

Course ID:	Course Title:	Winter 2021
PH 125-1	Introduction to Philosophy	Prerequisite: None
		Credits: 3

Class Information		Instructor Information		Important Dates	
Days:	W & F	Instructor:	Ken Nickel, PhD	First day of classes:	Mon, Jan 11
Time:	8:15 - 9:30	Email:	knickel@ambrose.edu	Last day to add/drop, or change to audit:	Sun, Jan 24
Room:	Airhart	Phone:	403-410-2000 ext 6903	Last day to request revised exam:	Mon, Mar 8
Lab/ Tutorial:		Office:	2103	Last day to withdraw from course:	Fri, Mar 19
		Office Hours:	Drop-in/Zoom or on request	Last day to apply for coursework extension:	Mon, Mar 29
Final Exam:	Monday, April 19 @ 9:00 AM			Last day of classes:	Fri, Apr 16

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:

- ✓ For certain topics I will be posting downloadable pdf summaries (Chapter Drafts) on Moodle. Students are highly encouraged to read these.

Course Schedule¹

“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)

JAN 13 HISTORY & PLATO

JAN 15 HISTORY & PLATO

JAN 20 HISTORY & PLATO

JAN 22 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)
- ✓ 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.

¹ The Professors reserves the right to modify the Course Schedule as may be warranted by unfolding events.

- ✓ Rorty, Richard. "The World Well Lost." *Journal of Philosophy* 69 (1972): 649-65.²

JAN 27 KNOWLEDGE
 JAN 29 KNOWLEDGE

FEB 3 KNOWLEDGE
 FEB 5 KNOWLEDGE

- ✓ We'll devote roughly THREE lectures to fundamental metaphysical questions: *Metaphysics I: What is reality really? Of what is reality constituted?*
 - ✓ 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 <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/relativism/>) (Emphasis on 4.1 Cultural Relativism and 4.2 Conceptual Relativism)

FEB 10 REALITY: BEING/BECOMING
 FEB 12 REALITY: BEING/BECOMING (**Writing Assignment # 1 DUE**)

FEB 17 READING WEEK
 FEB 19 READING WEEK

FEB 24 REALITY: BEING/BECOMING
 FEB 26 **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, 2015.³

MAR 3 MIND/BODY
 MAR 5 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**)

² 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.

³ PDF excerpts from **Plantinga** and **van Inwagen** will be available on Moodle.

MAR 10 SELF-IDENTITY

MAR 12 SELF-IDENTITY

- ✓ 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**)

MAR 17 HUMAN ACTION

MAR 19 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**)
- ✓ The Problem of Evil: J.L. Mackie (**Reading 9**)
- ✓ John Hick (**Reading 10**)

MAR 24 GOD

MAR 26 GOD

MAR 31 NO CLASS - Ambrose Research Conference

APR 2 NO CLASS - Good Friday

- ✓ 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 7 MORALITY

APR 9 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**)

APR 14 POLITICS

APR 16 POLITICS

Requirements:⁴

1. **Attendance, Participation, and Weekly Check-ins** 10%
 - Please make every effort to be seated and prepared for class by 8:14. In-person attendance will be taken before each class. When Zoom is functional, attendance is taken automatically if students login with their Ambrose I.D.
 - In-person participation is welcomed in the form of questions, but all students are expected to give evidence of participation in Moodle Discussion forums, e-mails, meetings, etc.
 - Students lose 1 mark for every absence (either in-person or Zoom). Two 'lates' is equivalent to ONE absence. Zoom attendees are expected to be online for 75 minutes. Students who repeatedly abbreviate Zoom attendance 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: Friday, February 12 @ 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%
 - Friday, February 26

4. **Second Writing Assignment** 25%
 - Due: **Monday, April 12 @ noon 12:00 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: Monday, April 19 @ 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.

⁴ The Professor reserves the right to modify requirements, assignments, and exams due to the fluid nature of COVID-19.

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. 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 (text messaging) during 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. 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.

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-awareness.

Off Campus:

- Clinic: Sheldon Chumir Health Centre - 403-955-6200
- Calgary Communities Against Sexual Abuse - 403-237-5888

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