

Course Outline

PHIL 1101, 001, Introduction to Philosophy: Knowledge and Reality

Year and semester: 2025, Spring

Course Format: In Person, Tuesdays 10.30am - 12.20pm, Room A218

Credits: 3

Transfer Credit: For information, visit
bctransferguide.ca

Course Description, Prerequisites, and Corequisites:

An introduction to core and contemporary topics in epistemology and metaphysics.

This course has no prerequisites.

Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Analyze an author's writing and identify their argument
- Construct and motivate their own arguments
- Articulate their thoughts in a clear philosophical manner
- Write a philosophical essay
- Provide feedback to others
- Understand, explain, and think about philosophical accounts of justification, the relationship between knowledge and society, and identity, the mind, and reality in general

Instructor(s): Jasper Heaton

Office: A348a

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Office Hours: Mondays, 2-3.30pm [on zoom.](#)

Textbook and Course Materials:

You do not need to buy any books for this course. All readings are available online, through the Langara library, or on the course Brightspace. Links are provided in the syllabus below.

Assessments and Weighting:

Weekly Group Exercises (20%)

- Completed and submitted in class on Thursdays
- Groups of 3-5 students
- Pass/fail

2 Written Essays (20% each, 40% total)

Essay 1

DUE February 13, by 11.59pm

- 700-900 words
- Pre-set topics (details on Brightspace)
- Peer review session prior to submission

Essay 2

DUE April 4, by 11.59pm

- 1200 words
- Pre-set topics (details on Brightspace)
- Peer review session prior to submission

2 Peer Review Sessions (5% each, 10% total)

DUE

- Completed in class prior to essay submission

Group Presentations (20%)

DUE

Students will prepare a presentation and present an argument on any topic of their choice, and respond to audience and instructor questions

Groups of 3-5 students

Final Exam (10%)

Details TBA

Grading:

Rubrics will be made available for each assessment

[Grades, Grade Points, & Notations](#)

Detailed Course Schedule:

Week	Topic	Reading
Epistemology		
Week 1, Jan 6	Introductions Descartes, Skepticism, and the Question of Justification	Rene Descartes, Meditations 1 and 2
Week 2, Jan 13	Theories of Epistemic Justification Part 1	Ernest Sosa, The Raft and the Pyramid , read sections 1-6
Week 3, Jan 20	Hume and the Problem of Induction	David Hume, An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding , read section 4 and part 1 of section 5
Week 4, Jan 27	Theories of Epistemic Justification Part 2	Alvin Goldman, What is Justified Belief?
Week 5, Feb 3	Testimony and Expertise	Alvin Goldman, Experts: Which Ones Should You Trust?

Week 6, Feb 10	Echo Chambers and Epistemic Bubbles	Thi Nguyễn, Echo Chambers and Epistemic Bubbles
Week 7, Feb 17		
Week 8, Feb 24	Epistemic Injustice	Gaile Pohlhaus, Relational Knowing and Epistemic Injustice: Towards a Theory of Wilful Hermeneutical Ignorance
Metaphysics		
Week 9, March 3	Personal Identity	John Locke, Of Identity and Diversity , read from section 7, page 6, to end of section 22, page 20 The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, Personal Identity and Ethics: the Narrative View
Week 10, March 10	The mind	Thomas Nagel, What's it Like to Be a Bat, pdf available on Brightspace
Week 11, March 17	Realism, Naturalism, and Social Construction	Sally Haslanger, Social Construction, Myth and Reality, pdf available on Brightspace
Week 12, March 24	Society and Identity	Louis Althusser, Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses , read from section "On Ideology"
Week 13, March 31	Assessment Due - Student Presentations	No reading

Policies

As a student at Langara, you are responsible for familiarizing yourself and complying with the following policies:

College Policies:

[Student Code of Conduct - E1003](#)

[Academic Integrity - F1004](#)

[Academic Standing - Academic Probation and Academic Suspension - E2008](#)

[Appeal of Final Grade - E2006](#)

[Concerns about Instruction - F1002](#)

[Withdrawal from Courses and Deferred Standing - E2011](#)

Course Policies:

Content Warning and Respectful Classroom Policy

In this course we will cover a number of topics, issues, and real world events that may have affected the personal lives of students taking this course and the teachers teaching it. While it is important that we be able to freely pursue academic inquiry into these issues, it is equally important we be attentive and sensitive to the different ways people might be affected by these issues and by our study of them.

Academic freedom is an important right we all have, but it is also an important responsibility we all share. As a student it is your right to bring your personal and lived experiences to your studies in this course. It is also your duty to be respectful of other people's experiences, no matter how different they are from your

own. At its best the study of philosophy is collaborative, constructive, and respectful of individuality. I hope that throughout this course we will all do our best to embody these norms.

Policy on Late Work

You are expected to submit your assignments by the due date. Failure to do so may result in late penalties or a fail grade for the course.

If **FOR ANY REASON** you are not able to submit your work on time **please contact me** to request an extension. Please do not send me personal medical information.

Policy on Email

I will answer all emails within 48 hours. If an issue is especially urgent, please put “URGENT” in the subject line.

If you haven’t heard back from me within 48 hours please feel free to start poking me for a response.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism, which is intellectual theft, occurs where an individual submits or presents the oral or written work of another person as his or her own. Scholarship quite properly rests upon examining and referring to the thoughts and writings of others. However, when another person's words (i.e. phrases, sentences, or paragraphs), ideas, or entire works are used, the author must be acknowledged in the text, in footnotes, in endnotes, or in another accepted form of academic citation. Failure to provide proper attribution is plagiarism because it represents someone else's work as one's own. Students are responsible for ensuring that any work submitted does not constitute plagiarism. If you are unsure, please come and speak with me.

Policy On The Use of A.I. (ChatGPT etc.)

You are expected to complete all the assignments yourself, without the use of generative A.I. (e.g. ChatGPT)

Copyright

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