



**Philosophy 1300E Introductory Philosophy**  
**Brescia University College, Winter 2023.**  
**Wednesday 11:30-1:30, Friday 11:30-12:30, MRW 152.**  
**Dr. Doug Mann. [dmann@uwo.ca](mailto:dmann@uwo.ca)**

Philosophy means “the love of wisdom.” This course will start budding philosophers on their journey to wisdom by exploring a wide variety of philosophical issues. Each week we will discuss one or more important philosophical themes, using key texts from both classical and contemporary thinkers, supplemented by chapters from Thomas Nagel's introductory text. This will include everything from the meaning of life and the nature of knowledge to theories of the self, of right and wrong, and of the nature of justice. In class discussions I'll try to relate classical philosophical issues to everyday life, engaging the students in a wide variety of philosophical problems.

\* Pre-requisites: none. \* Anti-requisites: Philosophy 1100E. \* 3 lecture hours per week.

## Competencies

In this course students will study some of the high points of the history of Western philosophy, from the ancient Greeks to the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. They will also learn to come to grips with basic philosophical concepts and debates, and to express these in both oral and written forms in both class discussions and in their reports, essays, and on the exam. A key part of this effort will be learning how to write clearly and concisely, to express the students' ideas in a written form that can at least potentially convince their readers that their various positions are valid.

Along the way, they will learn how to argue philosophically, which in the Socratic tradition involves challenging the dominant values and worldviews of the current age. Hopefully, they will also learn how to challenge the values and ideas of their peers in the classroom, and to examine their own lives, including their present and future goals, to answer such questions as “what does it all mean?”, “what is the point of my life?”, “am I free?”, “what is the self?”, “how do we know the past?” “what is right and wrong?”, and “what is justice?”, and “what is the best state?” To do so, they will learn how to rise above their rough-hewn feelings about such questions, and to express their ideas in rational form so that these are both clear and internally consistent.

## Texts

☆ Thomas Nagel. *What Does it All Mean?* Oxford: Oxford UP, 1987.

◇ Douglas Mann & J. Elijan Dann. *Philosophy: A New Introduction*. Wadsworth/Thompson, 2004.

You'll have to order this yourself: I'll provide links on Owl. I'll leave a copy on reserve in the library. (**PNI**)

☹ Posted on Owl under Resources: class notes or readings.

## Work Breakdown

- Reports (one due before February 17, one after, see below): **15% each, 30% total**
- Class Participation: **15%** (I'll grade you each class, and total these grades to rank order all students. You'll have the option to write a third report to replace this grade.)
- Essay: **25%** (due in the last class, late penalty = 3% per day)
- Final Exam: **30%** (closed book, covers the whole course)

**Course Schedule** (Note: As not all units contain equal amounts of material, they will vary in length. I'll post lecture summaries under Resources on Owl as I get them done.)

### 1. Introduction. Philosophy and Life

Readings: ☆ Nagel Chapters 1 "Introduction" and 10 "The Meaning of Life".

◇ Plato, *The Apology*. Trans. B. Jowett. Oxford: Clarendon, 1953. **PNI Chapter 1, pp. 20-22, 50-67.**

⊕ Bertrand Russell, "The Value of Philosophy", Chapter 15 of his *The Problems of Philosophy*.

⊕ Thales, Sophists & Socrates Cartoons. Forms of Knowledge Diagram.

### 2. The Mind/Body Problem: The Scientific Revolution and Descartes' Dualism

Readings: ☆ Nagel Chapters 3 "Other Minds" and 4 "The Mind/Body Problem".

◇ The Mysterious Case of of the Mind and the Body; René Descartes, *Meditations* Parts I, II, VI. **PNI Chapter 3, pp. 193-227.** ⊕ Renaissance, Galileo, Bacon, and Descartes cartoons.

⊕ Theories of the Relation Between the Mind and the Body Chart.

### 3. Knowledge and Language

Readings: ☆ Nagel Chapters 2 "How Do We Know Anything?", and 5 "The Meaning of Words".

◇ Knowledge and the Human Condition; A. J. Ayer, "Preface" and "The Elimination of Metaphysics", *Language, Truth and Logic*, London, 1970. **PNI Chapter 4, 299-309, 338-349.** ⊕ Appearance & Reality Diagram. ⊕ Meaning of Words Diagram. ⊕ Wittgenstein and de Saussure cartoons.

### 4. Historical Knowledge and the Science of Human Nature

Readings: ⊕ David Hume, *Introduction to A Treatise of Human Nature* (1739). My edit.

◇ R. G. Collingwood, *The Idea of History*, Oxford UP, Selections. **PNI Chapter 4, pp. 349-361.**

### 5. Freewill, Determinism, and the Self (Double-length Unit)

Readings: ☆ Nagel Chapter 6 "Free Will". Reread Descartes Part II.

◇ Theories of the Self **PNI Chapter 3, pp. 239-250.** ⊕ Free Will vs. Determinism Diagram.

◇ Goethe, "Pride in the Heart" and "Oh, You Rationalists!", from *The Sorrows of Young Werther*.

◇ Percy Bysshe Shelley, *A Defense of Poetry*. ◇ José Ortega y Gasset, "Man has No Nature."

◇ Albert Camus, *The Myth of Sisyphus*. **PNI Chapter 3, pp. 257-274.**

### 6. Ethics I: Introduction to Ethics. Reason and Responsibility in Ethical Theory

Readings: ☆ Nagel Chapter 7 "Right and Wrong". ⊕ Summary of the Major Ethical Perspectives.

◇ Ethics: An Introduction. **PNI Chapter 6, pp. 394-401.** ⊕ Hume, Kant and Nietzsche quotes.

◇ Jean-Paul Sartre, "Existentialism is a Humanism". **PNI Chapter 6, pp. 277-286.**

### 7. Ethics II: Utilitarianism and its Problems (Light Unit)

◇ John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism*. Selections from Chapters 1-3. **PNI C5, 404-414.** ⊕ Mill cartoons.

### 8. Political Theory I: Justice & the Ideal State

☆ Nagel Chapter 8 "Justice". ⊕ Plato cartoons.

◇ History of Political Theory. **PNI C6, pp. 463-470.**

◇ Plato, *The Republic*, Selections. **PNI C1, pp. 67-101.**

### 9. Political Theory II: The Problem of Power

Readings: ◇ Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince*, Chapters 6, 8, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 25. **PNI Chapter 6, pp. 471-478.**

◇ Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Chapters 13, 14, 15, 17.

**PNI Chapter 6, pp. 479-487.** ◇ Karl Marx, *Preface, Theses, The Communist Manifesto*. **PNI C6, pp. 495-512.**

◇ John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty*. **PNI C6, pp. 513-520.**

⊕ Machiavelli, Hobbes, and Marx cartoons.



## 10. The Philosophy of Culture (Another heavy unit - may be shortened or cut for time reasons)

◆ Christopher Lasch, *The Culture of Narcissism*. orton, 1978, selections. **PNI Chaper 9, pp. 719-737.**  
◆ Doug Mann, "What is Postmodernism?", **PNI C9, pp. 786-789.** ◆ "The Reign of Simulacra," **PNI C9, pp. 793-796.**◆ John Ralston Saul, "The Great Leap Backwards", *The Unconscious Civilization*, 1995, Selections. **PNI C9, pp. 800-809.** ☺ McLuhan diagram. Lyotard & Baudrillard cartoons.

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**Participation:** A core element in this course will be participation in class. I'll keep track of your participation in these classes by giving you a mark of 0-3 each class, at the end of the course adding up the totals, rank ordering everyone, and then using the following schema to give you a specific grade:

- 0: You never talk, or never attend class, or stare at your cell phone.**
- 1-4: You talk a few times (your grade will be based on how often you talk).**
- 5-9: You attend most classes AND participate 5-10 times.**
- 10-11: You attend most classes AND participate meaningfully in over half. You show *some* textual knowledge.**
- 12-13: You say something meaningful in every class but one or two and clearly know the texts.**
- 14-15: You always participate meaningfully, skip at most one class, show clear evidence that you know the readings and videos, and aren't afraid to critique your classmates.**

A high premium will be placed on **knowledge of the texts** and willingness to engage with key issues, while uninformed opinions will be lightly regarded. So knowledge of the course materials counts.

**The Digital Zombie Apocalypse!** To encourage students to pay attention, take their studies seriously and show respect to the lecturer, I reserve the right to deduct a **1% penalty** from your **participation grade** each time you are seen using your cell phone, social networking web sites or playing video games during lecture. No **warning** or **notification** will be given of this penalty. This penalty will be applied to your **report grade** if you chose that option instead.

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**Reports:** Students will be expected to write **one** report, due no later than February 17, 4-6 pages in length. This should be formatted as a short essay with bibliography and proper internal citations: I prefer MLA style. See my "How to Write an Essay" on Owl. The topics will be posted on Owl early in the term - each will have a distinct deadline (the February 17 deadline is only for the *last topic*). **These individual deadlines ARE ALWAYS VALID!** Make sure you read over these topics *very* carefully: each will be different, with different requirements. The first topic in each half of the course will be graded more leniently; the last one more strictly. Late penalty = 5% per day from when I get it.

You absolutely must show you've read **the course readings** listed in the topic or face losing at least a full grade level. Also use proofreading and technology to reduce language errors. Most topics will refer to a comic/film AND a historical/theoretical reading. Some will be screenplays or diaries. For screenplays, don't use Courier font: single-space speeches and scene descriptions, leaving spaces between these. I'll post a sample screenplay under Resources on Owl to show you the format I prefer.

**Second Report Option:** You may, but don't have to, write a second report. It can be used to either: (a) replace your **participation grade** or (b) reduce the length of your final essay to 5-7 pages and its value to 20%. Pick any topic due in March or April. Clearly indicate on the cover what it's for.

**Exam:** The exam will cover all material in the course, so it's **very important** you have a good set of lecture notes to study from (i.e. not just the Power Point notes in the courseware), and that you at least try to keep up with the readings. About three-quarters of its grade will be based on essays.

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## Warning Notes

**On Reading and Work:** You may feel that some of the readings are fairly difficult. I've designed the course to give students a thorough introduction to philosophy. If you're having difficulty with the readings, try to go over them before class, highlighting key passages and making marginal notations beside sections that you have a problem understanding. Then come to lecture, and see if this helps. If things are still unclear, ask a question. All this being said, you probably don't have to read every selection from beginning to end to pass this course, although you are definitely expected to read and quote from the primary texts pertaining to your reports and essays. To excel, try to read all required materials.

**Plagiarism:** If you quote long passages from a text without noting the source, it's called plagiarism. If you buy an essay

or download text from a Web page and pretend it's your work, it's called plagiarism. In these cases, you will receive a 0 on the assignment, and open yourself up to further unpleasant punishments (as per university regulations).

**Ideology:** Note that since we'll be discussing some controversial issues here, those easily offended by moral, political and religious debates should try to be tolerant. Note that this is not a course in political activism, and that all beliefs will be open to question. In short, try to keep an open mind to ideas that you disagree with. Follow in the steps of Socrates: the unexamined life is not worth living.

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## 2022-23 BRESCIA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE ACADEMIC POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

### 1. POLICY REGARDING ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

The complete policy regarding Accommodation for Illness - Undergraduate Students can be found at

[https://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page\\_135](https://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_135)

Students who have long-term or chronic medical conditions which may impede their ability to complete academic responsibilities should seek Academic Accommodation through Student Accessibility Services

([https://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page\\_10](https://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_10)).

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.

Students who experience an illness or extenuating circumstance sufficiently severe to temporarily render them unable to meet academic requirements may submit a request for academic consideration through the following routes:

1. For medical absences, submitting a **Student Medical Certificate (SMC)** signed by a licensed medical or mental health practitioner;
2. For non-medical absences, submitting **appropriate documentation** (e.g., obituary, police report, accident report, court order, etc.) to their Academic Advisor. Students are

encouraged to contact their Academic Advisor to clarify what documentation is acceptable.

### **Request for Academic Consideration for a Medical Absence**

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 their academic responsibilities. Minor ailments typically treated by over-the-counter medications will not normally be accommodated.

The following conditions apply for students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds:

1. Students must submit their Student Medical Certificate (SMC) 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. An SMC can be downloaded from [https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf);
2. 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;
3. Whenever possible, students who require academic accommodation should provide notification and documentation in advance of due dates, scheduled tests or examinations, and other academic requirements;
4. Students **must** communicate with their instructors **no later than 24 hours** after the end of the period covered by the SMC to clarify how they will fulfil the academic expectations they may have missed during the absence;
5. Appropriate academic accommodation will be determined by the Dean's Office/Academic Advisor in consultation with the course instructor(s). Academic accommodation may include extension of deadlines, waiver of attendance requirements, arranging Special Exams (make-ups), re-weighting course requirements, or granting late withdrawal without academic penalty.

## **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

([https://brescia.uwo.ca/enrolment\\_services/academic\\_advising/book\\_an\\_appointment.php](https://brescia.uwo.ca/enrolment_services/academic_advising/book_an_appointment.php)). If you consider reducing your workload by dropping one or more courses, this must be done by the appropriate deadlines; please contact your Academic Advisor or see the list of sessional dates in the Academic Calendar

(<https://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/SessionalDates.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.

Please note that for asynchronous online courses, attendance or participation requirements maybe different than for synchronous or in-person courses.

**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 ([https://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=5&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page\\_64](https://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=5&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_64)).

### 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: [https://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page\\_20](https://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.

### **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, they may then submit a written appeal to the Office of the Dean. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the Dean, they may appeal to the Senate Review Board Academic (SRBA), if there are sufficient grounds for the appeal and if the matter falls within the jurisdiction of the SRBA. For information on academic appeals consult your Academic Advisor or see the Student Academic Appeals – Undergraduate in the Academic Calendar [https://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page\\_14](https://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/>. Students can access supports through Brescia's Student Life Centre (<http://brescia.uwo.ca/life/student-life/>) and Learning Development & Success at Western (<https://www.uwo.ca/sdc/learning/>).

## 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 obtain information about how to obtain help for yourself or others through **Health & Wellness at Brescia**, [https://brescia.uwo.ca/student\\_life/health\\_and\\_wellness/index.php](https://brescia.uwo.ca/student_life/health_and_wellness/index.php) and **Health and Wellness at Western**, [http://uwo.ca/health/mental\\_wellbeing/index.html](http://uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/index.html).

## 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 [https://brescia.uwo.ca/safe\\_campus/sexual\\_violence/index.php](https://brescia.uwo.ca/safe_campus/sexual_violence/index.php).

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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.

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