

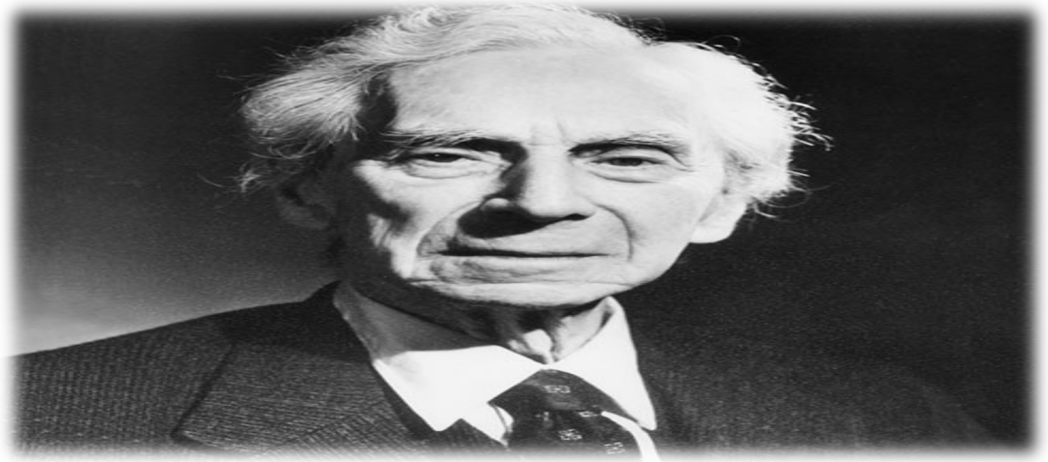
‘I cannot teach anybody anything: I can only make them think.’ Socrates



❑ **Philosophy** is the systematic use of critical reasoning to engage with fundamental questions.

What kinds of questions are philosophers interested in?

Questions that are **contestable, common, central, and connected to human experience.**



Bertrand Russell 1872-1970

“Philosophy is to be studied, not for the sake of any definite answers to its questions, since no definite answers can, as a rule, be known to be true, but rather for the sake of the questions themselves; because these questions enlarge our conception of what is possible, enrich our intellectual imagination and diminish the dogmatic assurance which closes the mind against speculation..”

Problems of Philosophy

Some of those philosophical questions:

- ☐ What is time?
- ☐ Does God exist?
- ☐ Should non-human animals have rights
- ☐ Can it ever be wrong to forgive?
- ☐ Is free will possible?
- ☐ What is the best society?
- ☐ What is justice?
- ☐ What is the nature of friendship?
- ☐ Are minds identical to brains?
- ☐ How can we say we really know anything?
- ☐ What is happiness?
- ☐ Is euthanasia morally permissible?
- ☐ What is the nature of goodness?

6 Main Branches of Philosophy:

particular questions find a home within
particular branches of philosophy because of the **concepts** their
questions investigate.

Metaphysics

Epistemology

Aesthetics

Ethics

Politics

Logic

1. METAPHYSICS: What 'comes before' or 'goes beyond' physics. A study of the fundamental nature of things.

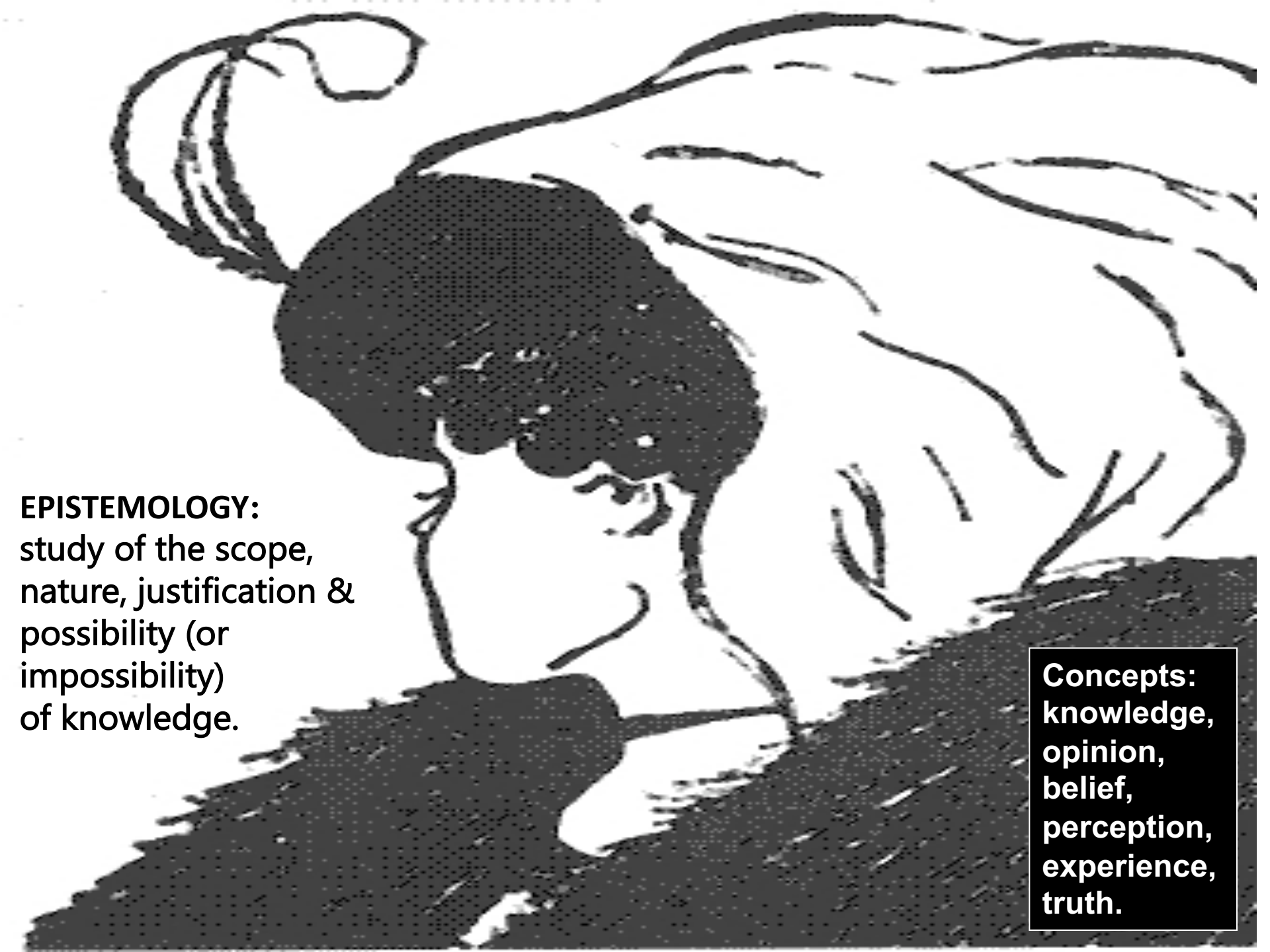
Large Hadron Collider CERN



Concepts: existence/being, possibility, space/time, substance, mind, free will, causality, the divine



The Creation of Adam



EPISTEMOLOGY:
study of the scope,
nature, justification &
possibility (or
impossibility)
of knowledge.

Concepts:
knowledge,
opinion,
belief,
perception,
experience,
truth.

AESTHETICS: the study of issues concerning art, appreciation, taste, and creation

Concepts:
beauty, art,
inspiration,
taste
creativity,
perception,
authenticity



ETHICS: The study of moral systems – defining, defending and recommending sets of moral values or perspectives.



Concepts: character, duty, intention, virtue, right/wrong, good/bad/evil, responsibility, moral luck.

Political Philosophy:

David Miller defines political philosophy as: ‘philosophical reflection on how best to arrange our collective life – our political institutions and our social practices, such as our economic system and our pattern of family life....seek to establish basic principles that will, for instance, justify a particular form of state, show that individuals have certain inalienable rights, or tell us how a society’s material resources should be shared among its members...

Concepts: Freedom justice, authority, law, citizenship, economy, equality, rights, duties, obligations, democracy, power, welfare, priority.



Logic: What is an argument? How do we tell good arguments from bad arguments? How do we learn to think well?



**Concepts:
claims,
arguments,
premises,
inference,
fallacies,
induction/
deduction,
validity/
soundness**



Many more specialised branches

- ☐ Philosophy of science
- ☐ Philosophy of mind
- ☐ Philosophy of language
- ☐ Philosophy of law
- ☐ Philosophy of mathematics
- ☐ Philosophy of religion
- ☐ Philosophy of history

- ☐ And so on.....

‘Grappling with
problematic aspects
of these disciplines’

Why study philosophy?

A) THE SKILL-SET

- ❑ Doing philosophy fosters critical, creative and caring thinking skills. It also deepens intellectual courage, intellectual empathy and intellectual discipline.
- ❑ These skills are not domain-specific, they are transferable. These skills will aid you in 1) your academic life, 2) in your future work world, and 3) in your future lives as citizens.

1) Philosophy is excellent training for current and/or further study:

In law,

In medicine,

In social service,

In teaching,

In psychology/politics/sociology/related fields.

Why study philosophy?

2) The future work world

A) THE SKILL-SET

Mark Cuban, billionaire entrepreneur, "I'm going to make a prediction. In 10 years, a liberal arts (humanities) degree in philosophy will be worth more than a traditional programming degree."

Christian Voegtlin, commenting on the trend for companies to hire their own **in-house philosophers**. 'The job role appears to be a mixture of consultant, life coach and strategist.' *Forbes*, 2018

'It is no wonder then, that philosophers are comfortable in the court, control room, or boardroom. They are trained in public expression and mental discipline, both crucial skills for manager, executives, lawyers, and leaders.' Travis Chamberlain, in *Forbes*

'Silicon Valley executives are hiring philosophers to teach them to question everything.' Quartz 2017

'...employers value creative problem-solving and the ability to deal with ambiguity...and I can't think of another subject that would better prepare you with those skills than the study of Philosophy.'
Lydia Frank (PayScale) in *The Atlantic*

Why study philosophy?

B) THE ATTITUDE

- Transformations resulting from globalisation and new technologies will have profound ethical and aesthetic implications for human life, impacting personal, cultural, and national identity.

‘...the great relevance of philosophy to our contemporary circumstances stems from it being, not just a prodigious well of human knowledge, but also an intellectual method of a particular sort – one that sharpens distinct critical capacities in those who study it...Philosophy is a form of reasoning that is grounded in an ability to identify assumptions, question given certainties, and articulate concepts in a rigorous fashion....Philosophy at its best is, in other words, an inquisitive state of mind – a willingness to get to the root of human problems, whether of an existential, metaphysical, or of a moral-ethical kind.’ **President Michael D. Higgins**

PHILOSOPHY @ NUI, GALWAY

National University of Ireland, Galway
Roinn na Fealsúnachta
Department of Philosophy



Our team



Our Teaching Staff:

Dr Gerald Cipriani: Aesthetics, East Asian Philosophy

Dr Tsarina Doyle: Philosophy of the Enlightenment, German Idealism, Nietzsche.

Dr Richard Hull: Applied Ethics, Bioethics, Moral and Political Philosophy, Disability

Professor Felix O Murchadha: Phenomenology, Philosophy of Religion, Heidegger

Dr John O'Reilly: Philosophy of Mind, History of Irish Thought

Dr Orla Richardson: Philosophy of Science, Moral and Political Philosophy, P4C

Dr Heike Schmidt-Felzmann: Healthcare ethics, moral theory, Information ethics.

Dr Nick Tosh: Philosophy of science, philosophy of language, logic

Dr Lucy Elvis: Aesthetics, Philosophy of Education, Gadamer

Dr Nora Ward: Practical Ethics, Environmental Ethics

First-Year Philosophy (modules)

- ❑ PI 108: Introduction to Practical Ethics (**SEMESTER 1**).
 - ❑ PI 1101: Critical Thinking and Persuasive Writing (**SEMESTER 1 & 2**)
 - ❑ PI 120: Philosophical Questions & Issues (**SEMESTER 1 & 2**).
 - ❑ PI 107: Introduction to the History of Philosophy (**SEMESTER 2**).
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- For course outlines, see: <https://www.nuigalway.ie/colleges-and-schools/arts-social-sciences-and-celtic-studies/history-philosophy/disciplines-centres/philosophy/undergraduate-courses/>
 - All courses are compulsory for B.A. students (Joint Honours).
 - **B.A. Connect students DO NOT take the Philosophical Questions and Issues module.**

Modules:

☐ Introduction to Practical Ethics (**SEMESTER 1**).

- Lectures posted on Blackboard with one live interactive on-line Q&A session each week.
- Assessed by essay.
- Instructor: Dr Richard Hull

☐ Critical Thinking and Persuasive Writing (**SEMESTER 1 & 2**).

- Online recorded lectures plus one live interactive session each week.
- Assessed by exam in semester 1 and assignment in semester 2.
- Instructor: Dr. Nick Tosh

☐ Philosophical Questions & Issues (**SEMESTER 1 & 2**).

- Online recorded lectures plus one live interactive session each week.
- Assessed by an essay in semester 1 and an essay in semester 2.
- Instructor (semester 1): Dr Lucy Elvis

- **Tutorials (online):**
- In addition, students will have **two weekly hours of online tutorials**, one for Practical Ethics (PI108), the other for Philosophy Skills (PISK1100 and PI120). These consist in completing a structured programme of tasks in break-out groups and larger tutorial groups. There will be four weekly slots to choose from for PI108 tutorials, and six weekly slots to choose from for Philosophy Skills.
- Slots and times to be confirmed.
- Sign up via Blackboard.

- **Group advisory sessions (face-to-face or online)**
- Each first year student will be assigned to a small group that will meet a staff member three times during the semester. In addition to the first year coordinator, this staff member will be their first point of contact with the department for the year. You can choose whether you prefer face-to-face or online meetings. We encourage students from the small groups to continue interaction within their groups throughout the semester and suggest a voluntary self-guided programme of shared activities for the groups.
- Times of advisory sessions will be advised via Blackboard and the Philosophy web page.
- **Overall workload:**
- **5 weekly live online sessions** (3 Q&A sessions, 2 tutorials) plus recorded lectures for general BA (20 ECTS/first year)
- 4 weekly live online sessions (2 Q&A sessions, 2 tutorials) plus recorded lectures for Connect Programmes (15 ECTS/first year)
- 3 group advisory sessions (face-to-face) **per semester**



Learning how to use Blackboard as a new student this year will be vital to our successful delivery of a meaningful interactive learning experience.

- ☐ Blackboard is a course management system.
- ☐ A vital resource – lectures, notes, readings, assessments, forums, updates, access to live online teaching sessions
- ☐ Sign up for and participate in tutorials
- ☐ Submission of assignments – via TURNITIN. **Turnitin** is an Internet based plagiarism-prevention service.
- ☐ Grade Center
- ☐ Attendance monitoring tool - **Qwickly**



PDP and you



THINKING BETTER
TOGETHER



Children are natural philosophers



PDP employs **P4C** an inquiry-based learning model that uses dialogue as a means to achieve some specified pedagogical aim. More simply, P4C asks participants to form a community of philosophical inquiry (CPI) where they work together to investigate and progress their understanding of a philosophical question.





**A Community of
Philosophical Inquiry
at work**

Another CPI at work. This community has just asked: do we have any duties to future generations? They're trying to figure out how to answer that question.



- ❑ NUIG Philosophy runs a **PAL** (a peer assisted learning) **program** using the PDP.
- ❑ PAL through PDP is peer-to-peer learning in a **community of philosophical inquiry**.
- ❑ Our PAL is specifically for **first year philosophy students**

- ❑ Aims:
 - Aid students to acquire critical thinking skills (skills that will be essential in your academic life at NUIG)
 - Help students make the transition to university life by developing academic relationships and support networks.
- ❑ **Get involved in this exciting initiative in Semester 2** (details to follow).

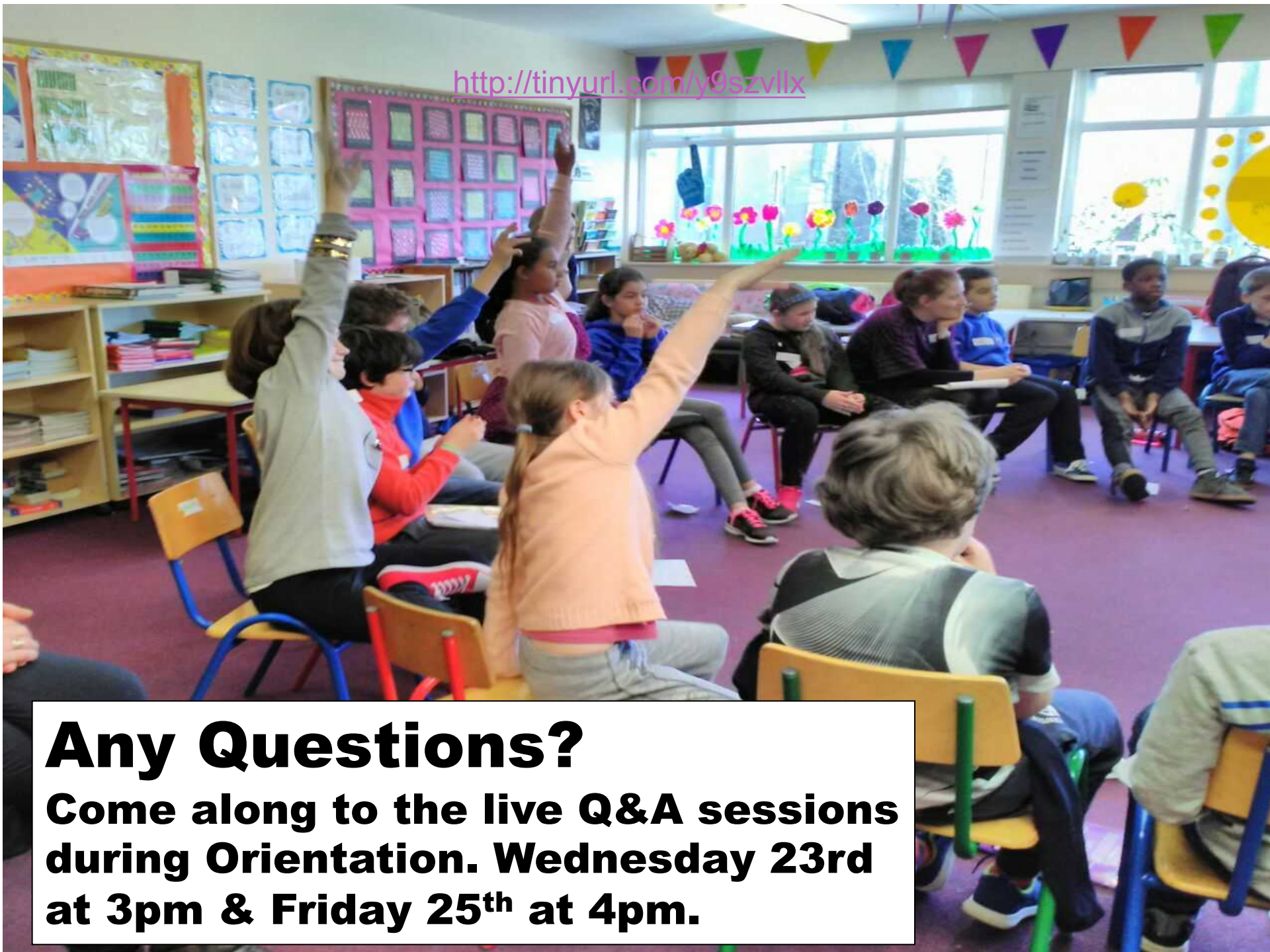
Philosophy @ NUIG

Homepage: <http://www.nuigalway.ie/philosophy/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/NUIGPhilosophy/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/nuigphilosophy?lang=en>

Follow our pages to find out about the wide range of philosophical research undertaken in the department, public talks and events, our PDP programs, important student updates; and other relevant posts.



<http://tinyurl.com/y9szvllx>

Any Questions?

Come along to the live Q&A sessions during Orientation. Wednesday 23rd at 3pm & Friday 25th at 4pm.



NUI Galway
OÉ Gaillimh

CHECK OUT THE ONLINE ACADEMIC SKILLS HUB

FOR HANDY TIPS
AND INFORMATION ON:

Studying at NUI Galway

How to take notes and do research

IT and digital skills

Doing assignments and exams

And much more

You can also visit the Academic Skills Hub desk in the Library foyer for personalised support with academic and information skills.

nuigalway.ie/academic-skills

Supported by the NUI Galway Student Project Fund

Academic Writing Centre (AWC)



OÉ Gaillimh
NUI Galway

The AWC offers **free one-on-one tutorials on essay writing** .

AWC tutors work with new entrants, final year students, and postgraduates alike.

The AWC is located on Floor 2, in the James Hardiman Library.

**I like
cooking my family
and my pets.**

**Use commas.
Don't be a psycho.**

<https://library.nuigalway.ie/awc/>