

## Syllabus

PHL-294: Life's Big Questions: Metaphysics  
Nathan Greeley, M.A.



## Course Description

Students will be introduced to the philosophical field of metaphysics and will examine issues addressed by metaphysicians. Students will explain which answers to metaphysical questions are compatible with a Christian worldview.

**Credit Hours:** 2

## Course Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, you should be able to:

1. Describe the nature and purpose of metaphysics by studying common topics associated with the discipline of metaphysics.
2. Discuss philosophers' typical responses to metaphysical questions.
3. Explain which metaphysical positions are rooted in Christian beliefs.
4. Defend one's metaphysical positions.

## Course Goals

1. Every perspective on the world is inseparable from metaphysical commitments. One of the chief aims of this course will be to enable students to understand this intimate relationship between metaphysics and

- worldview. Students will also see that understanding metaphysics is eminently practical: to know what we should do or how we should do something, we must have some idea of what things are and what is real.
2. Students after having taken the class will have a better understanding of the philosophical dimension of the Christian faith and be able to see how Christianity bears on certain philosophical issues.

## Course Textbook

Craig, W.L. and Moreland, J.P. (2003). *Philosophical Foundations for a Christian Worldview*. Downer's Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press.

## Grading Scale

Grade	Quality Points Per Credit	Percentage	Score
<b>A</b>	4.0 (Superior)	95% - 100%	428-450
<b>A-</b>	3.7	92% - 94.9%	414-427
<b>B+</b>	3.3	89% - 91.9%	401-413
<b>B</b>	3.0 (Above Average)	85% - 88.9%	383-400
<b>B-</b>	2.7	82% - 84.9%	369-382
<b>C+</b>	2.3	79% - 81.9%	356-368
<b>C</b>	2.0 (Average)	75% - 78.9%	338-355
<b>C-</b>	1.7	72% - 74.9%	324-337
<b>D+</b>	1.3	69% - 71.9%	309-323
<b>D</b>	1.0 (Passing)	65% - 68.9%	294-308
<b>F</b>	.0	0% - 64.9%	0-293

## Grading Policies

Please refer to the IWU catalog located on the portal for current grading policies.

# Letter Grade Equivalencies

Grade	Description of Work
<b>A</b>	Clearly stands out as excellent performance. Has unusually sharp insights into material and initiates thoughtful questions. Sees many sides of an issue. Articulates well and writes logically and clearly. Integrates ideas previously learned from this and other disciplines. Anticipates next steps in progression of ideas. Example "A" work should be of such nature that it could be put on reserve for all cohort members to review and emulate. The "A" cohort member is, in fact, an example for others to follow.
<b>B</b>	Demonstrates a solid comprehension of the subject matter and always accomplishes all course requirements. Serves as an active participant and listener. Communicates orally and in writing at an acceptable level for the degree program. Work shows intuition and creativity. Example "B" work indicates good quality of performance and is given in recognition for solid work; a "B" should be considered a good grade and awarded to those who submit assignments of quality less than the exemplary work described above.
<b>C</b>	Quality and quantity of work in and out of class is average. Has marginal comprehension, communication skills, or initiative. Requirements of the assignments are addressed at least minimally.
<b>D</b>	Quality and quantity of work is below average. Has minimal comprehension, communication skills, or initiative. Requirements of the assignments are addressed at below acceptable levels.
<b>F</b>	Quality and quantity of work is unacceptable and does not qualify the student to progress to a more advanced level of work.

## Workshop One Outline

Workshop One	Due Dates	Estimated Time	Points
1.1 Quiz: Different Theories of Truth	Due by the end of the workshop.	2:30 hours	10
1.2 Discussion: The Perils of Post-modernism	Your initial post is due by the end of the fourth day of the workshop. Respond to at least two of your classmates' postings, as well as all follow-up instructor questions directed to you. Post on three different days	4 hours	30

	during the workshop. Responses need to be completed by the end of the workshop.		
1.3 Discussion: Faith and Metaphysics	Your initial post is due by the end of the fourth day of the workshop. Respond to at least two of your classmates' postings, as well as all follow-up instructor questions directed to you. Post on three different days during the workshop. Responses need to be completed by the end of the workshop.	3:30 hours	25
1.4 Quiz: Existence, Identity, and Reductionism	Due by the end of the workshop.	3:30 hours	15
1.5 Quiz: Properties and Substances	Due by the end of the workshop.	3:30 hours	15
<b>Totals</b>		<b>17 hours*</b>	<b>95</b>

## Workshop Two Outline

Workshop Two	Due Dates	Estimated Time	Points
2.1 Discussion: Arguments for Substance Dualism	Post your initial response by the end of the fourth day of the workshop and the required responses by the end of the workshop	4 hours	30
2.2 Discussion: Dualism and Theism	Post your initial response by the end of the fourth day of the workshop and required responses by the end of the workshop.	3:30 hours	25
2.3 Assignment: Free Will	Due by the end of the workshop.	4 hours	30
2.4 Quiz: Personal Identity	Due by the end of the workshop.	3:30 hours	15
2.5 Assignment: The Human Person	Due by the end of the workshop.	3 hours	30
<b>Totals</b>		<b>18 hours*</b>	<b>130</b>

# Workshop Three Outline

Workshop Three	Due Dates	Estimated Time	Points
3.1 Assignment: Does God Exist?	Due by the end of the workshop.	3 hours	15
3.2 Discussion: The Cosmological Argument	Your initial post is due by the end of the fourth day of the workshop. Respond to at least two of your classmates' postings, as well as all follow-up instructor questions directed to you. Post on three different days during the workshop. Responses need to be completed by the end of the workshop.	4 hours	30
3.3 Discussion: Other Theistic Arguments	Your initial post is due by the end of the fourth day of the workshop. Respond to at least two of your classmates' postings, as well as all follow-up instructor questions directed to you. Post on three different days during the workshop. Responses need to be completed by the end of the workshop.	4 hours	30
3.4 Quiz: The Coherence of Theism I	Due by the end of the workshop.	3:30 hours	15
3.5 Quiz: The Coherence of Theism II	Due by the end of the workshop.	3:30 hours	15
<b>Totals</b>		<b>18 hours*</b>	<b>105</b>

# Workshop Four Outline

Workshop Four	Due Dates	Estimated Time	Points
4.1 Discussion: Creation, Providence, and Miracles	Your initial post is due by the end of the fourth day of the workshop. Respond to at least two of your classmates' postings, as well as all follow-up instructor questions directed to you. Post on three different days during the workshop. Responses need to be completed by the end of the workshop.	4 hours	30

4.2 Quiz: The Trinity	Due by the end of the workshop.	3:30 hours	15
4.3 Quiz: The Incarnation	Due by the end of the workshop.	3:30 hours	15
4.4 Assignment: Final Paper	Due by the end of the workshop.	7 hours	60
<b>Totals</b>		<b>18 hours*</b>	<b>120</b>

\*These timings are based on estimations of average times to complete each assignment. Actual assignment completion times will vary.

## Course Development Resources

Carroll, J., and Markosian, N. eds. (2010). *An Introduction to Metaphysics*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Conee, E., and Sider, T. (2007). *Riddles of Existence: A Guided Tour of Metaphysics*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press

Cowan, S., and Spiegel, J. (2009). *The Love of Wisdom: A Christian Introduction to Philosophy*. Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing.

DeWeese, G. (2011). *Doing Philosophy as a Christian*. Downer's Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press.

Geisler, N. and Feinberg, P. (1987). *Introduction to Philosophy: A Christian Perspective*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing.

Grondin, J. (2012). *An Introduction to Metaphysics: From Parmenides to Levinas*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.

Hasker, W. (1983). *Metaphysics: Constructing a World View*. Downer's Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press.

Loux, M. (2006). *Metaphysics: A Contemporary Introduction*. 3rd. ed. New York: Routledge.

Loux, M., and D. Zimmerman, eds. (2005). *The Oxford Handbook of Metaphysics*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Lovejoy, A. (1976). *The Great Chain of Being: A Study of the History of an Idea*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Lowe, E. (2002). *A Survey of Metaphysics*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Owens, J. (1985) *An Elementary Christian Metaphysics*. South Bend, IN: University of Notre Dame Press.

Pabst, A. (2012). *Metaphysics: The Creation of Hierarchy*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing.

Sider, T., Hawthorne, J. and Zimmerman, D. eds. (2007). *Contemporary Debates in Metaphysics*. Oxford: Wiley-

Blackwell. van Inwagen, P. (2008). *Metaphysics*, 3rd. ed. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

## Expectations, Policies, and Important Student Information

School/Division	Link
DeVoe School of Business Division of Liberal Arts School of Services and Leadership	<a href="#">View School/Division Expectations, Policies, and Student Information</a>
School of Educational Leadership	<a href="#">View School/Division Expectations, Policies, and Student Information</a>
Wesley Seminary @ IWU	<a href="#">View School/Division Expectations, Policies, and Student Information</a>
Nursing - Undergraduate	<a href="#">View School/Division Expectations, Policies, and Student Information</a>
Nursing - Graduate	<a href="#">View School/Division Expectations, Policies, and Student Information</a>