

## Vesalius College

### Course description

**Course title:** Introduction to Philosophy

**Course code:** PHL 101 / PHL 101E

**Teacher responsible:** Ludo Peferoen

**Course description:**

The course offers an introduction to the nature of philosophy. Philosophy is presented as both essentially different from science and from religion. In the two first parts, different kinds of “ethics of belief” are discussed, the skeptical challenge is introduced, and the method of science is critically examined. In the third part the metaphysical question of freedom is discussed, and in the fourth part the mind-body problem. In the fifth and concluding part, the question of the meaning of life is examined.

**Course objectives:**

The course is meant to be a discussion course, based on a selection of texts, mostly by contemporary philosophers. These texts need to be read 1) very carefully and 2) before they are being discussed in class. The students should be able to point out problems with their reading and, along with the teacher, should contribute to construct a correct account of an author’s position and arguments. In due course they should develop a feeling for the skeptical conclusion that humans don’t know overly much about the things that really matter. They should be able to render the different positions and arguments clearly, and to provide a cogent discussion of them.

**Grade weighting scheme:**

One third of the grade on each of the two papers assigned and one third on the final exam.

**Used course material (handbooks, readers, readings, newspapers, magazines) and references:**

Klemke, E.D., e.a., *Philosophy, Contemporary Perspectives on Perennial Issues*.