

Luther College Course Syllabus: PHIL 100-L01

Luther College is a federated college at the University of Regina. Grounded in the liberal arts tradition, Luther College is committed to personalized education in a community of scholars who value excellent teaching and engaged learning. Luther courses are student-centred and open to students from all faculties and federated colleges at the University of Regina.

Course Number: PHIL 100-L01 (CRN 12194)
Course Title: Introduction to Philosophy
Term/Year: Winter 2018
Times and Locations: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, 9:30 am - 10:20 am, Luther College Room 211
Pre-Requisites: None for this course.

Instructor Name and Title: Dr. Roger Petry
Office Location: Luther College, Room 112
Email: roger.petry@uregina.ca
(put "phil 100" in subject line of e-mail)
Phone Number: 306-585-5295
Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 10:30 to 11:20 am
Tuesdays 11:30 am to 12:30 pm;
Thursdays 2:30 pm to 3:30 pm
Or by appointment

Any student with a disability who may need accommodations should discuss these with the course instructor, and contact the Coordinator of the Centre for Student Accessibility at 306.585.4631.

Course Description:

Philosophy seeks to satisfy our intellectual curiosity about enduring questions: what we can know, what is meaningful, how should we live our lives—all dimensions of the traditional search for wisdom. This course will explore questions concerning knowledge and truth, mind and body, personal identity, free will, morality, politics, and the existence of God. Students will also be introduced to various areas of philosophy including metaphysics, critical thinking, epistemology, ethics, political philosophy, and philosophy of religion.

Instructor's Bio:

See: <https://www.luthercollege.edu/university/academics/faculty-profiles/roger-petry>

Learning Objectives and/or Outcomes:

Students in the Introduction to Philosophy class will achieve the following learning objectives:

- To understand and **appreciate philosophy as a discipline** of study, the kinds of questions explored in its various sub-disciplines, and interrelationships between them.
- To **learn important concepts** employed in the study of philosophy.

- To **identify, analyse, and comment upon key arguments** and positions found in important writings of Western and Eastern philosophers in diverse areas of philosophy (including metaphysics, critical thinking, epistemology, ethics, political philosophy, and philosophy of religion) while exploring their contemporary relevance.
- To **formulate one's own views on enduring questions** of philosophy explored in class and to learn how to **provide structured support for these views** employing philosophical conceptual tools and patterns of argument while avoiding common errors in reasoning.
- To explore how the study of philosophy relates to the question of **what counts as wisdom**, to evaluate competing accounts of wisdom presented by the philosophers studied, and to explore the relationship of these competing accounts to possible understandings of a life well lived.

Students will acquire this knowledge and develop these skills through in-class discussions and activities in small and large groups, assignments, reading of selected texts, a midterm exam, and an essay assignment.

Meta-skills and/or Capabilities:

In addition to important contributions to one's personal development and life fulfillment, philosophy develops skills and abilities readily transferred to other academic disciplines, one's chosen profession or field of work, and community responsibilities. In this course specific capabilities you will develop include:

- **Independent thinking:** students will develop intellectual habits preventing the passive acceptance of beliefs in various life settings (as students, employers/employees, and citizens) and how to guard against faulty methods of persuasion employed against the unwary
- **Critical reasoning skills, self-awareness, and independent thinking:** students will learn how to identify, analyze, criticize, and construct various types of arguments while further developing and supporting their own views on important life questions
- **Effective listening and communication skills:** students will learn attention to detail in drawing out key arguments and insights from written texts and in-class discussions while learning how to clearly, systematically, and convincingly communicate their own ideas
- **Organizing and unifying one's ideas:** students will be able to organize, integrate, and synthesize information and ideas from a wide range of sources (including their other university courses) while applying these ideas and diverse approaches to scholarly problems and general life questions
- **Tolerance of complexity and ambiguity:** Students will learn to appreciate the various dimensions of philosophical questions, both tolerating and enjoying the ability to reflect on complex, high level issues often characterized by uncertainty
- **Successful transitioning to professional employment:** the skills developed within philosophy provide proven success on professional exams (for example, the GRE, GMAT, & LSAT) and for admission to medical school; see "why study philosophy" at <https://sites.google.com/site/whystudyphilosophy/>
- **Development as a Global Citizen:** One's own personal engagement with deeper and enduring life questions plays an important part in shaping key life decisions and mobilizing communities to engage in important courses of action that are meaningful and likely to succeed.

Required Text and Readings:

Robert M. Martin, *For the Sake of Argument: How to Do Philosophy* (Peterborough, Ont: Broadview Press, 2017). This short text is extensively supplemented by Open Access philosophy readings made available in URCourses including works by Plato, Aristotle, Confucius, Anselm, Francis Bacon, Descartes, and David Hume. These are required readings. The Robert Martin textbook is available in the University of Regina Bookstore for \$14.95. A copy is available on reserve at the Luther College library for use within the library.

Electronic Resources:

The UR Courses site (<http://www.uregina.ca/urcourses/> (go to: "Login to URCourses")) will be continually updated with supplementary readings, lecture notes, study guides, announcements, etc.

Class Schedule

Student enjoyment and learning in the course is greatly increased by having read assigned readings prior to the class and bringing the appropriate readings to class. The following provides a tentative list of topics and readings that will be explored in class. Excerpts of the readings from specific philosophers will be placed on UR Courses while specific portions of the Robert Solomon textbook will be periodically assigned as they relate to specific topics being covered. Students should read the various readings as they are assigned to be prepared for discussing these texts in class. Following this list of readings is a list of important dates.

- What is Philosophy?
- Critical thinking and logic
- Plato, *Apology*
- Middle East Religions and Inspiration (selected readings from Hebrew and Christian Scriptures, Philo of Alexandria, St. John of the Cross, Teresa of Avila, Ibn al-'Arabi)
- David Hume, *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*
- Confucius, *The Sayings of Confucius*
- Framing ethical arguments & elements of an ethical toolkit
- David Hume, *An Inquiry Concerning the Principle of Morals*
- Aristotle, *Metaphysics*
- Francis Bacon, *New Atlantis*
- Physicalism and objectivity
- First Nations' Accounts of wisdom, *The 7 Sacred Teachings of White Buffalo Calf Woman*
- Sustainable Development and wisdom
- Rene Descarte, *Meditations on First Philosophy*

Important Dates:

Monday, January 8

Friday, January 19

Wednesday, February 7

Wednesday, February 14

February 19 to 23

Monday, February 26

Wednesday, February 28

Friday, March 9

Friday, March 23

Friday, March 30

Friday, April 13

First Day of This Class

Argument Assignment Provided

Argument Assignment Due

Midterm Exam

No Classes: University Closed for Winter Break

Library Presentation

Essay Assigned

Summary of Thesis and Main Arguments for Essay Due

Essay Due

No Class: University Closed for Good Friday

Last Day of this Class

Evaluation Components and Due Dates

Evaluation Component	Grade Weight	Due Date
Participation/attendance/in-class activities/small assignments	15%	In class or as assigned
Argument Assignment	20%	Wednesday, February 7
Midterm Exam	30%	Wednesday, February 14
Summary of Thesis/Args. for Essay	5%	Friday, March 9
Essay	30%	Friday, March 23
Total	100%	

Professional Conduct & Policies

Academic Honesty:

Cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic misconduct undermine academic integrity and are punishable as outlined in §5.14.2 of the 2017-18 University of Regina Calendar. Note the definitions of plagiarism and cheating in 5.14.2.2 of the 2017-2018 Calendar. An online definition of plagiarism translated into several languages is available at:

<http://www.uregina.ca/international/assets/doc/pdf/plagiarism.pdf> If you have any questions about the proper methods of citing sources, the extent to which sources (including internet resources) must be cited, or what might constitute plagiarism, please discuss your questions with your instructor before handing in work.

Late Submission Policy:

The penalty for late assignments will be 3% of the grade for the assignment per day. Tests on a date other than the scheduled date will only be allowed for legitimate absences (for example, illness) accompanied by documented evidence explaining the absence (for example, a doctor's note, etc.). **All students must write the midterm exam and submit the assigned essay (these are essential to pass the course).**

Attendance Policy:

As part of a community of scholars, students are expected to attend classes regularly and to be present on exam dates. Students will find the UR Courses website useful in keeping up with the course in the event of illness. Completion of assignments and regular attendance is important for student success in this course. **Students who are persistently tardy or absent or who neglect academic work may be subject to disciplinary action and may be excluded from the final examinations (5.3 of the 2017-18 Calendar).**

Use of Electronic Devices:

Students may use laptops/tablets during class for accessing readings, notetaking and other activities related to the study of topics under discussion. Other uses should be of an exceptional nature and should not distract fellow students. Electronic devices cannot be used during examinations except where special permission has been granted by the instructor to meet a special needs accommodation. Evidence of possible use of an electronic device during an exam will be subject to appropriate penalties for cheating (see "Academic Honesty" above).

Other Policies:

A list of **Luther Course Announcements** that inform students of important dates applicable to all courses along with a **Luther Safety Guide** on how to respond in cases of emergency while in the College **is posted on URCourses**. In addition, a page from the University of Regina Counseling Services on **stress management** is also posted on UR Courses.