

Puzzles & Paradoxes

INSTRUCTOR: [Louis Doulas](#)
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COURSE PAGE: [Canvas](#)
STUDENT HOURS: [Tues, 12pm-1pm](#)
DATES: June 21–July 28, 2021

Description

We all believe things. Some of our beliefs are justified. Some even amount to knowledge. We know, for example, that the sun will rise tomorrow, that two things can't occupy the same space at the same time, and that it's impossible to go back in time and change the past

Or so we claim. The puzzles and paradoxes that we'll encounter in this course threaten each of these claims—some of them even threaten the *possibility* of knowledge itself! This is what a good puzzle or paradox does: it brings out a tension in our beliefs and forces us to reconsider them. Such puzzles and paradoxes are at the heart of philosophy.

This course will also serve as an introduction to the core areas of philosophy (metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, aesthetics, logic). Along the way, you'll learn how to read and think *better*: how to present an argument in premise and conclusion form, evaluate it for validity, and apply this method to a broad range of texts.

Format

This course is entirely online and asynchronous. There are no live lectures. Two pre-recorded lecture videos will be posted to Canvas each week. *Optional synchronous student hours will be held each week.* These sessions will give you a chance to interact with your instructor and fellow classmates in real time.

Assignments

There are three assignments:

1. [Philosophy Email](#)
DUE: *Sundays by 11:59 pm (40%)*
2. [Paper Outline](#)
DUE: *July 12th by 11:59 pm (20%)*
3. [Final Paper](#)
DUE: *July 27th by 11:59 pm (40%)*

Additional details will be provided in the lecture videos and on Canvas.

Reading Schedule

No textbook is required. All the readings can be found on [Canvas](#) or here, linked below.

WEEK 1 _____

- [A Brief Guide to Logic and Argumentation](#)
- [Constitution](#)
TED SIDER

WEEK 2 _____

- [The Paradoxes of Time Travel](#)
DAVID LEWIS
- [Is Knowledge Impossible?](#)
DUNCAN PRITCHARD

WEEK 3 _____

- [Proof of an External World](#)
G.E. MOORE
- [Hempel's Raven](#)
WILLIAM POUNDSTONE

WEEK 4 _____

- [The New Riddle of Induction](#)
NELSON GOODMAN
- [How Can We Be Moved by the Fate of Anna Karenina?](#)
COLIN RADFORD

WEEK 5 _____

- [Moral Luck](#)
THOMAS NAGEL
- [What, exactly, is a paradox?](#)
WILLIAM G. LYCAN

Course Policies

Class Withdrawal Policy

It is the student's responsibility to officially drop/withdraw from any courses before the deadline posted by the university's registrar's office. Please refer to UCI's academic calendar <http://www.reg.uci.edu/enrollment/withdrawals/> for the withdrawal policy, procedure, and refunded schedule.

Disability Statement

The University of California, Irvine, is committed to providing a barrier-free environment for learning and an electronic environment that is accessible to everyone, including individuals with disabilities. Students with disabilities who believe they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact the Disability Services Center at <https://dsc.uci.edu/> or by phone at 949-824-7494 as soon as possible to better ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.

Academic Dishonesty

Any student who compromises the academic integrity of this course is subject to a failing grade. The work you submit must be your own. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to submitting someone else's written work as your own, copying answers from another student, allowing another student to copy your answers, communicating exam answers to other students during an exam, attempting to use notes or other aids during an exam, or tampering with an exam after it has been corrected and then returning it for more credit. If you do so, you will be in violation of the UCI Policies on Academic Honesty, which you can find here: <https://aisc.uci.edu/>. It is your responsibility to read and understand these policies. Note that any instance

of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Academic Integrity Administrative Office for disciplinary action.

Food and Housing Instability

Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect their performance in the course, is urged to contact the FRESH Basic Needs Hub and the Basic Needs Coordinator, Andrea Gutierrez, at Andrea.g@uci.edu. You can find out more information about UCI Basic Needs and FRESH here: <https://basicneeds.uci.edu/>. Furthermore, please notify me if you are comfortable doing so. This will enable me to inform you of resources that might be of help.

Wellness, Health, and Counseling

For resources related to healthcare, counseling, wellness, and other support services, visit the UCI WHCS website here: <https://whcs.uci.edu/>. All enrolled students have access to free counseling services. You can find more information and make an appointment here <http://www.counseling.uci.edu/>.

Research Support

Librarians are available to help you find articles and books as you research your projects and papers. If you have questions about how to find additional sources or resources, you can make an appointment or chat with a librarian via the library website: <https://www.lib.uci.edu> or in person at the library.

Technical Support

Contact the OIT helpdesk at oit@uci.edu or call (949) 824-2222 for all technical support and training needs.