

## HG531 A - Tópicos Especiais de Metafísica I

### Metaphysics - UNICAMP Winter 2018

**Teacher:** Emiliano Boccardi

#### Course Syllabus

We all know - sometimes painfully so - that often things are not really how they appear to be. Metaphysics is the rational endeavour to discover how things really are, at the most fundamental level. Whether you think so or not, you (we) all have deeply entrenched metaphysical beliefs; and, whatever our wishes may be, and whatever our degree of intellectual sophistication, we have all asked deep metaphysical questions, which we find of the uttermost importance in our daily lives.

Are we free? Who are we, really? Will we survive our death? Are we the same person as when we were kids? If we were to lose our memory, would we still be the same person? Are we approaching the day of our death? Why does time pass? Does it really pass, or is it an illusion? What is reality? Does it depend on our minds? What is a mind? Could there be minds without bodies? What is it for something to be possible? How could we know if something is possible?

The aim of this course is to become increasingly aware of your own pre-theoretic metaphysical beliefs, and to learn how to rationally assess them. By the end of the semester, you should be able to master arguments for and against all the main metaphysical theses discussed in class, and to be aware of your own (rational) preferences.

Philosophy is an eminently dialectical enterprise. Your active participation in class will be very important both for your own enjoyment and for your final course grade. You should try by all means to voice your doubts, opinions, disagreements and intuitions in class (either in English or in Portuguese). Short of this, I will consider my job as a teacher to have failed, and yours as young philosophers too.

Readings will be from two sources:

- (1) The course will follow the text: Earl Conne e Theodore Sider, *Riddles of Existence, A guided tour of metaphysics*, Oxford, 2005. The book is translated in Portuguese as: *Enigmas da Existência, um guia de viagem pela metafísica*, Oxford, 2005. You can choose whether to read it in English or Portuguese (though of course reading it in English would be a good exercise for you).
- (2) For each topic, I will make available on the website associated with the course more in-depth readings which will be discussed in class.

Readings and relevant information about the course will be made available at the following address: <https://metaphysicsunicamp.blogspot.it/>