



DEPARTMENT OF ARTS AND EDUCATION

COURSE OUTLINE - Winter 2015

PH1020 (A3) Introduction to Philosophy: Knowledge and Reality -

3 (3-0-0) 45 Hours

INSTRUCTOR: Tom Enders, PhD **PHONE:** 780-539-2996
OFFICE: C-303 **E-MAIL:** tenders@gprc.ab.ca
OFFICE HOURS: TBA and by appointments

PREREQUISITE(S)/COREQUISITE: none

REQUIRED TEXT/RESOURCE MATERIALS:

- Louis Pojman and James Fieser, editors. *Introduction to Philosophy: Classical and Contemporary Readings*, 4th edition. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.
- Readings posted on Moodle, class handouts, and internet readings.

CALENDAR DESCRIPTION:

This is an introduction to the classical problems of philosophy through study and critical discussion of selected philosophical classics and contemporary works. Emphasis will be placed on questions of the nature and extent of human knowledge and classic problems about the nature of reality and our place in it.

CREDIT/CONTACT HOURS: 3 credits / 3 hours per week

DELIVERY MODE(S): Lectures and discussions.

OBJECTIVES:

By the end of this course you should have a good initial understanding of selected classic problems of philosophy in the fields of metaphysics and epistemology - problems such as the ones noted above.

Completion of this course should also help to prepare you for further study in Philosophy.

TRANSFERABILITY: UA (&AUG), UC, AU, UL, CUC, KUC

* The grade of D or D+ may not be accepted for transfer to other post-secondary institutions. Students are cautioned that it is their responsibility to contact the receiving institutions to ensure transferability.

GRADING CRITERIA:

GRANDE PRAIRIE REGIONAL COLLEGE			
GRADING CONVERSION CHART			
Alpha Grade	4-point Equivalent	Percentage Guidelines	Designation
A⁺	4.0	90 – 100	EXCELLENT
A	4.0	85 – 89	
A⁻	3.7	80 – 84	FIRST CLASS STANDING
B⁺	3.3	76 – 79	
B	3.0	73 – 75	GOOD
B⁻	2.7	70 – 72	
C⁺	2.3	67 – 69	SATISFACTORY
C	2.0	64 – 66	
C⁻	1.7	60 – 63	
D⁺	1.3	55 – 59	MINIMAL PASS
D	1.0	50 – 54	
F	0.0	0 – 49	FAIL
WF	0.0	0	FAIL, withdrawal after the deadline

EVALUATION:

Attendance and participation	10%
Two assignments	30%
First exam	25%
Final exam	35%

Please be informed that it is **not** the instructor's policy to allow exams or assignments to be rewritten, or extra work done to increase marks. You are welcome, however, to consult with the instructor prior to exams and assignment due dates.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

*Due to the challenging nature of the questions and the answers philosophers have presented, the connectedness of topics, and the journal assignment, regular attendance – and reading - are strongly advised. There is also an attendance and participation mark...

* You are expected to devote time in the classroom to the class itself. Use of cell phones, and use of laptops for nonclass purposes, is unacceptable. It is also not acceptable to socialize or do work for other courses (or even for *other* work for this course) during the class.

* You are strongly advised to keep a copy of your own of any work you submit for grading at least until you have your work returned to you.

** Students who miss an excessive number of classes (i.e. more than six without reasonable justification such as illness) may be denied the opportunity to write the final exam, as stated in the Calendar.

**You are expected to write the final exam when scheduled by the Registrar's Office - with possible exceptions in the case of compelling and urgent circumstances beyond your control. Also note and observe other key dates during the term as provided in the Calendar.

STATEMENT ON PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING:

* You are required to reference sources fully and properly for written assignments. You are responsible for familiarizing yourself with College Calendar information pertaining to cheating and plagiarism, for which there are various penalties depending on the severity of the offense. These include, among others, a reduced mark, a zero for the assignment, a record kept

with the Department, a forced withdrawal from the course or even from the College, etc.

You can also refer to the College Policy on Student Conduct at https://www.gprc.ab.ca/files/forms_documents/Student_Misconduct.pdf

**Note: all Academic and Administrative policies are available at <https://www.gprc.ab.ca/about/administration/policies/>

Please note: Details of this course outline are subject to change. Any changes will be discussed in class.

COURSE SCHEDULE/TENTATIVE TIMELINE:

Reading list is to follow:

8, 13 January

I. Introduction. What is philosophy? Wisdom and truth. Good arguments. Philosophy and science. Branches of philosophy. Liberal arts education.

15, 20 January

II. Reading philosophy. The value of philosophy. Philosophy and the good life.

22, 27, 29 January

III. Introduction to Metaphysics and Epistemology. Reductionism. Plato's cave and divided line. Platonic forms. Plato and Aristotle on art and popular culture.

3, 5, 10 Feb.

IV. Epistemology. Skepticism, rationalism, empiricism. The problem of induction. Kant's solution and attempt at reconciliation.

12, 24 Feb.

V. Truth and Objectivity. Theories of truth. Antirealism, postmodernism and relativism. Morality and objectivity.

FIRST EXAM: Thursday 26 February

3, 5, 10 March

VI. The Mind-Body Question. Dualism, materialism and identity theory. Behaviouralism. Functionalism and computers.

12, 17, 19 March

VII. Free Will, Determinism and Responsibility.

24, 26, 31 March

VIII. Philosophy and Religion. Faith and reason. Arguments for the existence of God. The problem of evil.

2, 7 April

IX. Self and Personal Identity. Is there an enduring self? Significance of the answer. Autonomous and social selves.

9, 14 April

X. The meaning of life. Existentialism. Religion and the meaning of life. Other perspectives.

Additional Information:

This course is an introduction to selected classic problems of philosophy in the fields of metaphysics and epistemology, the fields in which questions are asked about the nature of reality and about the nature and limits of human knowledge. They include the following questions which are key questions for a range of academic disciplines and for decision-making in life. What is philosophy? What is a good life? To what extent can we know what is real – and what underlies appearances, if anything, or much? What is truth? Should we accept or reject the concept of objective truth? What am I? Does anything immaterial exist? Do I have a mind or soul separate from my body? Will computers be able to think, and if so, what will be the significance of that? Can I and other people make truly free choices for which we can be reasonably held responsible? Does God exist? How can I know? Can a good God allow evil in the world? Do I remain “the same person” all my life? Why does that matter? Am I primarily an autonomous person or a social being? What is the meaning of life? This course is designed to help you achieve a good understanding of many if not all of these questions and the ways in which they are related to one another. It should also enable you to begin to think clearly and systematically about *the best possible answers* to these Big Questions.