrive late, leave early, etc.) may also be deemed absent. Students whose 'attendance' is perfect but whose quality of engagement is negligible should anticipate nothing better than C+ (7/10) for this portion of their grade.

2. **First writing assignment** 10%
 - **Due: Thursday, October 14 @ 8:14 AM before class** (electronic and paper submissions)
 - A separate document regarding topics, format and submission guidelines, and late policy will be available on Moodle. Papers will be submitted to "**Turnitin**" for originality assessment. Personal privacy is protected.
 - Students must submit this assignment to be eligible to write the Final Exam.

3. **Midterm Examination** 15%
 - **Thursday, October 21**

³ The Professor reserves the right to modify requirements, assignments, and exams in the event of any permanent transition to online delivery. The current requirements assume the semester will proceed as planned.

4. **Second Writing Assignment** 25%
- Due: **Monday, December 13 @ 4:00 PM** (electronic only - no paper submission required)
 - A separate document regarding topics, format and submission guidelines, and late policy will be available on Moodle. Papers will be submitted to “**Turnitin**” for originality assessment. Personal privacy is protected.
 - Students who have not submitted all assignments prior to the exam or have made no prior arrangements with the Professor to do so will not be permitted to write the Final Exam.
5. **Comprehensive / Cumulative Final Exam** 40%
- Date: **Thursday, December 16 @ 9:00 AM** in 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		96-100 %
A	4.0	Exceptional	91-95 %
A-	3.7		86-90 %
B+	3.3	Good	82-85 %
B	3.0	Exceeds Expectations	75-81 %
B-	2.7		72-74 %
C+	2.3	Satisfactory	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 disagree with me and your fellow students on the condition that you do so with civility and an appropriate degree of respect. Due to Covid-19 protocols, guests are not welcome in class this semester.
- ✓ **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 cell use during class

Ambrose University Important Information:

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.

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 Academic Calendar. 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.

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. Please refer to your professor regarding their electronic etiquette expectations.

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/content/academic-calendar-2>.

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.

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 are normally granted for 30 days beyond the last day of the term.

Normally, Course Extension Applications will be considered only when all of the following conditions are met:

- the quality of prior course work has been satisfactory;
- circumstances beyond your control, such as an extended illness or death of a family member, make it impossible for you to complete the course work on time; and
- you submit *Coursework Extension Application* to the Office of the Registrar on or before the deadline specified in the Academic Schedule.

If granted, time extensions do not excuse you from a final examination where one has been scheduled for the course.

A temporary grade of TX will be assigned until a final grade is submitted in accordance with the new deadline. A final grade of F will apply to:

- all course work submitted after the end of the semester unless a coursework extension has been granted; and all course work submitted after the revised due date provided by an approved extension to coursework.

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/writingcentre>

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
- Peer Supportive Listening: One-to-one support in Student Life office. Hours posted at ambrose.edu/wellness.
- For immediate crisis support, there are staff on campus who are trained in Suicide Intervention and Mental Health First Aid. See ambrose.edu/crisissupport for a list of staff members.

Off Campus:

- Distress Centre - 403-266-4357
- Sheldon Chumir Health Care Centre - 403-955-6200
- Emergency - 911

Sexual Violence Support

All staff, faculty, and Residence student leaders have received *Sexual Violence Response to Disclosure* training. We will support you and help you find the resources you need. There is a website with on and off campus supports – ambrose.edu/sexual-violence-response-and-