

## **PHIL 1200 The Meaning of Life**

**Fall 2014**

**Tuesdays and Thursdays, 6.00 – 7.30 p.m.**

**Room: TBA**

Professor: Iva Apostolova

Office: 329B Patterson Hall

Contact info: [Iva.Apostolova@carleton.ca](mailto:Iva.Apostolova@carleton.ca), ext. 6307

Office Hours: Tuesdays, 4.30-5.30 p.m.

Teaching Assistant: TBA

Teaching Assistant's contact info: TBA

**Required Course Materials:** You do not have to purchase a textbook or course pack for this course. All the readings required for this course are available from free online sources (the list of all required texts follows below).

This book might be helpful (no need to purchase it!): Norman Melchert, *The Great*

*Conversation: A Historical Introduction to Philosophy*, Oxford University Press, 2007.

**Objectives:** The question of the meaning of life is one of the most fundamental and enduring philosophical questions. The primary objective of this course is to introduce students to different philosophical approaches to the question of the meaning of life. The course will take a historical rather than thematic approach. Thus, we will start from antiquity and finish with 20<sup>th</sup> century philosophy. You will get introduced to different perspectives on the question of the meaning of life such as the nihilist, the supra-natural, the pragmatist, the existentialist, etc. A secondary objective of the course is to introduce you to some basic aspects of expressing your views on such matters in a written form via philosophical essay which will be the final assignment for this course.

### **Course Evaluation:**

There are two in-class midterms for this course, each worth 30% of the final mark. In addition, there is one take-home final assignment in the form of a philosophical essay, worth 40% of the final mark. The in-class midterms and the final take-home assignment/essay consist of a certain number of questions (you will be able to choose from a number of questions for the in-class tests but not for the take-home assignments) to be answered. The take-home assignment questions and instructions will be posted on cuLearn on the last day for this class. Midterm topics will also be posted in advance on cuLearn.

Note that the Philosophy Department at Carleton has decided to abstain from printing out course outlines and/or handouts except in rare cases. In agreement with this new effort to save paper and ink, all handouts will be available on the course web-site on cuLearn.

**Midterm 1 (in-class): Thursday, October 9, 2014.**

**Midterm 2 (in-class): Thursday, November 13, 2014.**

**Final take-home assignment: Sunday, December 21, 2014.**

All the tests are based upon the material and discussions **covered in class**.

**Note:** There are no mock or make-up tests scheduled for this course. A make-up test or due date extension will be provided **only** upon presentation of a verifiable doctor's note. A failure to provide one will result in 0 (zero) on the given assignment! It is the responsibility of the student to contact the professor as soon as possible with any official documentation the student might have, justifying his/her absence from the test/assignment/exam and schedule a make-up midterm/assignment/exam. All such arrangements must be made directly with the professor.

Please note that neither the professor nor the TA will provide slides and/or lecture notes, regardless of the reason the student has missed a given class. It is the responsibility of the student to find a way to recover the missed lecture.

If you require a note taker, please contact PMC as soon as possible to be accommodated.

No electronic copies of any of the final assignments will be accepted unless there is a medical or other documented emergency!

**Note:** Please note that the syllabus is subject to changes and modifications due to time constraints and in-class progress!

The Teaching Assistant is responsible for marking all the tests and exams. If a disagreement over a mark occurs, the student needs to see the marker (Teaching Assistant) first and discuss the mark/test/exam. The professor will not discuss the assignments/marks with the student unless the student has seen the TA first. If the disagreement persists, the student can appeal the mark to the professor. However, the professor reserves the right to raise or lower the mark despite the mark that has already been assigned.

The standard time for returning marked tests/exams is two weeks from the date of the test/exam. However, in some cases, it may require more time. Announcements of any changes will be made in class or posted on the web-site of the course.

Neither the Teaching Assistant, nor the professor will weigh any of the tests/exams any differently than the value that has been originally assigned to them.

Border marks will not be 'bumped up'. In other words, a 79 is a B+ and will not be 'bumped up' to an A-, unless the student has a good reason to contest his or her mark. 'I studied really hard for this course' or 'I need an A- average', or 'I'm on academic probation and I really need to pass' are not good reasons!

### **Online Texts:**

Plato, *The Republic*, Book 4, Book 6, and Book 7 at: <http://classics.mit.edu/Plato/republic.html>

Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book 1, sections 7-13 at:  
<http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/nicomachaen.1.i.html>

Epicurus, *Principal Doctrines*, <http://www.epicurus.net/en/principal.html>

Marcus Aurelius, *Confessions*, book 2, <http://www.bartleby.com/2/3/2.html>

Augustine, *Confessions*, Book 11, Chapters 13-18 at:  
<http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/110111.htm>

and *On Two Souls: Against the Manicheans*, Chapters 2, 3, 7, 10, 11 at:

<http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/1403.htm>

Hildegard von Bingen, TBA

Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince*, Chapters 15-19 at: <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/1232/1232-h/1232-h.htm>

Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork*, Chapter 2 at: <http://www.earlymoderntexts.com/kgw.html>

Karl Marx, *The Communist Manifesto*, Sections 1 and 2 at:

<http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1848/communist-manifesto/>

Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, Chapter 9, remark 260 at:

<http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/nietzsche/1886/beyond-good-evil/ch09.htm>

and *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Zarathustra's Prologue, at:

<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/1998/1998-h/1998-h.htm>

Fyodor Dostoyevsky, *Notes from the Underground*, Part I, sections vii and viii, at:

<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/600/600-h/600-h.htm>

William James, *Pragmatism: A New Name for Some Old Ways of Thinking*, *Lectures I and II*:

<http://www.marx.org/reference/subject/philosophy/works/us/james.htm>

Jean-Paul Sartre, *Existentialism Is a Humanism* at:

<http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/sartre/works/exist/sartre.htm>

Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, Introduction, at:

<http://www.marxists.org/reference/subject/ethics/de-beauvoir/2nd-sex/introduction.htm>

Albert Camus, *The Myth of Sisyphus*, The Absurd Man: <http://iheartlahs.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/Camus-Myth-of-Sisyphus-and-other-readings.pdf>

Please note that there is a course web-site on CULearn where the course outline as well as any other instructions and questionnaires will be posted. Any additional postings on the course web-site are considered an official communication between the professor, the TA, and the students and it is a responsibility of the students to check the web-site regularly and keep up to date with the postings.

## Department of Philosophy and Carleton University Policies (2014-15)

### **Assignments:**

Unless specifically told otherwise by their instructors, students:

- must not use a plastic or cardboard cover or paper clips
- must staple the paper (there is a stapler on the essay box)
- must include the following:
  - student name
  - student number
  - course number and section
  - instructor's name
- The Philosophy Department does not accept assignments by FAX. You may send them by courier, if necessary.
- No assignments will be accepted after the last day for handing in term work – see dates in next column.
- Assignments handed in through the essay box (just inside the glass doors, Paterson Hall, Floor 3A) must be dropped into the box by **4:15** on a regular business day in order to be date-stamped with that day's date. Assignments handed in after 4:15 or on a non-business day will be stamped as having been handed in on the next business day.
- Students are required to keep copies of their assignments. If your paper is lost at any point, you will be considered not to have submitted it if you cannot produce a copy immediately on request.

### **Deferrals for Term Work:**

If you miss a final examination and/or fail to submit a final assignment by the due date because of circumstances beyond your control, you may apply for a deferral of examination/assignment. For deferred examinations, you must apply within 5 working days after the scheduled date of your exam. To apply for deferral of a final assignment, you must apply within 5 working days of the last scheduled day of classes. Visit the Registrar's Office for more information.

### **Plagiarism:**

It is the responsibility of each student to understand the meaning of 'plagiarism' as defined in the Undergraduate or Graduate Calendars, and to avoid both committing plagiarism and aiding or abetting plagiarism by other students. (Undergraduate Calendar Academic Regulations, section 14.3, or <http://calendar.carleton.ca/undergrad/regulations/academicregulationsoftheuniversity/acadregsuniv14/>)

### **Academic Accommodation:**

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

**Pregnancy obligation:** write to your professor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details visit the Equity Services website: <http://www2.carleton.ca/equity/>

**Religious obligation:** write to your professor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details visit the Equity Services website: <http://www2.carleton.ca/equity/>

**Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:** The **Paul Menton Centre** for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or [pmc@carleton.ca](mailto:pmc@carleton.ca) for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send your **Letter of Accommodation** at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam

requiring accommodation (*if applicable*). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with your professor to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (*if applicable*) at <http://www2.carleton.ca/pmc/new-and-current-students/dates-and-deadlines/>

You can visit the Equity Services website to view the policies and to obtain more detailed information on academic accommodation at <http://www2.carleton.ca/equity/>

### **Important Dates:**

Sept. 4	Classes start (after Orientation events).
Sept. 17	Last day for registration and course changes in Fall and Fall/Winter courses.
Sept. 30	Last day for entire fee adjustment when withdrawing from Fall term or two-term courses.
Oct. 13	Thanksgiving Day – university closed.
Oct. 27-31	Fall Break – no classes.
Nov. 24	Last day for tests or examinations in courses below 4000-level before the Final Examination period.
Dec. 8	Last day of classes, Fall term. Last day for handing in term work and the last day that can be specified by a course instructor as a due date for Fall term courses.
Dec. 8	Last day to withdraw from Fall term courses (academic purposes only).
Dec. 9	No classes or examinations take place. Review classes may be held, but no new material may be introduced.
Dec. 10-21	Final examinations for Fall courses, mid-terms for Fall/Winter courses.
Dec. 21	Take-home exams are due.
Jan. 5	Winter term classes begin.
Jan. 16	Last day for registration and course changes in Winter term classes.
Jan. 31	Last day for entire fee adjustment when withdrawing from winter courses or winter portion of two-term courses.
Feb. 16-20	Winter Break, classes suspended.
Mar. 24	Last day for tests or examinations in courses below 4000-level before the Final Examination period.
Apr. 8	Last day of Fall/Winter and Winter term classes. Last day for handing in term work and the last day that can be specified by a course instructor as a due date for term work for Fall/Winter and Winter term courses.
Apr. 8	Last day to withdraw from Fall/Winter and Winter term courses (academic purposes only).
Apr. 9-10	No classes or examinations take place. Review classes may be held, but no new material may be introduced.
Apr. 11-23	Final Examinations. Exams are normally held all seven days of the week.
Apr. 23	Take-home exams are due.

### **Addresses:**

Department of Philosophy:	3A35 Paterson Hall <a href="http://www.carleton.ca/philosophy">www.carleton.ca/philosophy</a> 520-2110
Registrar's Office:	300 Tory <a href="http://www.carleton.ca/registrar">www.carleton.ca/registrar</a> 520-3500
Student Academic Success Centre:	302 Tory <a href="http://www.carleton.ca/sasc">www.carleton.ca/sasc</a> 520-7850
Writing Tutorial Service:	4 <sup>th</sup> Floor, Library <a href="http://www1.carleton.ca/sasc/writing-tutorial-service/">http://www1.carleton.ca/sasc/writing-tutorial-service/</a> 520-6632
MacOdrum Library	<a href="http://www.library.carleton.ca/">http://www.library.carleton.ca/</a> 520-2735