School of Humanities and Languages

ARTS2360: Truth and Belief
Semester 2, 2016

Lectures: Wednesdays 1–3 in Civil Engineering 101 (weeks 1–12)
Tutorials: Wednesdays 4–5 in Mathews 102 (weeks 2–13)

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1. Course Staff and Contact Details

**Course convenor and lecturer**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Professor Stephen Hetherington</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Room</td>
<td>MB 337</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone</td>
<td>9385 2318</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td><a href="mailto:s.hetherington@unsw.edu.au">s.hetherington@unsw.edu.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultation Time</td>
<td>Wednesdays 12–1 or by appointment</td>
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</tbody>
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**Tutor**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Dr. Max Rabie</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Room</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Phone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td><a href="mailto:m.rabie@unsw.edu.au">m.rabie@unsw.edu.au</a></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

2. Course Details

**Units of Credit (UoC)** 6

**Course Description**

This is a course in metaphysics and epistemology. Traditionally, these are regarded as probably the two most central areas of philosophy. (The first half of the course will be on metaphysics; the second half will be on epistemology.) Philosophy will not have every answer to every question about the nature of reality. But there are some distinctively philosophical questions, to which there are distinctively philosophical answers. And one of the marks of their being philosophical is their being subject to a particular kind of questioning.

**Metaphysics** is the philosophical study of reality. We will focus on such traditional metaphysical topics as these: what it is to be a person; what it is to have a free will (if indeed anyone ever does); whether there is, or even could be, a supremely good and knowing and powerful god, given the apparent suffering in the world; whether there is any meaning to human life; whether there is any harm in death as such; and what makes two different individual things able to be examples of one kind of thing.

**Epistemology** is the philosophical study of knowledge and conceptually related phenomena. We will focus on such traditional epistemological topics as these: what it is for a thought or claim to be true; what it is for a thought or claim to be rationally well supported; what it is for a thought or claim to be knowledge; what it is to have knowledge via the senses; what it is to have knowledge purely via reason; and whether it might actually be impossible for us ever to have any knowledge or rational support at all.

**Learning outcomes**

1. Students will gain an awareness of some historically and philosophically important ideas and ways of thinking.
2. Students will gain an increased ability to engage critically, rigorously, and imaginatively with those ideas and those ways of thinking.
3. Course Schedule

To view course timetable, please visit: [http://www.timetable.unsw.edu.au/](http://www.timetable.unsw.edu.au/)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Lecture topic</th>
<th>Tutorial topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1 (27 July)| Persons       | n/a            | RKP, ch. 1 &lt;see below for what ‘RKP’ denotes&gt;  
M&E, chs. 23, 24, 25, 26 &lt;see below for what ‘M&E’ denotes&gt; |
| 2 (3 August)| Free will     | Persons, free will | RKP, ch. 2  
M&E, 29, 30, 32 |
| 3 (10 August)| God and evil | God and evil  | RKP, ch. 3  
M&E, ch. 22  
On Moodle: Hume, Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion, part X; Rowe, ‘The problem of evil and some varieties of atheism’ |
| 4 (17 August)| Life’s meaning | Life’s meaning | RKP, ch. 4:  
M&E, ch. 1  
On Moodle: Nozick, Anarchy, State, and Utopia, pp. 42–5; Taylor, Good and Evil, ch. 18 |
| 5 (24 August)| Death’s harm  | Death’s harm   | RKP, ch. 5  
M&E, chs. 33, 34, 35, 36 |
| 6 (31 August)| Properties   | Properties     | RKP, ch. 6  
M&E, chs. 13, 14 |
| 7 (7 September)| Truth       | Truth          | RKP, ch. 7  
M&E, chs. 15, 16, 17 |
| 8 (14 September)| Well supported views | Well supported views | RKP, ch. 8  
M&E, chs. 38, 39, 66 |
| 9 (21 September)| Knowledge     | Knowledge      | RKP, ch. 9  
M&E, chs. 37, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44 |
| 10 (5 October)| Observational knowledge | Observational knowledge | RKP, ch. 10  
M&E, chs. 45, 8, 47, 11 |
| 11 (12 October)| Pure reason  | Pure reason    | RKP, ch. 11  
M&E, chs. 52, 53, 54 |
| 12 (19 October)| Sceptical doubts | Sceptical doubts | RKP, ch. 12  
M&E, chs 46, 48, 62, 63 |
| 13 (26 October)| n/a          | [revision]     | n/a |

4. Course Resources

Textbook Details

[referred to in section 3 above as RKP]*

[referred to in section 3 above as M&E]
5. Course Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Task</th>
<th>Length</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Learning Outcomes Assessed</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Submitted in Moodle? (Yes/ No)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Essay</td>
<td>2500 words</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>1, 2</td>
<td>30 August (Tuesday of week 6)</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam*</td>
<td>2 hours</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>1, 2</td>
<td>UNSW exam period</td>
<td>no</td>
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</table>

* This is the final assessment task for attendance purposes.

The essay will be on topics from meetings 1 through 5. The exam will be on topics from meetings 6 through 12.

Please Note: The UNSW Policy on Class Attendance and Absence states the following:

Students are expected to be regular and punctual in attendance at all classes in the courses in which they are enrolled. All applications for exemption from attendance at classes of any kind must be made in writing to the Course Authority.

It is the student’s responsibility to read the course outline before the course commences to ensure that they are familiar with any specific attendance requirements for that course.

If students attend less than 80% of their possible classes they may be refused final assessment.

Students must attend 80% of lectures (10 of the 12 lecture). Students must attend 80% of tutorials (10 of the 12 tutorials).

The UNSW Policy on Class Attendance and Absence can be viewed at: [https://student.unsw.edu.au/attendance](https://student.unsw.edu.au/attendance)

The Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences guidelines on attendance can be viewed at: [https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/current-students/academic-information/protocols-guidelines/](https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/current-students/academic-information/protocols-guidelines/)

Formal Examination

This course has a formal examination which will be scheduled in the formal examination period from 4-22 November 2016. Students are expected to give their studies priority and this includes making themselves available for the entire examination period. Travel
commitments made prior to the publication of the final examination timetable are not a valid reason for alternate assessment.

For information about examination dates, location and procedures at UNSW, visit: https://my.unsw.edu.au/student/academiclife/assessment/examinations/examinations.html

Grades

All results are reviewed at the end of each semester and may be adjusted to ensure equitable marking across the School.

The proportion of marks lying in each grading range is determined not by any formula or quota system, but by the way that students respond to assessment tasks and how well they meet the objectives of the course. Nevertheless, since higher grades imply performance that is well above average, the number of distinctions and high distinctions awarded in a typical course is relatively small. At the other extreme, on average 6.1% of students do not meet minimum standards and a little more (8.6%) in first year courses. For more information on the grading categories see: https://my.unsw.edu.au/student/academiclife/assessment/GuideToUNSWGrades.html

Submission of Assessment Tasks

Assignments must be submitted electronically through Moodle (http://moodle.telt.unsw.edu.au/). You must use your zID login to submit your assignments in Moodle.

Refer to the section “Course Assessment” for details of assessment tasks that are to be submitted via Moodle.

** Please note the deadline to submit an assignment electronically is 4:00 pm on the due date of the assignment.

When you submit your assignment electronically, you agree that:

I have followed the Student Code of Conduct. I certify that I have read and understand the University requirements in respect of student academic misconduct outlined in the Student Code of Conduct and the Student Misconduct Procedures. I declare that this assessment item is my own work, except where acknowledged, and has not been submitted for academic credit previously in whole or in part.

I acknowledge that the assessor of this item may, for assessment purposes:

- provide a copy to another staff member of the University
- communicate a copy of this assessment item to a plagiarism checking service (such as Turnitin) which may retain a copy of the assessment item on its database for the purpose of future plagiarism checking.

You are required to put your name (as it appears in University records) and UNSW Student ID on every page of your assignments.

If you encounter a problem when attempting to submit your assignment through Moodle/Turnitin, please telephone External Support on 9385 3331 or email them on externalsupport@unsw.edu.au. Support hours are 8:00am – 10:00pm on weekdays and 9:00am – 5:00pm on weekends (365 days a year).
If you are unable to submit your assignment due to a fault with Turnitin you may apply for an extension, but you must retain your ticket number from External Support (along with any other relevant documents) to include as evidence to support your extension application. If you email External Support you will automatically receive a ticket number, but if you telephone you will need to specifically ask for one. Turnitin also provides updates on its system status on Twitter.

For information on how to submit assignments online via Moodle: https://student.unsw.edu.au/how-submit-assignment-moodle

Late Submission of Assignments

Students are responsible for the submission of assessment tasks by the required dates and times. Depending of the extent of delay in the submission of an assessment task past the due date and time, one of the following late penalties will apply unless special consideration or a blanket extension due to a technical outage is granted. For the purpose of late penalty calculation, a ‘day’ is deemed to be each 24-hour period (or part thereof) past the stipulated deadline for submission.

- **Work submitted less than 10 days after the stipulated deadline** is subject to a deduction of 5% of the total awardable mark from the mark that would have been achieved if not for the penalty for every day past the stipulated deadline for submission. That is, a student who submits an assignment with a stipulated deadline of 4:00pm on 13 May 2016 at 4:10pm on 14 May 2016 will incur a deduction of 10%.

  **Task with a non-percentage mark**

  If the task is marked out of 25, then late submission will attract a penalty of a deduction of 1.25 from the mark awarded to the student for every 24-hour period (or part thereof) past the stipulated deadline.

  Example: A student submits an essay 48 hours and 10 minutes after the stipulated deadline. The total possible mark for the essay is 25. The essay receives a mark of 17. The student's mark is therefore 17 – [25 (0.05 x 3)] = 13.25.

  **Task with a percentage mark**

  If the task is marked out of 100%, then late submission will attract a penalty of a deduction of 5% from the mark awarded to the student for every 24-hour period (or part thereof) past the stipulated deadline.

  Example: A student submits an essay 48 hours and 10 minutes after the stipulated deadline. The essay is marked out of 100%. The essay receives a mark of 68. The student’s mark is therefore 68 – 15 = 53

- **Work submitted 10 to 19 days after the stipulated deadline** will be assessed and feedback provided but a mark of zero will be recorded. If the work would have received a pass mark but for the lateness and the work is a compulsory course component (hurdle requirement), a student will be deemed to have met that requirement;

- **Work submitted 20 or more days after the stipulated deadline** will not be accepted for assessment and will receive no feedback, mark or grade. If the assessment task is a compulsory component of the course a student will receive an Unsatisfactory Fail (UF) grade as a result of unsatisfactory performance in essential component of the course.

### 6. Learning and Teaching Rationale and Strategies
I am required to allocate two hours each week to lectures. Even so, I will treat these as a chance to introduce you to what is usually called the Socratic method. (And the tutorials will also apply that method.) This means that the emphasis will not simply be on my presenting what I regard as the correct answers to the philosophical questions being discussed, for example. Each meeting will be conducted as a guided but shared inquiry. You can think of it as a seminar, in which I will lead the discussion. I will begin each meeting by presenting some of the main issues, claims, and concepts that are to be found in the reading for that week. I will then pose questions for discussion. These are intended to encourage you to reflect critically and imaginatively upon those issues, claims, and concepts. I will encourage you to follow through the implications and subtleties of their comments and suggestions. You will be encouraged to interact with your fellow students in those ways, too. What is sought is an atmosphere of inquiry — active learning.

This is sought because, for most students, it is a particularly effective way to gain — and to retain — a deeper sense of what philosophical thinking involves. Not coincidentally, it also reflects the way in which philosophy is actually conducted among professional philosophers. Philosophy is a discipline within which there is much critical debate. This can be a way of showing respect for someone’s ideas. It can also be about what might appear to be the simplest aspects of an issue. For it is all too easy to take for granted — as being quite clear and simple — much that is actually not so clear or simple. A great deal of philosophical discussion thus tries to clarify questions, before offering and assessing answers to them. In this class we will aim to become better at posing, and at answering, some fundamental epistemological questions. Skills of understanding, analysing, reasoning, and imagining will be called upon — and strengthened, hopefully.

I will not ‘spoon-feed’ you, such as by dictating lectures, or by distributing notes or posting web material, for you merely to absorb. This is a course in which you will have a marked opportunity to think — and to think for yourself. As I said, lectures will be interactive, in that I will give you plenty of opportunity to explore ideas as they arise — stopping me to gain clarity about what I have said, to question the truth of what I have said, etc. This opportunity to improve your ability to think well and philosophically will also place more responsibility upon you to do so. It will be up to you to pay attention, to be ready for potentially surprising changes of direction in discussion (always knowing that I will not allow these to divert us too far from the day’s main questions), and to note important points without my always having to say which are important points.

You are never required to agree with what you read for the course. But if you do disagree with it, you should think of good reasons for why, in your view, it is mistaken.

7. Extension of Time for Submission of Assessment Tasks

The Arts and Social Sciences Extension Guidelines apply to all assessed tasks regardless of whether or not a grade is awarded, except the following:

1. any form of test/examination/assessed activity undertaken during regular class contact hours
2. any task specifically identified by the Course Authority (the academic in charge of the course) in the Course Outline or Learning Management System (LMS), for example, Moodle, as not available for extension requests.

A student who missed an assessment activity held within class contact hours should apply for Special Consideration via myUNSW.
A student who wishes to seek extension for submission of assessment tasks that are not held within class contact hours for courses offered by the School of Humanities and Languages must apply for Special Consideration via myUNSW.

The Arts and Social Sciences Extension Guidelines state the following:

- A request for an extension should be submitted before the due time/date for the assessment task.
- The Course Authority should respond to the request within two working days of the request.
- If a student is granted an extension, failure to comply will result in a penalty. The penalty will be invoked one minute past the approved extension time. See section “Late Submission of Assignments” for penalties of late submission.

8. Attendance

The UNSW Policy on Class Attendance and Absence can be viewed at: https://student.unsw.edu.au/attendance

From time to time, the Course Authority may vary the attendance requirements of a course. It is the students’ responsibility to ensure that they are familiar with the specific attendance requirements stipulated in the course outline for each course in which they are enrolled.

8.1 Attendance

Students are expected to be regular and punctual in attendance at all classes in the courses in which they are enrolled. Students who seek to be excused from attendance [or for absence] must apply to the Course Authority in writing. In such situations, the following rules relating to attendances and absences apply.

In the case of illness or of absence for some other unavoidable cause students may be excused for non-attendance at classes for a period of not more than one month (i.e., 33%) or, on the recommendation of the Dean of the appropriate faculty, for a longer period.

8.2 Absence from classes

A student who attends less than eighty per cent of the classes within a course may be refused final assessment.

Explanations of absences from classes or requests for permission to be absent from forthcoming classes should be addressed to the Course Authority in writing and, where applicable, should be accompanied by appropriate documentation (e.g. medical certificate). After submitting appropriate supporting documentation to the Course Authority to explain his/her absence, a student may be required to undertake supplementary class(s) or task(s) as prescribed by the Course Authority. If examinations or other forms of assessment have been missed, then the student should apply for Special Consideration.

Students who falsify their attendance or falsify attendance on behalf of another student will be dealt with under the Student Misconduct Policy.

9. Class Clash

Students who are enrolled in an Arts and Social Sciences program (single or dual) and have an unavoidable timetable clash can apply for permissible timetable clash by completing an
online application form. Students must meet the rules and conditions in order to apply for permissible clash. The rules and conditions can be accessed online in full at: https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/media/FASSFile/Permissible_Clash_Rules.pdf

For students who are enrolled in a non-Arts and Social Sciences program, they must seek advice from their home faculty on permissible clash approval.

10. Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Plagiarism is presenting someone else’s thoughts or work as your own. It can take many forms, from not having appropriate academic referencing to deliberate cheating.

In many cases plagiarism is the result of inexperience about academic conventions. The University has resources and information to assist you to avoid plagiarism.

The Learning Centre assists students with understanding academic integrity and how to not plagiarise. Information is available on their website: https://student.unsw.edu.au/plagiarism/. They also hold workshops and can help students one-on-one.

If plagiarism is found in your work when you are in first year, your lecturer will offer you assistance to improve your academic skills. They may ask you to look at some online resources, attend the Learning Centre, or sometimes resubmit your work with the problem fixed. However, more serious instances in first year, such as stealing another student’s work or paying someone to do your work, may be investigated under the Student Misconduct Procedures.

Repeated plagiarism (even in first year), plagiarism after first year, or serious instances, may also be investigated under the Student Misconduct Procedures. The penalties under the procedures can include a reduction in marks, failing a course or for the most serious matters (like plagiarism in an Honours thesis) or even suspension from the university. The Student Misconduct Procedures are available here: http://www.gs.unsw.edu.au/policy/documents/studentmisconductprocedures.pdf

11. Course Evaluation and Development

Courses are periodically reviewed and students’ feedback is used to improve them. Feedback is gathered using various means including UNSW's Course and Teaching Evaluation and Improvement (CATEI) process.

12. Student Support

The Learning Centre is available for individual consultation and workshops on academic skills. Find out more by visiting the Centre’s website at: http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au

13. Grievances
All students should be treated fairly in the course of their studies at UNSW. Students who feel they have not been dealt with fairly should, in the first instance, attempt to resolve any issues with their tutor or the course convenors.

If such an approach fails to resolve the matter, the School of Humanities and Languages has an academic member of staff who acts as a Grievance Officer for the School. This staff member is identified on the notice board in the School of Humanities and languages. Further information about UNSW grievance procedures is available at https://student.unsw.edu.au/guide

14. Other Information

myUNSW

myUNSW is the online access point for UNSW services and information, integrating online services for applicants, commencing and current students and UNSW staff. To visit myUNSW please visit either of the below links:

https://my.unsw.edu.au

OHS

UNSW's Occupational Health and Safety Policy requires each person to work safely and responsibly, in order to avoid personal injury and to protect the safety of others. For all matters relating to Occupational Health, Safety and environment, see http://www.ohs.unsw.edu.au/

Special Consideration

In cases where illness or other circumstances produce repeated or sustained absence, students should apply for Special Consideration as soon as possible.

The application must be made via Online Services in myUNSW. Log into myUNSW and go to My Student Profile tab > My Student Services channel > Online Services > Special Consideration.

Applications on the grounds of illness must be filled in by a medical practitioner. Further information is available at:

https://student.unsw.edu.au/guide

Student Equity and Disabilities Unit

Students who have a disability that requires some adjustment in their learning and teaching environment are encouraged to discuss their study needs with the course convener prior to or at the commencement of the course, or with the Student Equity Officers (Disability) in the Student Equity and Disabilities Unit (9385 4734). Information for students with disabilities is available at: https://student.unsw.edu.au/disability

Issues that can be discussed may include access to materials, signers or note-takers, the provision of services and additional examination and assessment arrangements. Early notification is essential to enable any necessary adjustments to be made.