

## **Department of Philosophy Speaker Series - Spring 2019**

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**January 30, 2019  
Clark Hall 206  
4pm  
Snacks Provided**



### **Philosophy and Truth: An Apology for *Philosophia Perennis***

Some philosophical disputes have persisted and will likely persist despite the fact that few, if any, of the parties to the disputes expect them to be resolved with desired knowledge of the truths they concern. If the possible attainment of knowledge were the sole rationale of philosophical discourse, much of it would lack one. But reasons exist for considering philosophical activity worthy apart from its eventuation in attainment of knowledge, even from pursuit of it. It is philosophical thinking that must determine the nature and possibility of knowledge and devise a method for pursuing it and certifying the success of the pursuit. Philosophical thinking has the option of dispensing with pursuit of knowledge and replacing it with alternative epistemic goals such as sharable justified beliefs. The Pyrrhonist commitment to seeking freedom from mental perturbation by deliberately doubting and suspending beliefs radically questions the epistemologist tradition. Philosophical thinking also includes non-theoretical functions, especially the practical, to which some philosophers confer primacy over the theoretical. Pursuit of an epistemic goal implies a valuation of the latter. But the philosophical subject must reflectively value its thinking and itself by so doing as a precondition of all other valuation. Philosophy should be viewed as a perennial activity of the community of thinkers to assure themselves of the worth of their thinking arising from its internal features. Gaining knowledge of truth or achieving doxastic consensus may be a desideratum but not a condition of the worth of thinking.