

GWU Department of Philosophy presents the 2011 Elton Lecture

## Dr. Graham Priest

Professor of Philosophy at the University of Melbourne

### Between the Horns of Realism and Idealism: the Philosophy of Madhyamaka Buddhism

November 18<sup>th</sup>, 5:00pm  
MPA Building, Room 310  
H & 21st Streets NW



**Abstract:** In Western philosophical traditions a major debate in metaphysics is between realists and idealists of various kinds. The same is just as true in Eastern philosophical traditions. In the East, there is one tradition, however, which goes between the horns of the dilemma. This is the position of the Madhyamaka Buddhist school, which began to flourish around the 2c CE, was one of the two major schools of Indian Buddhism, and had a major impact on all subsequent Buddhist philosophy. In this lecture, I will explain the relevant parts of the Madhyamaka view, and their implications for the realist/idealist debate. No knowledge of Buddhist philosophy will be presupposed.



**Graham Priest** is currently Boyce Gibson Professor of Philosophy at the University of Melbourne and Distinguished Professor of Philosophy at the Graduate Center, City University of New York. He is also Arché Professorial Fellow in the Department of Philosophy, University of St Andrews. He has written widely on philosophy and its history, but is best known for his work in non-classical logic, especially paraconsistent logic and its metaphysical applications. His main books include: *In Contradiction*, *Beyond the Limits of Thought*, *Towards Non-Being*, *Doubt Truth to be a Liar*, and *Introduction to Non-Classical Logic*.