

Methods and Problems of Philosophy

Prof. Akeel Bilgrami (Office Hour: By appointment only).

This course is intended as an Introduction to Philosophy, covering a range of fundamental topics, with readings both historical and contemporary. Though it is expected that Freshmen and Sophomores will be the majority of students, more senior students are welcome to enroll or attend. It is primarily a lecture course, but student participation is strongly encouraged and most welcome. Roughly, for every three lectures, there will be one class devoted to a revision class session with the Teaching Assistant. These sessions are likely to be distributed unevenly through the semester.

Requirements: A mid-term and a final. Though these will not be take-home exams, questions for both exams will be given to the class a week before the exams.

Here is a breakdown of topics and readings.

1. Are Values Objective?

Readings: Sartre, Williams, Hare, Moore.

2. Freedom of the Will

Readings: Campbell, Holbach, Hume, Strawson.

3. Scepticism

Readings: Descartes, Hume, Putnam.

4. Political Liberty and Political Power

Readings: Mill, Berlin, Lukes

5. The Mind/Body Problem

Readings: Armstrong, Nagel, Searle, Davidson

