Basic Philosophical Questions
UCOR 132 (05)
Spring 2020: MWF 11-12PM
Instructor: James Swindal, College Hall 319, swindalj@duq.edu

Course Goals
In this course we shall explore the Western philosophical tradition. We will analyze four major question areas in philosophy:

- **philosophy of God** (the question of God’s existence and action)
- **epistemology** (the problem of human knowledge)
- **the philosophy of the person** (the relation between the soul/mind and the body)
- **ethics** (what we ought to do in order to live well).

This course assumes, first, that philosophical thinking plays a valuable part in a full and reflective life. It also assumes that philosophical reasoning is a kind of skill that can be developed and improved through time and effort. It is challenging, important, and indeed fun. Philosophy brings enthusiasm and an openness to the joy – and challenges -- of living and, indeed as we shall see, to love, fidelity, and genuine kindness.

Our goals are to:

- learn and appreciate the essential role of **rationality, logic, and critical thinking** in all aspects of human life
- develop a respect for and willingness to analyze **beliefs and judgments**
- achieve a deeper understanding of the scope and **limits** of human knowledge
- understand the **meaning of human life** and of one’s personal identity
- confront the difficulties associated with determining **what we ought to do**, given the myriad options we have for acting or not acting.

Education for the Mind, Heart and Spirit