

BRESCIA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
(at Western)

Wed: 11:30-1:30
Fri: 11:30-12:30
Room: BR 304

Philosophy 1300E
Introduction to Philosophy
(Tentative)

2019-2020
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

objective reality? Is truth objective or subjective?

**Philosophy 1300E
2029-20**

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 partly on attendance and partly on class participation. 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, 10th 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
2019-2020

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 23 (5%)

Nov 15 (5% or 8.33%)

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

Feb 14 (5% or 8.33%)

March 18 (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. 3 (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. 5

Thanksgiving Holiday: Oct. 14

Fall Reading Week: Nov 4-10

Our last class, first term: Dec. 4

December exam period: Dec. 8-20

Our first class, second term: Jan. 8

Spring Reading Week: Feb. 17-21

Our last class: April 3

Easter: April 12

Final exam period: April 6-26

2019-20 BRESCIA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE ACADEMIC POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

1. POLICY REGARDING ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

The complete policy regarding [Accommodation for Illness - Undergraduate Students](http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_12) can be found at http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_12.

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

(http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?PolicyCategoryID=1&Command=showCategory&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. Submitting a **Self-Reported Absence** form provided that the conditions for submission are met;
2. For medical absences, submitting a **Student Medical Certificate (SMC)** signed by a licensed medical or mental health practitioner;
3. 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.

Requests for Academic Consideration Using the Self-Reported Absence Portal

Students who experience an unexpected illness or injury or an extenuating circumstance of 48 hours or less that is sufficiently severe to render them unable to meet academic requirements should self-declare using the online Self-Reported Absence portal. This option should be used in situations where the student expects to resume academic responsibilities within 48 hours. Note that the excused absence includes all courses and academic requirements within the up to 48 hours, it is not intended to provide an excused absence from a single course while students fulfill their academic responsibilities in other courses during that time.

The following conditions are in place for self-reporting of medical or extenuating circumstances:

1. Students will be allowed **a maximum of two self-reported absences** between September and April and one self-reported absence between May and August;
2. The duration of the absence will be for a maximum of 48 hours from the time the Self-Reported Absence form is completed through the online portal, or from 8:30 am the following morning if the form is submitted after 4:30 pm;
3. The excused absence will terminate prior to the end of the 48 hour period if the student undertakes significant academic responsibilities (writes a test, submits a paper) during that time;
4. Self-reported absences will **not** be allowed for scheduled final examinations; midterm examinations scheduled during the December examination period; or for final lab examinations scheduled during the final week of term;
5. Self-report absences may **not** be used for assessments worth more than 30% of any course;
6. Any absences in excess of 48 hours will require students to present a Student Medical Certificate (SMC), or appropriate documentation;
7. Students **must** communicate with their instructors **no later than 24 hours after the end of the period covered by the Self-Reported Absence form** to clarify how they will fulfil the academic expectations they may have missed during the absence.

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 http://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.

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; please refer to the [Registrar's website](#), <http://brescia.uwo.ca/academics/registrar-services/> or the list of official sessional dates in the Academic Calendar (<http://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.

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, 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 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/>. Students can access supports through Brescia's Student Life Centre (<http://brescia.uwo.ca/life/student-life/>) and Learning Skills Services 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 **Mental Health & Wellness at Brescia** (<http://brescia.uwo.ca/life/mental-health-wellness/>) and **Health and Wellness at Western**, 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 <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.
