

Brief Course Outline

Course Title: **Philosophy of Money**

Course Number and Section:

PHILOSOP

2264G 550

Instructor Name(s): Dr. D. Conter

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

Course Description:

A historical introduction to accounts of the origin and the nature of money. Students will look at accounts provided by philosophers, economists, and bankers, starting with Aristotle in the fourth century BCE, and going up to the work of John Stuart Mill in the second half of the 19th century CE. The central developments to be considered are the introduction of commodity money (e.g., gold and silver coins); the later reliance on negotiable instruments 'commercial paper' (e.g., bills of exchange, promissory notes, cheques); and then, even later, the introduction of paper money. Towards the end of the course, there may be some discussion of cryptocurrencies such as bitcoin.

Learning Outcomes:

Students should come to understand, among other things, the explanations for:

- the inadequacy of barter theories of money
- the inadequacy of philosophical and religious arguments against lending money at interest
- the role of credit and debt in the use of money
- the role of government in maintaining the value of money
- the relation between, on the one hand, credit and debt, and, on the other, trust and obligation
- the deficiencies will know of both a labour theory of value and the idea of a just price.

Textbooks and Course Materials:

Felix Martin, *Money: The Unauthorized Biography – From Coinage to Cryptocurrencies*, New York: Vintage Books, 2015.

If you are in Canada, you should be able to get a paper copy of the text from Amazon in one day. You will want a paper copy of the text because you will be allowed to use it while writing your tests. For obvious reasons, you will not be allowed to use the internet to access the text

or other electronic resources while writing the tests -- and you will be on camera when you are writing them.

Methods Of Evaluation:

Assignment	Due Date mm/dd/yy	Weight - %
Three on-camera essay tests		100

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

Friday, June 6, 2025