Welcome to Philosophy!
“Philosophy begins in wonder.”

— Aristotle (384-322 BCE)
Philosophy is what you’re doing when you keep asking questions after everyone else is satisfied with their answers.
Philosophy is thinking about how we should think about things we don't know how to think about (yet)
Originally ... philosophy was just the rational explanation of anything
That sounds a lot like Science (philosophy as the first science ...
Philosophy asks Fundamental Questions
Where did the world come from?
Is my mind just my brain?
Is there a God?
Am I free?
Is anything ever really morally right or wrong?
Can I know anything with certainty?
Is reality ultimately irrational?
Is the death of my body the end of me?
Where does value come from?
What is beauty?
What is the meaning of life?
Areas of Philosophy

Metaphysics (What is?)
The study of being or reality, the nature of the self, and the nature of the divine.

Epistemology (What is the subject/object relation?)
The study of the nature of knowledge and belief, justification, and truth.

Axiology (What has value? What is value?)
- **Metaethics**: The study of the meaning of moral claims, and the nature of moral principles
- **Normative Ethics**: The study of what constitutes morally correct conduct, and this requires the articulation and justification of moral principles
- **Aesthetics**: The study of the nature of art and the beautiful.
- **Political Philosophy**: The study of the justification of the use of force in the context of a state.
- **Social Philosophy**: The study of the ideal society or social organization.

Logic (What is good reasoning?)
The study of the principles of good arguments or good reasoning
Philosophy is Theoretical as well as Practical
Philosophy is about the nature of reality.
... but it’s also about how we ought to live.
Both theory and practice depend upon our Beliefs therefore …
Philosophy focuses on

(1) The justification of fundamental beliefs
   Sample belief: “A world exists separate from my mind.”

(2) the analysis of concepts in those beliefs
   Sample concepts: “What do we mean by ‘world’, ‘exists’, ‘separate from’, and ‘mind’?”
How do we arrive at our beliefs?

I should care about the welfare of no one but myself.

Five is the square root of twenty. The Cubs will win the World Series this year.

The good life is spent serving others. Water freezes at 0 degrees celsius.

Mars has three moons.
... and how do we justify them?
But before we consider any beliefs, let’s pause to consider our eyeballs.
Each human eye has a blind spot
You can find your own blind spot

Draw a rectangle with an ‘X’ and a dot; hold the paper at arm’s length; close your left eye and stare at the ‘X’ with your right eye; slowly move the paper toward you until the dot disappears.
Locating our blind spots, and correcting for them, is our primary goal this semester.
Now, back to those beliefs...
Are these two table tops the same size and shape?
Question #1

Are these two table tops the same size and shape?
Are these two table tops the same size and shape?
Are these two table tops the same size and shape?
Are these two table tops the same size and shape?
Are these two table tops the same size and shape?
Are these two table tops the same size and shape?
How do squares A and B compare?
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How do squares A and B compare?
Is it possible that all of your beliefs are false?
Are you free to believe whatever you choose to believe?

Can you be forced to believe something?

Can you force yourself to believe anything?
Question #5

Do all objects fall at the same speed, regardless of their weight?
Imagine a large lake of calm water. Is the surface of the water perfectly flat?
Are all bachelors unmarried?
If you call a tail a leg, how many legs has a dog?
What is the meaning of life?
Discuss in your Groups

What is the difference between
“proving X”
and
“having evidence for X”?

[facilitators: start and stop the discussion, and keep it on track]
[monitors: make sure everyone’s ideas are heard]
[recorders: write down your group answer. When done, go to the board…]
Proof and Evidence

Proving $X = I$ know that $X$ is true.

Having evidence for $X = I$ have some reason to believe that $X$ is true.

Proof is evidence that makes truth either certain (as with mathematical/deductive proofs) or very likely (strong inductive arguments).

Evidence is just “a reason to believe.”