

161-111 Great Ideas in Philosophy

Credit Points:	12.500
Level:	Undergraduate
Dates & Locations:	2008, This subject commences in the following study period/s: Semester 2, - Taught on campus. *
Time Commitment:	Contact Hours: Thirty-five contact hours per semester: two 1-hour lectures per week for the whole semester and a 1-hour tutorial per week beginning the second week of semester Total Time Commitment: *
Prerequisites:	*
Corequisites:	*
Recommended Background Knowledge:	*
Non Allowed Subjects:	*
Core Participation Requirements:	*
Coordinator:	Dr Douglas Adeney
Subject Overview:	This subject introduces and examines several famous ideas in Western philosophy, from various periods and traditions but with important recurring concerns including the scope of human reason, the case for religious belief, the nature of morality, and the freedom of the will. These ideas will include: (1) Plato's division of the human soul into three parts (Reason, Spirit and Appetite), and the parallel he draws with the structure of his ideal society; (2) St Thomas Aquinas' Five Ways of proving the existence of God; (3) Pascal's Wager, which recommends belief in God not as supported by any proof or evidence, but as a very wise gamble; (4) David Hume's view that 'reason is, and ought only to be, the slave of the passions', and that it is 'not contrary to reason to prefer the destruction of the whole world to the scratching of my finger'; (5) A.J. Ayer's version of the 'emotive theory of ethics', which holds that moral judgements 'have no objective validity', but are 'pure expressions of feeling'; (6) Jean-Paul Sartre's 'existentialist' view that the non-existence of God gives us free will, which warrants 'anguish' because it carries our 'total and deep responsibility' for our lives and for those of everyone else; (7) the view of the 'compatibilists' that genuine freedom of the will is quite compatible with strict determinism, which sees all events as conforming to fundamental regularities or laws of nature; (8) Hume's claim that our confidence in the continuing operation of these regularities requires rational justification, which may not be easy to find.
Assessment:	Best 4 (of 8) 200-word tutorial assignments 20%, an essay of 1200 words 30% (due mid-semester), and a 2-hour written examination (not open-book) 50% (due at the end of semester).
Prescribed Texts:	Prescribed Texts:A subject reader will be available.
Breadth Options:	This subject potentially can be taken as a breadth subject component for the following courses: # Bachelor of Biomedicine # Bachelor of Commerce # Bachelor of Environments # Bachelor of Music # Bachelor of Science # Bachelor of Engineering

	You should visit learn more about breadth subjects (http://breadth.unimelb.edu.au/breadth/info/index.html) and read the breadth requirements for your degree, and should discuss your choice with your student adviser, before deciding on your subjects.
Fees Information:	Subject EFTSL, Level, Discipline & Census Date, http://enrolment.unimelb.edu.au/fees
Generic Skills:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # be able to recognise philosophically important similarities and differences between views and issues arising in different texts and contexts; # be able to apply the analytical skills developed in this subject to other philosophical and non-philosophical studies; # be able to apply the critical skills developed in this subject to other philosophical and non-philosophical studies.
Related Course(s):	Bachelor of Arts Diploma in Arts (Philosophy) Diploma in Arts (Philosophy) Graduate Certificate in Arts (Philosophy) Graduate Diploma in Arts (Philosophy) Graduate Diploma in Arts (Philosophy and Social Theory)