

**Philosophy 110 A (002)**  
**Introduction to Philosophy: Knowledge and Reality**  
**Fall 2011, Tues., Thurs. 10:00-11:20, AL 105**

**Professor:** Shannon Dea

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**Office hours:** T/Th 1:15-2:15, by appointment,  
or by chance

**Course website:** is on Desire to Learn  
(hereafter, "Learn"), accessible via UW ACE  
(<https://uwangel.uwaterloo.ca/>)

**T.A.:** TBA



*Detail from Battle of the Giants (anon.), c. 180-159 BCE, Pergamon Museum, Turkey*

**Stranger:** There appears to be a sort of war of Giants and Gods going on amongst them; they are fighting with one another about the nature of essence.

**Theaetetus:** How is that?

**Stranger:** Some of them are dragging down all things from heaven and from the unseen to earth, and they literally grasp in their hands rocks and oaks; of these they lay hold, and obstinately maintain, that the things only which can be touched or handled have being or essence, because they define being and body as one, and if anyone else says that what is not a body exists they altogether despise him, and will hear of nothing but body.

**Theaetetus:** I have often met with such men, and terrible fellows they are.

**Stranger:** And that is the reason why their opponents cautiously defend themselves from above, out of an unseen world, mightily contending that true essence consists of certain intelligible and incorporeal ideas; the bodies of the materialists, which by them are maintained to be the very truth, they break up into little bits by their arguments, and affirm them to be, not essence, but generation and motion. Between the two armies, Theaetetus, there is always an endless conflict raging concerning these matters.

**Theaetetus:** True.

**Stranger:** Let us ask each party in turn, to give an account of that which they call essence.

*Plato, The Sophist*

**Course Description:**

This course will introduce you to philosophical reading, thinking, discussion and writing through a survey of four classic questions in the philosophical subdisciplines of **metaphysics** and **epistemology**: (1) Does God exist? (2) What can we know about the external world? (3) What is the character of scientific knowledge? and (3) What is the nature of mind? As we wrestle with these questions, we'll pay particular attention to what Plato described as the "war of Giants and Gods" -- the historic tug-of-war between two different classes of answers to these (and related) questions.

**Course outcomes:**

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

- illustrate what **metaphysics** and **epistemology** are, using as examples four classic philosophical questions;
- explain two or more possible answers that philosophers have posed to each of those questions;
- identify similarities between classes of answers that have been offered to these questions and differences between those classes;
- critically and charitably analyse primary texts from a range of philosophical periods and movements;
- mount your own philosophical arguments orally and in writing.

**Text:**

Andrew Bailey and Robert M. Martin, Eds. *First Philosophy: Fundamental Problems and Readings in Philosophy*. Second edition. Peterborough, Broadview: 2011.

**Work required:**

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|--|--|
| <b>Short paper</b><br>Prereq.: Must pass online academic integrity/syllabus quiz in order to submit essay. | 10%<br>(Quiz: mandatory, but nongraded.) |
| <b>Term paper</b>  | 25%                                      |
| <b>Small group work</b><br>(in class and online)   | 25%                                      |
| <b>Midterm test</b> (online)   | 10%                                      |
| <b>Final exam</b>  | 30%                                      |
| <b>Total</b>   | 100%                                     |

Consult the course Learn site for **details** on above components.

Work must be submitted by the beginning of the lecture on the day it is due. Any work submitted once the lecture has commenced will be considered one day late. **Late work** is subject to a penalty of 5% per business day.

**Special arrangements request form:**

If circumstances in your life pose an obstacle to your getting your work in on time, you may complete a special arrangements request form (available on Learn) to propose an alternative arrangement. This form **must be submitted 48 hours before the due date** for the work. Submitting the form doesn't guarantee that your proposed special arrangement will be approved. However, the professor will give all requests serious consideration.

**Final Exam:** The final examination will occur during the scheduled December examination period at a date/time/location to be announced. Accommodations for deferred final exams are made only under specific conditions and time restrictions. **Requests for accommodation based on religious holidays must be submitted to the Associate Dean** as soon as the conflict becomes apparent; in any case, no later than one week following the publication of the final exam schedule. It is the student's responsibility to make him/herself available for the entire examination period, and **travel plans are not a sufficient reason to have a final exam deferred** (see <http://www.registrar.uwaterloo.ca/exams/finalexams.html>).

**LEARN Site and Email:** The professor will post details concerning tests, review sessions and assignments on the course Learn site. It is the individual student's responsibility to check this on a regular basis. From time to time, the professor will send students important emails regarding (for instance) readings, assignments, review sessions and tests (or -- if they should arise -- last minute emergencies that affect a scheduled lecture). If you would rather receive these emails at your home account (e.g., hotmail, gmail, rogers...), then you must enter that email address on your WatIAM entry. To log on to WatIAM and update your entry, follow this link: <https://watiam.uwaterloo.ca/idm/user/login.jsp>. Log in and then click "Update Profile." Then, select the "Email configuration" tab. It is your responsibility to stay current with course news by regularly checking whichever email account is listed on your WatIAM entry.

**Class schedule**

*Final lecture subjects and readings are subject to fine tuning, with notice.*

| Question/University Stuff          | Week   | Topic                           | Date     | Readings/ Assignments/ Tests               |
|------------------------------------|--------|---------------------------------|----------|--|
|                                    | Week 1 | Introduction                    | Sept. 13 |  |
| <b>Question 1: Does God exist?</b> |        | The ontological argument        | Sept. 15 | Anselm, 22-23                              |
|                                    | Week 2 | Aquinas's five ways             | Sept. 20 | Aquinas (Second and Third articles), 40-42 |
|                                    |        | Discussion and small group work | Sept. 22 |  |
|                                    | Week 3 | The best of all possible worlds | Sept. 27 | Leibniz, 88-95                             |
| Oct. 1 -- Last day for no penalty, |        | The problem of evil             | Sept. 29 | Hume (Parts X and XI), 71-82               |

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| 100% tuition refund course drop.                                  |         |                                 |         |   |
|   | Week 4  | Discussion and small group work | Oct. 4  |   |
| <b>Question 2: What can we know about the external world?</b>     |         | Rationalism                     | Oct. 6  | Descartes ( <i>Meditations</i> 1 & 2), 144-150<br><br><b>Short paper due.</b> |
|   | Week 5  | Empiricism                      | Oct. 11 | Locke, 178-189  |
|   |         | Discussion and small group work | Oct. 13 |   |
|   | Week 6  | Kant's critical philosophy      | Oct. 18 | Kant, 222-232   |
|   |         | Discussion and small group work | Oct. 20 | <b>Online mid-term test.</b>  |
| <b>Question 3: What is the character of scientific knowledge?</b> | Week 7  | The problem of induction        | Oct. 25 | Hume , 296-310  |
|   |         | Goodman's "grue" paradox        | Oct. 27 | Goodman, 314-323  |
|   | Week 8  | Discussion and small group work | Nov. 1  |   |
|   |         | Kuhn on theory choice           | Nov. 3  | Kuhn, 391-403   |
|   | Week 9  | Feminist science                | Nov. 8  | Longino, 405-413  |
|   |         | Discussion and small group work | Nov. 10 |   |
| <b>Question 4: What is the nature of mind?</b>                    | Week 10 | Descartes's error               | Nov. 15 | Ryle, 421-429   |
| Nov. 19 -- Last day to drop with a grade of WD.                   |         | Functionalism                   | Nov. 17 | Putnam, 447-454   |
|   | Week 11 | Discussion and small group work | Nov. 22 |   |
|   |         | The Chinese Room                | Nov. 24 | Searle, 459-473   |
|   | Week 12 | Nagel's bat                     | Nov. 29 | Nagel, 496-505  |
|   |         | Discussion and small group work | Dec. 1  |   |

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| Final examination period: Dec.9-22. | Week 13 | Exam review session | Dec. 6 |  |
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**The fine print:**

**Academic Integrity:** In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility.

**Discipline:** A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offenses, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offense, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offenses (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71 - Student Discipline,

<http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm>

**Grievance:** A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4,

<http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm>

**Appeals:** A student may appeal the finding and/or penalty in a decision made under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than regarding a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline if a ground for an appeal can be established. Read Policy 72 - Student Appeals, <http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm>

**Avoiding Academic Offences:**

[http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic\\_responsibility.html](http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic_responsibility.html)

**Course resources to support academic integrity:**

Check out the LEARN site for the course for detailed academic integrity guidelines. More information on academic integrity will be posted on assignments as they are issued. It is your responsibility to ensure that your work meets the standards of academic honesty. If you're not sure about whether a particular practice meets these standards, ask the professor or a t.a.

**Students with disabilities:**

The Office for Persons with Disabilities (OPD), located in Needles Hall, Room 1132, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the OPD at the beginning of each academic term.