

BRESCIA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
(at Western)

Tue: 2:30-4:30
Thur: 2:30-3:30
Room: UH 30

Philosophy 1300E
Introduction to Philosophy

2018-19
Dr. Dennis Hudecki

Course Description:

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to philosophy by acquainting them with some of its main issues and methodologies. We shall examine writings from both classical and contemporary western philosophy. We will also spend time learning how to better distinguish between good arguments and bad ones. Time permitting, selections will be taken from the writings of Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Aquinas, Descartes, Hobbes, Hume, Kierkegaard and Nietzsche. It is also possible that the philosophies of Mill, Marx, Sartre and de Beauvoir will be addressed. Among the issues addressed in this course are the following:

- Ethics:**
1. Given that our life is precious and our time short, how can we best make use of our opportunity to exist as a human being?
 2. Does being alive, itself, carry with it any responsibilities to ourselves and to others?
 3. Are there any absolute moral principles?
 4. Why not be immoral?

Human Nature:

1. What is human nature and in what does happiness and joy consist?
2. Are human beings a combination of the spiritual (e.g., mind, soul) and the physical or are they just physical beings?
3. Are human beings just another kind of animal or are they in a different class than the rest of the animal world?
4. Is freedom real, as an attainable goal, or is a human being just a product of his or her heredity and environment?
5. Is there any difference between human intelligence and computer intelligence?

- Politics:**
1. What is "justice"? What are "human rights"?
 2. What would an ideal society be like?
 3. Which is better: socialism or capitalism?
 4. Are women treated justly in our society?
 5. Is there such a thing as a "just war"?

- Religion:**
1. What is "religion" and what is it to be "religious"?
 2. Does God exist? Can God's existence be proven?
 3. Is there an afterlife?
 4. Is the theory of reincarnation true?

- Metaphysics:**
1. Why are we here? Why is the universe here?
 2. What is "deepest reality" and what is our relationship to it?

- Epistemology:**
1. Does science discover and understand what is most real? Are the only good explanations scientific ones? Or is science limited because it is only able to ask certain kinds of questions?
 2. What can art, religion and philosophy tell us about ultimate reality?
 3. Are all words and concepts "social constructions", or are some of our concepts reflective of

reality? Is truth objective or subjective?

**Philosophy 1300E
2017-18**

Course Requirements:

short assignment or quiz	5%
two essays	25%
four quizzes	30%
class participation	10%
final examination	30%

Classes will be a combination of lecture and discussion. Students are urged to think critically and to participate actively in class discussions. Regular attendance is mandatory since tests will be based primarily on class material. The participation mark will be based solely on attendance and the participation mark is decreased for every hour of missed classes. Late papers may be penalized up to 2% a day.

Required Texts:

James Fieser and Samuel Enoch Stumpf, Philosophy: A Historical Survey with Essential Readings, 9th edition, McGraw-Hill, 2014.

Office Hours:

The easiest way for you to contact me is right after every class, in the classroom. I make myself available at that time for as long as needed. Furthermore, I will especially try to be in my office at Brescia on Thursdays and Fridays, 4:00 to 5:30. Still, to make sure, you should phone ahead to make sure I am there. My office is in 335B UH. Please feel free to drop into my office anytime, or by appointment at a mutually acceptable time. You can also communicate with me by phone or voice-mail (tel: 519-432-8353), ext. 28245), or you can reach me via email at: <dhudecki@uwo.ca>. Please put something like "Philosophy 1300E" in the subject heading of any email you send me. Otherwise I may inadvertently delete it without reading it. (Please be warned that, because of the number of students I have, I may be slow in answering your e-mail.) Please do not hesitate to come in and see me regarding course matters or other matters. Feel free to visit if you want to philosophize about any issue--course-related or not! Regardless of why you are there, it will be my duty and my pleasure to try to help.

Course Objectives

At the end of the course, students will:

- have been presented with and encouraged to think about the most important philosophical issues that an individual human being must face over the course of their life;
- be better able to find within themselves and give expression to the philosophical questions that are most personally important to them;
- have become acquainted with, in a general way, many of the major developments in the history of western

philosophy

--have an understanding of the central role that logical, rational arguments, (based on reasoning and evidence) play in the search for truth;

--be better able to distinguish good arguments from bad ones;

--be able to identify an argument's assumptions, premises and conclusions;

--be better able to articulate and defend their philosophical views in both written and spoken form;

--have a better appreciation of the discipline of philosophy.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Philosophy 1300E
2018-19

Dr. Dennis Hudecki
Brescia (at Western)

Lecture Topics

First Term

Part One: Introduction

Meiland: High School vs. University (handout)

Part Two: A Brief Look at Logic and Logical Argumentation

Logic: On What An "Argument" Is (handout)

Logic: Common Types of Mistakes in Reasoning (handout)

Part Three: The Ancient and Medieval Tradition

Birth of Western Philosophy

Pre-Socratic Philosophy

Questions Concerning The Meaning of Life, Afterlife, The Relationship Between Morality and The Law and The Relationship Between Morality and Religion

Socrates: Apology; Crito; Euthyphro

Questions Concerning How We Can Arrive at True Knowledge, Whether Morality Is Objective, What "Goodness" Is, What "Justice" Is, What "Beauty" Is, Censorship, Democracy,

Plato

Second Term

Plato

On Human Nature, Happiness, Goodness, Justice and Art

Aristotle

If There is a Loving God, Why Is There So Much Evil and Misery in the World?

Augustine

Can God's Existence Be Proved?

Aquinas

Part Four: The Modern Tradition

Can Anything Be Known With Certainty?

Descartes

Mind/Body Problem: Dualism; Idealism; Materialism; What is the Self?

Arguments Against the Claim that God's Existence Can Be Proven

Hume (Empiricism)

Is There Any True Knowledge Beyond Scientific Knowledge?

Logical Positivism

Part Five: The Existentialist Tradition

What is the Meaning of Life; Are Humans Free? What Does it Mean to be a Good Person? What does it Mean to be a Religious Person? Is Religion Good or Bad for the Individual?

Existentialism: Kierkegaard; Nietzsche, de Beauvoir

Part Six: Political Philosophy: Classical Liberalism vs. Marxism

Should Society Be Built Upon the Idea of Freedom of the Individual?

Mill

Liberal Political Philosophy

Is Capitalism Evil?

Marx

Please note that, due to time considerations, some topics may not get covered. We may, for example, only get to "Existentialism" on the above list. (The amount of philosophy that students learn does not depend on how much material is covered.)

Quizzes

Oct 25 (5%)

Nov 15 (5% or 8.33%)

Dec (during December exam period) (5% or 8.33%)

Feb 14 (5% or 8.33%)

March 19 (5% or 8.33%)

The first quiz will be on Oct 25 and will count for 5% of your final grade. The last four quizzes will count for a total of 30%. Regarding the last four quizzes, your top three quizzes will count for 8.33% each and your lowest will count for 5%.

Essays

1st essay (worth 10% of your final grade) is due in class: Jan. 22

2nd essay (worth 15% of your final grade) is due in class: Apr. 9 (last class)

Final Exam

There will be 3-hour essay-type exam (worth 30% of your final grade) covering the whole year.

Some Important Dates

Our first class: Sept. 6

Thanksgiving Holiday: Oct. 8

Fall study break: Oct. 9-12

Our last class, first term: Dec. 6

December exam period: Dec. 10-21

Our first class, second term: Jan. 8

Reading Week: Feb. 18-22

Our last class: April 9

Easter: April 21

Final exam period: April 11-30

2018-19 BRESCIA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE ACADEMIC POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

1. POLICY REGARDING MAKEUP EXAMS AND EXTENSIONS OF DEADLINES

When a student requests academic accommodation (e.g., extension of a deadline, a makeup exam) for work representing 10% or more of the student's overall grade in the course, it is the responsibility of the student to provide acceptable documentation to support a medical or compassionate claim. All such requests for academic accommodation **must** be made through an Academic Advisor and include supporting documentation.

Academic accommodation for illness will be granted only if the documentation indicates that the onset, duration and severity of the illness are such that the student could not reasonably be expected to complete her academic responsibilities. Minor ailments typically treated by over-the-counter medications will not normally be accommodated.

Students must submit their documentation along with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested no later than two business days after the date specified for resuming responsibilities. In cases where there might be an extended absence or serious issue, students should submit their documentation promptly and consult their Academic Advisor for advice during their recovery period. Whenever possible, students who require academic accommodation should provide notification and documentation in advance of due dates, examinations, etc. Appropriate academic accommodation will be determined by the Dean's Office/Academic Advisor in consultation with the student's instructor(s).

Academic accommodation may include extension of deadlines, waiver of attendance requirements for classes/labs/tutorials, arranging Special Exams or Incompletes, re-weighting course requirements, or granting late withdrawals without academic penalty

Please note that personal commitments (e.g., vacation flight bookings, work schedule) which conflict with a scheduled test, exam or course requirement are **not** grounds for academic accommodation.

A UWO Student Medical Certificate (SMC) is **required** if a student is seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds. This documentation should be obtained at the time of the initial consultation with the physician/nurse practitioner or walk-in clinic. A SMC can be downloaded from:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf . The student must request documentation sufficient to demonstrate that her ability to meet academic responsibilities was seriously affected. Please note that under University Senate regulations documentation stating simply that the student "was seen for a medical reason" or "was ill" is **not** adequate to support a request for academic accommodation.

The full policy on requesting accommodation due to illness can be viewed at:

http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_12

2. ACADEMIC CONCERNS

If you feel that you have a medical or personal challenge that is interfering with your work, contact your instructor and Academic Advisor as soon as possible. Problems may then be documented and possible arrangements to assist you can be discussed at the time of occurrence rather than on a retroactive basis. Retroactive requests for academic accommodation on medical or compassionate grounds are not normally considered.

If you think that you are too far behind to catch up or that your work load is not manageable, you should consult your Academic Advisor. If you consider reducing your workload by dropping one or more courses, this must be done by the appropriate deadlines (refer to the Registrar's website, <http://brescia.uwo.ca/academics/registrar-services/> or the list of official sessional dates in the Academic Calendar, see the Sessional Dates tab at

<http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/index.cfm?SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=>). You should consult with the course instructor and the Academic Advisor who can help you consider alternatives to dropping one or more courses. *Note that dropping a course may affect OSAP eligibility and/or Entrance Scholarship eligibility.*

3. ABSENCES

Short Absences: If you miss a class due to a minor illness or other problems, check your course outline for information regarding attendance requirements and make sure you are not missing a test or assignment.

Cover any readings and arrange to borrow notes from a classmate. Contact the course instructor if you have any questions.

Extended Absences: If you have an extended absence, you should contact the course instructor and an Academic Advisor. Your course instructor and Academic Advisor can discuss ways for you to catch up on missed work and arrange academic accommodations, if appropriate and warranted.

It is important to note that the Academic Dean may refuse permission to write the final examination in a course if the student has failed to maintain satisfactory academic standing throughout the year or for too frequent absence from the class or laboratory

(http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=5&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#SubHeading_68).

4. SCHOLASTIC OFFENCES

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at:

http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_20 .

Students are responsible for understanding the nature of and avoiding the occurrence of plagiarism and other academic offences. Note that such offences include plagiarism, cheating on an examination, submitting false or fraudulent assignments or credentials, impersonating a candidate, or submitting for credit in any course without the knowledge and approval of the instructor to whom it is submitted, any

academic work for which credit has previously been obtained or is being sought in another course in the University or elsewhere. Students are advised to consult the section on Scholastic Discipline for Undergraduate Students in the Academic Calendar.

If you are in doubt about whether what you are doing is inappropriate or not, consult your instructor, the Academic Dean's Office, or the Registrar. A claim that "you didn't know it was wrong" is not accepted as an excuse.

The penalties for a student guilty of a scholastic offence (including plagiarism) include refusal of a passing grade in the assignment, refusal of a passing grade in the course, suspension from the University, and expulsion from the University.

Plagiarism:

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

Computer-marked Tests/exams:

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating. Software currently in use to score computer-marked multiple-choice tests and exams performs a similarity review as part of standard exam analysis.

5. PROCEDURES FOR APPEALING ACADEMIC EVALUATIONS

All appeals of a grade must be directed first to the course instructor. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the course instructor, a written appeal is to be sent to the School Chair. If the response of the Chair is considered unsatisfactory to the student, she may then submit a written appeal to the Office of the Dean. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the Dean, she may appeal to the Senate Review Board Academic (SRBA), if there are sufficient grounds for the appeal. For information on academic appeals you can consult your Academic Advisor or see the Student Academic Appeals – Undergraduate in the Academic Calendar

http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_14.

Note that final course marks are not official until the Academic Dean has reviewed and signed the final grade report for the course. If course marks deviate from acceptable and appropriate standards, the Academic Dean may require grades to be adjusted to align them with accepted grading practices.

6. PREREQUISITES

Unless you have either the prerequisites for a course or written special permission from the Dean to enroll in it, you will be removed from the course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisite(s).

7. SUPPORT

Support Services

The Brescia University College Registrar's website, with a link to Academic Advisors, is at <http://brescia.uwo.ca/academics/registrar-services/>. The website for the Student Development Centre at Western is <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>.

Mental Health and Wellness

Students may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to your learning, such as increased anxiety, feeling overwhelmed, feeling down or lost, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. Services are available to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing. You can learn more about mental health and wellness at Brescia at <http://brescia.uwo.ca/life/mental-health-wellness/>. Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Health and Wellness at

Western, http://uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/index.html, for information about how to obtain help for yourself or others.

Sexual Violence

All members of the Brescia University College community have a right to work and study in an environment that is free from any form of sexual violence. Brescia University College recognizes that the prevention of, and response to, Sexual Violence is of particular importance in the university environment. Sexual Violence is strictly prohibited and unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Brescia is committed to preventing Sexual Violence and creating a safe space for anyone in the Brescia community who has experienced Sexual Violence.

If you or someone you know has experienced any form of Sexual Violence, you may access resources at <http://brescia.uwo.ca/life/sexual-violence/>.

Portions of this document were taken from the Academic Calendar, the Handbook of Academic and Scholarship Policy and the Academic Handbook of Senate Regulations. This document is a summary of relevant regulations and does not supersede the academic policies and regulations of the Senate of the University of Western Ontario.