

## **Metaphysics**

**Instructor:** Daniel Kodaj

### **Content of the course:**

Metaphysics studies very general phenomena that we often talk about but rarely define. They include time, causation, identity, properties, the relationship between parts and wholes, the difference between abstract and concrete (see the schedule for more examples). These things cannot be investigated through scientific experiments, because interpreting scientific experiments requires a prior understanding of such phenomena. (Try describing a scientific experiment without referring to the properties of objects.) Nor can they be investigated with mathematics, because mathematics is purely formal. (In fact, the nature of mathematical entities like numbers is a deep metaphysical issue.) The course provides an introduction to the main topics of contemporary (analytic) metaphysics, where such questions are intensely debated.

### **Grading**

Assessment is based on a written exam. Planned exam dates: 16 Dec, 13 Jan, 27 Jan. The exam will consist of (a) 10 multiple-choice questions about some readings (see the course homepage: [elte.dkodaj.net](http://elte.dkodaj.net)) (50 points), and (b) an essay question (70 points).

There will be 12 possible essay topics. These will be published before the exam on the course homepage.

Grading: 60–69 points D (2), 70–79 points C (3), 80–89 points B (4), 90–99 points A (5), 100–109 points A+, 110–120 points A++.

### **Topics**

- 1 Introduction
- 2 Existence
- 3 Causation
- 4 Time
- 5 Universals
- 6 Substance
- 7 Persistence
- 8 Dualism and physicalism
- 9 Personal Identity
- 10 Free will
- 11 Modality
- 12 God

### **Literature:**

Grayling, A.C. (ed.) (1995): *Philosophy*. Oxford University Press.

van Inwagen, Peter (2009): *Metaphysics*. Westview Press.

**Recommended literature:**

Garrett, Brian (2011): *What is This Thing Called Metaphysics?* Routledge

Huemer, Michael (2021): *Knowledge Reality, and Value.*