

Knowledge and Reality

PHIL 110A (Section 001) COURSE OUTLINE University of Waterloo, Department of Philosophy, Winter 2012

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* Please contact me via my uwaterloo email rather than the LEARN system.

Course Info: Web: Via UW LEARN | Lectures: 9:30-10:20am, MWF, in room AL 124
| Office hours: Wed, 10:30am-12:00pm or arrange appointment by email.

Course Description:

We will study a selection of important philosophical writings – some from historical and some from contemporary sources – concerning the following problems: the existence of God, the nature (and extent) of our knowledge of the world, what in general can be said to exist, personal identity, freedom and determinism and the nature of mind.

Learning Objectives:

Primary: To develop an acquaintance with and appreciation of some of the major traditional philosophical problems and with important attempts to solve them.

Secondary: To develop reasoning skills relevant not only to philosophy, but to any discipline that requires critical thinking and the ability to form and analyze arguments.

Required Text:

Course Package for Phil 110A – Section 001. Available in the UW Bookstore.

Evaluation:

	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Due Date</i>	<i>Weighting</i>
5 Response Activities	Key concepts discussed in class	T.B.A.	10% (2% each)
Midterm Exam	Everything up to Oct 27 th	Feb 17 th	30%
Essay	Free Will or Mind	Apr 2 nd	30%
Final Exam	Cumulative (post-midterm emphasis)	T.B.A.	30%

* Response activities and essay are due in class on the date due.

** I will do my best to return your work to you within one to two weeks.

Waterloo LEARN:

Students should plan on checking the Waterloo LEARN site for this course regularly. I will be posting lecture outlines, announcements, and other course content on LEARN.

Class Schedule (tentative):

Week 1 (Jan 4-6)	What is Philosophy? <i>Euthyphro</i> , <i>Apology</i> (Plato)
Week 2 (Jan 9-13)	<i>Republic</i> (Plato), <u>The Matrix</u> ; “The Value of Philosophy” (Russell)
Week 3 (Jan 16-20)	Arguments and the Existence of God: “The Ontological Argument” (Anselm), “The Existence of God” (Aquinas)
Week 4 (Jan 23-27)	“The Wager” (Pascal) Epistemology: Selections from <i>Theatetus</i> (Plato); <i>Meditations</i> I,II (Descartes)
Week 5 (Jan 30-Feb 3)	“Proof of an External World” (Moore); <i>Enquiry</i> , section IV (Hume)
Week 6 (Feb 6-10)	“The Problem of Induction,” sections I and III (Salmon); “The Raft and the Pyramid: Coherence Versus Foundations...” (Sosa)
Week 7 (Feb 13-17)	Ontology: Selections from the <i>Categories</i> (Aristotle); <u>Midterm Exam</u>
(Feb 20-24)	READING WEEK – No Classes
Week 8 (Feb 27-Mar 2)	Personal Identity: “Of Identity and Diversity” (Locke); <u>Total Recall</u> ; “Of Personal Identity” (Hume)
Week 9 (Mar 5-9)	“Personal Identity” (Parfit) Free Will: “The Sea Battle Tomorrow” (Aristotle)
Week 10 (Mar 12-16)	“Freedom of the Will and the Concept of a Person” (Frankfurt); “Incompatibility of Free Will and Determinism” (van Inwagen)
Week 11 (Mar 19-23)	<u>Lord of the Rings</u> ; Nature of Mind: <i>Meditations</i> VI (Descartes)
Week 12 (Mar 26-Apr 2)	“Eliminative Materialism” (Churchland); “Consciousness and Its Place in Nature” (Chalmers); Final Exam Review *** Essay Due ***

Attendance: Students are expected to prepare for and attend class regularly. Students should consult the instructor with any problems / concerns about the course **early** in the semester.

Laptops and Phones: Laptops may be used in class, but only for taking notes. Please sit at the back of the room to avoid distracting others. Texting on cell phones is not allowed during class.

Policy Regarding Illness and Missed Tests:

It is entirely your responsibility to ensure that you complete all course requirements by the relevant due dates. The University of Waterloo Examination Regulations (www.registrar.uwaterloo.ca/exams/ExamRegs.pdf) state that:

- A medical certificate presented in support of an official petition for relief from normal academic requirements must provide all of the information requested on the “University of Waterloo Verification of Illness” form or it will not be accepted. This form can be obtained from Health Services or at www.healthservices.uwaterloo.ca/Health_Services/verification.html.

- If a student has a test/examination deferred due to acceptable medical evidence, he/she normally will write the test/examination at a mutually convenient time, to be determined by the course instructor.
- The University acknowledges that, due to the pluralistic nature of the University community, some students may on religious grounds require alternative times to write tests and examinations.
- Elective arrangements (such as travel plans) are not considered acceptable grounds for granting an alternative examination time.

Academic Integrity:

In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. [Check <http://www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/> for more information.]

Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (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>. For typical penalties check Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties, <http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/guidelines/penaltyguidelines.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>. When in doubt please contact the department’s administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

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>.

Academic Integrity website (Arts):

http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic_responsibility.html

Academic Integrity Office (UW): <http://uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/>

Accommodation for 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.