

# THE ZENO CONTEST 2015

All Roanoke College students are invited to compete in the eleventh annual Zeno Contest, a critical thinking competition sponsored by the Religion and Philosophy Department.

A modest cash prize and an extravagant trophy will be awarded to the student with the best solution to the following paradox:

## THE SHIP OF THESEUS

When the legendary Athenian hero Theseus died, the Athenians preserved his ship to celebrate his exploits and to enhance the glory of Athens. As the ship rode at anchor year after year it was necessary to replace parts of it periodically—timbers, fittings, rigging, etc. As each part was replaced, it was taken to a warehouse and stored away. Eventually, the ship floating in the harbor retained none of the original material from Theseus' day, though in appearance and function the ship was exactly the same. Meanwhile, some enterprising Athenians took it upon themselves to honor Theseus further by taking the parts stored in the warehouse and putting them back together, each in its original place relative to the other parts.

**Which is the real Ship of Theseus? Are both of them? Neither?**

Papers should be brief: anywhere from 1-3 pages, typed and double-spaced. Concise, elegant solutions are encouraged. Papers should be written in standard English with a minimum of errors in spelling or grammar. Papers must be individual, not collaborative efforts. The usual rules regarding academic integrity apply.

A panel of distinguished Philosophy faculty will judge all entries by the clarity and rigor of their analysis. **Successful papers should explain as clearly as possible the reasoning that generates the paradox itself and the reasoning behind its resolution.**

Entries should be submitted to Dr. Hans Zorn, Religion and Philosophy Department, zorn@roanoke.edu. Please direct any questions to that address or call x2024.

The deadline for submissions is Friday, February 27. Good luck!

