

## PHILOSOPHY 100

## Introduction to Philosophy

**Instructor:** Dr J.O. Young  
**Office:** CLE B324  
**Telephone:** 250.721.7509  
**Office Hours:** Monday and Thursday, 2:30-4:00 and by appointment; Office hours will be held via Zoom: <https://uvic.zoom.us/j/97463307203?pwd=NWRXM1hmNnN2U1dTZkdEdnM2ZmlEZz09>  
**E-mail:** joy@uvic.ca

**The Instructor:**

I was interested in philosophy from an early age. Even as a student at Burnaby North High School, I was reading (though not understanding) philosophers, including Plato. I knew going into university that I wanted to student philosophy. (This is very unusual; most students come to philosophy after deciding that they don't like whatever they initially planned to study.) After receiving my B.A. at Simon Fraser University, I completed an M.A. at the University of Waterloo in Ontario and a Ph.D. at Boston University. I taught for a year at the University of Calgary before coming to the University of Victoria. I was also a research fellow for a year at Melbourne University in Australia. I have been a visiting scholar at the Universidad de Murcia (Spain) and a Senior Visiting Fellow at the Institute of Advanced Studies at Durham University (England).

My initial area of philosophical research was aimed at answering the question 'What is truth?' and this was the subject of my first book, *Global Anti-realism* (1995). I have subsequently written several books on philosophy of art including *Art and Knowledge* (2001) and *Cultural Appropriation and the Arts* (2008) *Critique of Pure Music* (2014), *Filosofía de la Música. Respuestas a Peter Kivy* (2017) and *Radically Rethinking Copyright in the Arts* (2020). I have edited three collections of essays, translated Charles Batteux's *The Fine Arts Reduced to a Single Principle* (2015) and published more than 60 papers in scholarly journals. I was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada in 2015.

I am passionate about philosophy and I hope to convey some of my passion to you.

**Outline**

For most students, this will be their first exposure to philosophy and you may have no clear conception of what you are about to study. Unfortunately, the nature of

philosophy is itself a matter of philosophical dispute and many definitions of philosophy have been proposed. I like Wilfred Sellars' account of philosophy: "The aim of philosophy is to understand how things in the broadest possible sense of the term hang together in the broadest possible sense of the term."

More specifically, philosophy is the study of a series of enduring questions. In this course, we will ask fundamental questions about the nature of reality, value, beauty and knowledge. Students will be introduced to the principal problems and schools of the Western philosophical tradition. Issues in ethics, social and political philosophy, epistemology (theory of knowledge), metaphysics (theory of the basic nature of reality) and aesthetics (philosophy of art) will be addressed.

### ***Course objectives:***

Students will be asked to develop the abilities to write clearly, to analyse and criticise arguments, and to construct their own arguments. Philosophy is widely recognized as the discipline best able to train students to think critically and logically. At the same time, students should develop an appreciation of the intrinsic importance and interest of philosophical questions.

Students will be encouraged to develop public speaking and debating skills by participating in discussions. Dialogue is an important part of the process of arriving at philosophical conclusions. You should feel free to offer comments and ask questions at any point. You should also feel free to provide reasons for doubting any assertion the instructor makes.

### ***Format:***

We live in a challenging time and teaching a course such as PHIL 100 online is not ideal. I will do my best to teach the course as if I were teaching in person. Each week I will offer two lectures, Mondays and Thursdays from 1 p.m. to 2:15 p.m. I will provide every opportunity for students to ask questions during class time and I will be available for online office hours for one-on-one consultation with students.

All class sessions will be held via this Zoom link: <https://uvic.zoom.us/j/97463307203?pwd=NWRXM1hmNnN2U1dTZkdEdnM2ZmlEZz09>.

### ***Texts:***

All readings are available online, free of charge.

Here are some places the readings may be found:

Plato, *Euthyphro*, <http://classics.mit.edu/Plato/euthyfro.html>

Plato, *Crito*, <http://classics.mit.edu/Plato/crito.html>

Plato, *Phaedo*, <http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/1658>

Hume, 'Of the Immortality of the Soul,'  
<https://quod.lib.umich.edu/e/ecco/004780373.0001.000/1:3.2?rgn=div2;view=fulltext>

Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy*,  
<http://earlymoderntexts.com/authors/descartes>

Descartes and Princess Elisabeth of Bohemia, Correspondence  
<http://earlymoderntexts.com/authors/descartes>

Leibniz, *Discourse on Metaphysics*, <http://earlymoderntexts.com/authors/leibniz>

Berkeley, *Three Dialogues*, <http://earlymoderntexts.com/authors/berkeley>

Hume, *Enquiries*, <http://www.earlymoderntexts.com/pdfs/hume1748.pdf>

Paley, *Natural Theology*, <http://darwin-online.org.uk/content/frameset?itemID=A142&viewtype=text&pageseq=1>

Locke, *Essay*, <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/10615/10615-h/10615-h.htm#link2HCH0030>

Ayer, *Language, Truth and Logic*, <https://archive.org/details/AlfredAyer>

Mill, *Utilitarianism; On Liberty*, <http://earlymoderntexts.com/authors/mill>

Hume, "Of the Standard of Taste," <http://earlymoderntexts.com/authors/hume>

Plato, *Republic*; <http://classics.mit.edu/Plato/republic.11.x.html>

Tolstoy, <http://www.csulb.edu/~jvancamp/361r14.html>

### **Grading:**

Students will write four essays of approximately 1500 words and a series of surprise quizzes. Two essays will be due before Christmas, and two in the second term. Students will write a total of fifteen surprise quizzes. The best ten grades on these quizzes will be used in the calculation of your final grade. Your ten best quizzes will be worth 20% of the course grade. Each of the four essays will be worth 20%. ***N.B.: In order to pass the course, students must submit all four essays and write***

***at least eight quizzes. Otherwise you will be assigned and N grade. If you are having trouble completing the essays, please see the instructor as soon as possible.***

Four criteria will be used in assessing essays: (1) effective and correct use of the English language; (2) accurate presentation of the views of the philosophers discussed; (3) presentation of valid arguments; and (4) evidence of original thought. A first-class essay will be characterised by clear, grammatical prose and careful exegesis. It will display an appreciation of the strengths and weaknesses of the arguments being discussed. It will state a thesis and present reasoned arguments for it. A first-class essay will also contain evidence of your own efforts grapple with philosophical issues and to arrive at your own solutions. Students are not expected to make startling philosophical discoveries, but they are expected to engage the issues. Students are strongly discouraged from making use of secondary sources. Their own reasoned reflections are more important than a survey of the extant literature.

Students will receive a final grade out of 100 points. Numbers will be converted to a letter grade in accordance with the following scale: 90-100=A+; 85-89=A; 80-84=A-; 77-79=B+; 73-76=B; 70-72=B-; 65-69=C+; 60-64=C; 50-59= D; 0-49=F. Final grades will be rounded to the nearest whole number.

After the deadlines, essays will be accepted without penalty for ten days. No papers will be accepted more than ten days after the deadline. Exceptions will be made only in cases of illness or personal crisis. Requests for exceptions must be received ***in writing*** and ***no more than ten days after the deadline.***

### ***Academic integrity***

Plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct are serious academic offences and will not be tolerated. Please see University Calendar for the regulations on academic integrity: <https://www.uvic.ca/students/academics/academic-integrity/>. The minimum penalty for violation of the policy is a failing grade on a plagiarised assignment. Serious or repeated plagiarism can result in failure of a course and even suspension from the University. A good way to avoid plagiarism is to take the instructor's advice and avoid secondary sources altogether.

### ***Intellectual property of materials on the LMS website***

Please note that all assignments for this course and all materials posted to the LMS website are the intellectual property of myself or the University of Victoria. Do not circulate this material or post it to note-sharing sites without my permission. Posting course materials to note-sharing sites or otherwise circulating course materials without the permission of your instructor violates the Policy on Academic

Integrity. Any evidence you are circulating materials without permission will be referred to the Chair of the Philosophy Department for investigation.

### **Schedule of Lectures: First Term**

Week One                      10 September

Topic: What is Philosophy?  
Readings: None

Week Two                      14 and 17 September

Topic: Introduction to philosophical reasoning  
Readings: Plato, *Euthyphro*

Week Three                    21 and 24 September

Topic: The authority of the state  
Readings: Plato, *Crito*

Week Four                    28 September and 1 October

Topic: Is the soul immortal? (introduced)  
Readings: Plato, *Phaedo*

Week Five                    5 and 8 October

Topic: Is the soul immortal? (continued)  
Readings: Plato, *Phaedo*; Hume, 'Of the Immortality of the Soul'

Week Six                      15 October

Topic: Introduction to Descartes  
Readings: Descartes, *Meditations* 1 and 2

Week Seven                  19 and 22 October

Topic: What can we know?  
Readings: Descartes, *Meditations* 3 and 4  
Assignment: First essay due, 22 October

Week Eight                    26 and 29 October

Topic: Does God exist? Are mind and body distinct?

Readings: Meditations 5 and 6; Elisabeth of Bohemia, Correspondence with Descartes

Week Nine                      2 and 5 November

Topic: The rationalism of Leibniz  
Readings: Leibniz, *Discourse on Metaphysics*

Week Ten                      12 November

Topic: Leibniz continued; Berkeley introduced  
Readings: Berkeley, *Three Dialogues*

Week Eleven                  16 and 19 November

Topic: God and Science in Berkeley's thought  
Readings: Berkeley, *Three Dialogues*

Week Twelve                 23 and 26 November

Topic: Introduction to Hume  
Readings: Hume, *Enquiry*, Sections 1 to 3

Week Thirteen              30 November and 3 December

Topic: Hume on causality; scepticism  
Readings: Hume, *Enquiry*, Sections 4 to 7  
Assignment: Second essay due, 2 December

### **Second Term**

Week One                      7 January

Topic: Liberty, Necessity and Morality  
Readings: *Enquiry* Sections 7 and 8

Week Two                      11 and 14 January

Topic: Miracles and a Future State  
Readings: *Enquiry* Sections 10 and 11; Paley, *Natural Religion*

Week Three                    18 and 21 January

Topic: Scepticism  
Readings: *Enquiry*, Section 12

Week Four                      25 and 28 January

Topic: Identity and personal Identity  
Readings: Locke, *Essay*, Book II, Ch. XXVII

Week Five                      1 and 4 February

Topic: Introduction to logical positivism and the principle of verifiability  
Readings: *Language, Truth and Logic* Chapters 1, 2 and 3

Week Six                      8 and 11 February

Topic: Phenomenalism  
Readings: *Language, Truth and Logic*, Chapters 4 and 5

Week Seven:                  Reading break

Week Eight                    22 and 25 February

Topic: Positivist solutions to philosophical problems  
Readings: *Language, Truth and Logic* Chapters 6 to 8  
Assignment: Third essay due 25 February

Week Nine                    1 and 4 March

Topic: Utilitarianism  
Readings: *Utilitarianism*

Week Ten                      8 and 11 March

Topic: The Principle of Liberty  
Readings: *On Liberty* Sections 1 to 3

Week Eleven                  15 and 18 March

Topic: Individuals and the state; applications of the Principle of Liberty  
Readings: *On Liberty* Sections 4 to 5; *Chapters on Socialism*

Week Twelve                  22 and 25 March

Topic: What is Art?  
Readings: Plato, *Republic*, Book X; Tolstoy, *What is Art?*

Week Thirteen                29 March and 1 April

Topic: Judging works of art  
Readings: Hume, "Of the Standard of Taste"

Week Fourteen                      5 April

Topic: Concluding remarks  
Readings: No new readings  
Assignment: Final essay due 7 April

N.B.: This syllabus is tentative, and intended only to give students a rough guide to readings, dates and topics.