

The University of Western Ontario  
Department of Philosophy  
Questions of the Day: Philosophy 1305G, Winter 2016  
Course Outline

Instructor: Dr. Ryan Robb  
Office: Stevenson Hall, room 4126  
Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays,  
12:30 – 1:30 p.m.

Class Hours: Mondays 1:30 – 2:30, and  
Wednesdays 1:30 – 2:30 p.m. (+1 tutorial hour)  
Talbot College, room 309  
e-mail: [rrobb@uwo.ca](mailto:rrobb@uwo.ca)  
Course info: OWLSakai

Course Objectives:

This course seeks to achieve two goals. The most important is to introduce students to, and build upon, a set of standard philosophical skills. Using the readings, lectures, essay assignments, and tutorial discussions this course will help students to identify what it is that makes the set of reasons that support the conclusions of an argument either convincing or implausible, which will also improve their ability to create compelling arguments of their own.

The second goal of this course is to introduce students to philosophical approaches toward some of the dominant issues in contemporary Canadian society. We will, for example, consider what it means for Canada to be a multicultural society. We will also engage competing answers to the following sorts of questions: What is the proper role of government in the lives of citizens? How should we decide to allocate scarce health care resources? What responsibilities do we have to address climate change? What is ‘terrorism’? Do animals have rights? Is abortion morally permissible?

Required Text:

*Ethics in Canada: Ethical, Social, and Political Perspectives*, Ed. Karen Wendling (Toronto, Canada: Oxford University Press Canada, 2015).

Course Requirements:

10% - Tutorial Participation  
20% - three 500 – 750 word essays, worth 20% each\*  
30% - Final Exam

\* Late papers will be assessed a 5% penalty on the first day, and will incur an additional 1% penalty for each subsequent day (weekends included), to a maximum of 45 days, or 50%. After that time, a grade of 0 will automatically be recorded. No papers will be accepted after the last day of classes, i.e., Wednesday, April 9<sup>th</sup> 2016.

## **AUDIT**

Students wishing to audit the course should consult with the instructor prior to or during the first week of classes.

The **Department of Philosophy Policies** which govern the conduct, standards, and expectations for student participation in Philosophy courses is available in the Undergraduate section of the Department of Philosophy website at <http://uwo.ca/philosophy/undergraduate/policies.html>. It is your responsibility to understand the policies set out by the Senate and the Department of Philosophy, and thus cannot be used as grounds of appeal.

All required papers are 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>)

Students who are in emotional/mental health distress should refer to Mental Health@Western: <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.