



**BRISBANE COLLEGE OF THEOLOGY  
UNIT OUTLINE**

**BACHELOR OF THEOLOGY**

UNIT TITLE	INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY
UNIT CODE	H51060
UNIT STATUS	Core
HOST FIELD	H
PREREQUISITE/S	Nil
INCOMPATIBLES	Nil
CREDIT POINTS	10cp
REQUIREMENTS	3 hours per week contact and 7 hours per week study over a 13-week semester.
FREQUENCY OF OFFERING	Annually – Semester 2
PREPARED BY	Dr Richard Colledge
UNIT COORDINATOR	Dr Richard Colledge
TEACHING STAFF	Dr Richard Colledge, Dr Greg Moses
DATE PREPARED	1 September 2007

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**Rationale**

Since the beginning of Christian thought, theologians have been in constant dialogue with the western philosophical tradition, this mutually enriching and often passionate exchange continuing to the present day. This unit provides theology students with a broad but rigorous problem-centred and issues-based introduction to philosophy, focusing particularly on issues of crucial relevance to theology.

**Relation to program**

As a core unit in the Bachelor of Theology program, this unit provides students with an indispensable introduction to some of the broader philosophical issues underlying Christian theological reflection. However, it also provides students with a thorough grounding in the methodology of philosophical thought in its own right, and an introduction to some of its key issues, thereby providing a solid platform for further studies in philosophy and philosophical theology in Field H elective units.

## Aims

The unit aims to provide students with a sound foundational understanding of the content and methodology of philosophy, along with an appreciation of the importance of philosophy to the study of theology.

Learning Outcomes	
At the end of this unit the student should be able to:	
1.	Outline the major debates within a range of topics in the discipline of philosophy, and explain how these issues are of relevance to theology;
2.	Analyse various attested positions taken within these debates;
3.	Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of such positions, in the context of developing a coherent interim position of the student's own concerning such issues;
4.	Identify some key markers of logically valid and invalid argumentation, and apply these skills to the recognition of formal and informal fallacious reasoning.

## Content

- 1 *Introductory philosophy of mind*: a survey of debates concerning the nature of, and relationship between, human mind, soul and body; and the characteristics of 'mind' in general
- 2 *Free will vs determinism*: a survey of the major positions: determinism, libertarianism and compatibilism; and some recent European philosophies of factual freedom
- 3 *Introductory philosophy of gender*: debates concerning the nature of, and relationship between, sex, gender and culture
- 4 *Introductory philosophy of perception*: the notion of an 'external world', the problem of epistemological scepticism in modernity, and the response of phenomenological realism
- 5 *Introductory epistemology*: a broad survey of debates concerning the possibility and nature of knowledge and truth, and an overview of the contemporary philosophical hermeneutics movement concerning the modes of meaning construction
- 6 *Introductory logic*: a survey of the function, limitations and vocabulary of logic; some important kinds of informal fallacy; basic propositional calculus
- 7 *Introductory Ethics*: a survey of the fields of ethics: meta-, normative and applied ethics; the theory and implications of traditional models of normative ethics
- 8 *Meaning in/of life*: theories of meaning and purpose in/of life; philosophical reflections on death; rational analyses of various claims concerning life beyond death
- 9 *Introductory philosophy of religion*: the relationship between philosophy and theology; arguments for and against the existence of God; various models of God-world-humanity

## Organization and Teaching Strategies

Each week, a 2 hour (2x 50 min) lecture is given that deals with a particular issue in philosophy and which fleshes out some of the more important debates involved. During the third tutorial hour, the lecturer guides student discussion of set readings dealing with the previous week's topic. In addition to the 3-hour face-to-face mode, students are encouraged to make use of electronic means of communication with the lecturer (and/or other students) concerning the weekly readings and early drafts of assigned work.

## Assessment

	Type of assessment	No of words	Weighting %	Due date	Learning Outcomes covered
1	“Journal” style overviews and analytic responses to five of the set weekly readings	2500 max	40%	Week 10	1,2
2	Logic examination	1000	20%	Week 9	4
3	Research Essay	2500 max	40%	End-semester	1,2,3,4

### Notes on Assessment

Item 1 Will develop the student’s knowledge of philosophical concepts, the ability to utilize the techniques of philosophy through independent work and thought, and the ability to engage in reflective application of philosophical concepts to personal situations.

Item 2 Will develop the student’s ability to apply the disciplines of logical thinking and the ability to define and analyse problems.

Item 3 Will develop the student’s understanding of the philosophical foundations of the Christian tradition by applying this understanding to the interpretation of emerging issues and the personal dilemmas which people face.

### Bibliography

#### Textbooks

Required weekly reading list, such as the following:

- Aristotle. “*Nicomachean Ethics*”, Bk 2, v-ix in *Aristotle: Selected Works*. Ed Hippocrates G Apostle & Lloyd P Gerson; Grinnell, Iowa: Peripatetic Press, 1991, 454-60.
- Ayer, AJ. “The Argument from Illusion” in *Introduction to Philosophy*. Ed John Perry & Michael Bratman; Oxford: OUP, 1999, 217-220.
- Barbour, Ian. *Myths, Models and Paradigms*. London: SCM, 1974, 155-70.
- Hick, John. *Philosophy of Religion*. Eaglewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1990, 39-55.
- Kant, Immanuel. Extracts from “The Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals” in *Ethics*. Ed Peter Singer; Oxford: OUP, 1994, 274-79.
- Lloyd, Genevieve. “Rationality” in *A Companion to Feminist Philosophy*. Ed Alison Jaggar & Iris Marion Young; Oxford: Blackwell, 1998, 165-72.
- Macquarrie, John. *In Search of Humanity*. New York: Crossroad, 1995, 10-24; 59-71; 234-42.
- Nagel, Thomas. *What Does It All Mean?* Oxford: OUP, 1987, 8-26.
- \_\_\_\_\_. “The Absurd” in *Introduction to Philosophy*. Ed John Perry & Michael Bratman; Oxford: OUP, 1999, 20-27.
- Perry, John. “On the Study of Philosophy” in *Introduction to Philosophy*. Ed John Perry & Michael Bratman; Oxford: OUP, 1999, 1-6.
- \_\_\_\_\_. “A Dialogue on Personal Identity and Immortality” in *Introduction to Philosophy*. Ed John Perry & Michael Bratman; Oxford: OUP, 1999, 396-416.
- Smart, JJ. Extracts from “An Outline of a System of Utilitarian Ethics” in *Ethics*. Ed Peter Singer; Oxford: OUP, 1994, 317-19.

#### Recommended

- Mitchell, H. *Roots of Wisdom*. Belmont CA: Wadsworth, 2002.
- Nagel, T. *What Does it All Mean? A Very Short Introduction to Philosophy*. Oxford: OUP, 1987.
- Macquarrie, J. *In Search of Humanity*. New York: Crossroad, 1995.
- Warburton, N. *Philosophy: The Basics*. London: Routledge, 1996.

## References – Books

- Cohen, M. *101 Philosophy Problems: A Fun Introduction to Philosophy*. London: Routledge, 2002.
- Falzon, C. *Philosophy Goes to the Movies: An Introduction to Philosophy*. London: Routledge, 2002.
- Lawless, Andrew. *Plato's Sun: An Introduction to Philosophy*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005.
- Morris, T. *Philosophy for Dummies*. Foster City CA: IDG Books, 1999.
- Morton, A. *Philosophy in Practice: An Introduction to the Main Questions*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1996.
- Phillips, DZ. *Introducing Philosophy: The Challenge of Scepticism*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1996.

## References - Journals

- Adams, EM. "The Meaning of Life". *International Journal for the Philosophy of Religion* 51 (2002), 71-81.
- Case-Withers, A. "The Argument from Design: What is at Stake Theologically?" *Zygon: Journal of Religion and Science* 35 (2000), 69-81.
- Colledge, R. "Freedom and Responsibility". *The Catholic Leader* 29 Sept, 2003.
- Colledge, R. "How do we Know God Really Exists?" *The Catholic Leader* 27 July, 2003.
- Colledge, R. "Innocent Suffering and the Christian God: Some Philosophical Reflections". *Compass* 39 (1), 2005.
- Meissner, WW. "The Mind-Brain Relation and Neuroscientific Foundations". *Bulletin of the Menninger Clinic* 70 (2006), 87-101.
- Stawinski, A. "Truth in Myth and Science". *Dialogue and Universalism* 15 (2005), 71-78.
- Tracy, D. "The Hermeneutics of Naming God". *Theological Quarterly* 57 (1991), 253-64.
- Waller, BN. "A Metacompatibilist Account of Free Will: Making Compatibilists and Incompatibilists more Compatible". *Philosophical Studies* 112 (2003), 209-224.

## References - Online and Other IT resources

- A Dictionary of Philosophical Terms and Names: <http://www.philosophypages.com/dy/>
- The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy: <http://www.utm.edu/research/iep/>
- Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy: <http://www.rep.routledge.com>
- Radio National's *The Philosopher's Zone* programme. Transcripts covering many unit topics available at: <http://www.abc.net.au/rn/philosopherszone>
- Radio National's *All in the Mind* programme. Transcripts and audio available at: <http://www.abc.net.au/rn/allinthemind>