# PHIL 305A A01 (12545)  Early Medieval Philosophy

Fall 2021, University of Victoria
Department of Philosophy
Course website: https://bright.uvic.ca/d2l/home/147670

## Instructor & Contact Information

Dr. Clifford Roberts (cliffordroberts@uvic.ca)          Meeting Times: Tue-Wed-Fri 12:30-1:20
Office hours: Tue-Wed 1:30-2:30pm (or by appt.)          Meeting Place: tba
Office: CLE B318

## Course Description

This course surveys some of the work of philosophers active from the late 4th century CE to the end of the 12th century CE. During this period, the Western Roman empire collapsed and two monotheistic religions ascended to cultural, social, and political dominance: Christianity in Western Europe and Asia Minor, Islam in Western and Central Asia, North Africa and the Iberian Peninsula. This was the period of Charlemagne's unification of Europe and the Carolingian Renaissance, the Abbasid Caliphate and the Islamic Golden Age, and the Renaissance of the 12th century that produced Scholasticism and the medieval university. As part of these immense changes, ancient Greek and Roman thought was repurposed and redeployed by a succession of Christian, Muslim and Jewish philosophers. These thinkers were responsible for significant developments in philosophical thought about various topics: freedom and the will, knowledge and perception, the nature of the divine and the physical world, and, of course, reason and faith. Whether we agree or disagree with the conclusions and claims of these thinkers, their rigorous reasoning, conceptual originality, and philosophical insight are well-worth thinking about as much today as during their own times.

## Course Texts

**Required:** *Philosophy in the Middle Ages: The Christian, Islamic, and Jewish Traditions*, 3rd ed., edited by Arthur Hyman, James J. Walsh, & Thomas Williams (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishers, 2010).

## Course Assignments

(1)     **Reading Questions**
**Value:** 10% per assignment, 3 assignments (total value = 30%)
**Assignment:** Short answer questions on the forthcoming week's readings. The answers must be submitted online. The questions will be assigned a few days before the due date. Late submissions will automatically receive a "0."
**Due dates:** *see course schedule.*

(2)     **Quote and Comments**
**Value:** 20% per assignment, 2 assignments (total value = 40%)
**Length:**    700 words (per assignment)
**Assignment:** Students will be assigned several passages from the text, of which they must pick one and submit their explanation of the passage online. The assignment will be made available 1-2 weeks before the due date.
**Due dates:** *see course schedule.*

and responsibility. It is expected that students will respect these ethical values in all activities related to learning, teaching, research, and service. Therefore, plagiarism and other acts against academic integrity are serious academic offences.

*The responsibility of the institution*
Instructors and academic units have the responsibility to ensure that standards of academic honesty are met. By doing so, the institution recognizes students for their hard work and assures them that other students do not have an unfair advantage through cheating on essays, exams, and projects.

*The responsibility of the student*
Plagiarism sometimes occurs due to a misunderstanding regarding the rules of academic integrity, but it is the responsibility of the student to know them. If the student is unsure about the standards for citations or for referencing sources, the instructor should be consulted. Depending on the

may have a disability, you may also want to meet with an advisor at the Centre for Accessible Learning (CAL). For more information about CAL, see: https://www.uvic.ca/services/cal/

Counseling Services

Many, if not most, students experience some difficulties with their mental health during their years as undergraduate students. Make sure you are familiar with the university's **Counseling Services** (https://www.uvic.ca/services/counselling/)which is an excellent resource you have at your

| Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, John Scottus Eriugena, & Anselm | |
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| <u>Week 5:</u> Oct 4-8 | Reading: [CT] pp. 141-181<br>*Quote & Comment #1: Due Oct 10* |
| Peter Abelard | |
| <u>Week 6:</u> Oct 11-15 | Reading: [CT] pp. 184-214 |
| Al-    [Alpharabius] & Ibn-    [Avicenna] | |

<u>Week 7:</u> Oct 18-22                                       Reading: