

## Brief Course Outline

**Course Title:** **Bias, Rationality, and Objectivity**

**Course Number and Section**

PHILOSOP

3220F 550

**Instructor Name(s):** Steve Bland

**Instructor Email(s):** sbland2@uwo.ca

Disclaimer: Information in the brief course outline is subject to change. The syllabus posted on OWL Brightspace is the official and authoritative source of information for the course.

### Course Description:

What does it mean to be rational? How rational are human beings? How can we become more rational? These three questions will guide this course through two ongoing debates in philosophy and psychology. The rationality debate concerns the extent to which we make systematic errors, known as cognitive biases, in our judgements and decisions. The misinformation debate concerns our susceptibility to, and possible remedies for, socially transmitted misinformation. Both debates have massive implications for politics, law, media, commerce, education, and many other core areas of human concern.

### Learning Outcomes: one outcome per entry

1. Manifest an understanding of the positions and arguments in the rationality and misinformation debates.
2. Apply this understanding to propose and evaluate practical efforts to improve the way people think and process information.
3. Manage and satisfy your academic responsibilities by meeting deadlines, communicating effectively, attending lectures, and demonstrably engaging with course material.

### Textbooks and Course Materials:

Available on Brightspace course site.

Methods of Evaluation: one assignment per entry

| Assignment              | Due Date mm/dd/yy | Weight - % |
|-------------------------|-------------------|------------|
| Participation           | Each class        | 10         |
| Participation questions | Each class        | 10         |
| The Rationality Debate  | After lecture #6  | 25         |
| Video proposal          | December          | 14th       |
| Final exam              | December          | 30         |

Friday, August 14, 2026

Huron Brief Course Outline 2026/27

In-course Costs \$000.00

For Textbooks and Course Materials (below), you are required to include the cost of each textbook or other learning material.

Note whether there are any restrictions that would prevent a student from using a second-hand copy. Here is some suggested text:

- Required textbook: [author, title, edition, publisher, date]. Cost: [insert amount].
  - Or include the weblink of the textbook’s publisher site that includes the cost information.
- Students need to purchase this edition. Second-hand or older editions will not be sufficient.
- OR Students are welcome to purchase second-hand or earlier editions of this textbook.
- This course has an optional field trip that costs [insert amount].
- This course has a required field component that costs [insert amount].

In solidarity with the Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak, and Chonnonton peoples on whose traditional treaty and unceded territories this course is shared.