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Academic Year 2021-22

**Introduction to Philosophy:**

**Mind, Knowledge, and World**

Venue Zoom

Day and Time Monday 5-7pm

Term Dates 27th September to 29th November 2021

No. of Meetings 10

Module taught by Jane O’Grady, Mark Fielding

Fee £100

**Entrance Requirements**

The course is open to anyone with an interest and enthusiasm for the subject.

**Teaching Methods**

The module will be taught on-line using a combination of lectures, reading extracts of key texts, and class discussion. For those wishing to prepare for the University of London external examination there will, in addition, be set essays (two per term). There will be individual feedback on each assignment, together with an opportunity to produce additional, short, pieces of work in order to aid understanding of particular arguments, as necessary. As this preparation involves extra teaching, an additional fee will be charged.

**Course Description**

This course focusses on the key areas of Philosophy as they have come to be identified over the history of the subject. The intention is to follow the syllabus of the University of London International Programme examination ‘Introduction to Philosophy’ and **we broadly follow the content of *Reading Philosophy: Selected Texts with a method for Beginners* (Routledge, 2002)**. Subjects covered in this course include: Theory of Knowledge (epistemology), Metaphysics, the nature of the Self, and Causation. The course is open to all students, regardless of whether the University of London examination is entered for.

**Module Content**

**First Term**

Week1

Introduction

The aims and methods of Philosophy: A brief overview of the development of the subject and of the structure of the course

Tutor: Mark Fielding

Week 2

Epistemology

What is Knowledge? Belief, Truth, and Justification

Tutor: Mark Fielding

Week 3

Epistemology

How do we know that we’re not a brain-in-a-vat? The sceptical challenge to knowing and its problems

Tutor: Mark Fielding

Week 4

The self as two (Dualism)

Descartes’ idea of the Self and its problems

Tutor: Jane O’Grady

Week 5

The self as one (Monism)

Strawson’s argument against Descartes

Tutor: Jane O’Grady

Week 6

The nature of Personal Identity: Locke’s account

Tutor: Jane O’Grady

Week 7

Williams’ ‘The Self and the Future’

Tutor: Mark Fielding

Week 8

The Nature of Causation: Hume’s billiard balls

Tutor: Jane O’Grady

Week 9

Challenging Hume: Anscombe and Feynman

Tutor: Jane O’Grady

Week 10

What do things have in common? Boyle and Locke on Qualities

Tutor: Jane O’Grady

Suggested readings:

No additional readings are necessary, but it’s sometimes helpful to read a number of different discussions of the same problem to assist in understanding. Not all Philosophers are also clear writers!

Here are a few suggestions:

*Introducing Philosophy: A Text with Integrated Readings*, Robert C. Solomon OUP 2015 (the older editions are still available and at a much lower cost!)

*Think: A Compelling Introduction to Philosophy*, Simon Blackburn. OUP 2001

*The Problems of Philosophy*, Bertrand Russell. Cosimo 2007

*What Does It All Mean?: A Very Short Introduction to Philosophy*, Thomas Nagel. OUP 1989

*Western Philosophy: An Anthology*, (Ed.) John Cottingham. Wiley-Blackwell 2008