

PHILOSOPHY 1301: MIND, WORLD AND KNOWLEDGE
CARLETON UNIVERSITY
PROFESSOR KEN FERGUSON

COURSE SYLLABUS

TERM: Summer Term, 2013
TIME: Tuesday/Thursday 18:05-20:55
LOCATION TBA
INSTRUCTOR: Ken Ferguson
OFFICE: Paterson Hall, 3A51 Paterson Hall
OFFICE HOURS: Tuesday and Thursday 17:-17:50
EMAIL: ken_ferguson@carleton.ca

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The aim of this course is to introduce students to philosophical reflection and inquiry by exploring a number of traditional problems concerning the nature of knowledge, minds, persons, language and related issues. Among the issues to be considered are the following: What conditions must be satisfied, for example, if a person is to know something? How can we respond to skeptics who insist that genuine knowledge is impossible? What is consciousness? Is it something purely physical, a state of the brain, perhaps, or is it something over and above the physical world? What are persons? Is there an afterlife? Has the development of modern science undercut any rational basis for religious belief?

These and other issues have occupied the attention of reflective people for thousands of years. Although they must have answers, it proves extremely difficult to know what they are, for they do not seem to be directly amenable to the methods and procedures that we normally rely upon in forming beliefs in science or everyday life. This does not mean, however, that we may choose whichever answers we like; opinions are of no interest unless they can be supported by reasoned arguments. After looking at how some of the most prominent philosophical thinkers, both today and in the past, have tried to answer these questions, we will try to arrive some conclusions ourselves.

REQUIRED TEXT

A course pack of readings with the title, *Philosophy 1301: Mind, World and Knowledge*, has been prepared by the Instructor. This course pack can only be purchased at **Haven Books**, which is located at 43 Seneca Street, just off Campus. Their phone number is: (613) 730-9888.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Midterm: There will be a midterm exam which will be worth 30% of the final grade. The format of the midterm will be as follows: one week before the midterm is held a list of study questions/topics will be distributed to students. On the midterm students will then be asked to answer a selection from this list.

Term Paper: Students will be required to write a term paper worth 30% of the final grade. The paper will be about 5 – 8 pages in length (1500 – 2000 words) and will be due in the final week of the course. It will not be a research paper that requires use of library or Internet sources but instead will consist of a critical discussion of some topic or issue central to the course. A list of topics, along with instructions and guidelines for writing the paper, will be available early in the term.

Final Examination: There will be a final exam, worth 40% of the final grade, scheduled during the examination period. It will have the same format as the midterm, and will cover only the material in the last half of the course.

CuLearn

Students must ensure that they have access to CuLearn for this course, as course notes as well as other information and material will be posted on it. (If you do not know how to access it, please contact the Instructor.)

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Although no official record of attendance will be taken, attendance in class is very important if students hope to do well. It is understood that students are responsible for any material they miss due to absence.

BRIEF LIST OF TOPICS TO BE COVERED

- The nature of philosophical inquiry
- The Scientific Revolution of the 17th Century
- Descartes' discussion of skepticism in his *Meditations*
- Descartes' foundationalist theory of knowledge and alternatives to it
- Locke's empiricist account of the nature of thought
- Are there any innate ideas?
- The distinction between primary and secondary qualities
- Berkeley's critique of Locke on primary and secondary qualities
- Idealism versus realism
- Attempts to prove God's Existence
- Hume's puzzle about causation
- Immanuel Kant's Copernican Revolution in philosophy
- The nature of scientific method
- The nature of consciousness
- The relation between minds and bodies
- Personal identity
- The concept of truth

OUTLINE OF TOPICS AND READINGS

I. Introduction: The Nature of Philosophy
Reading 1: Louis Pojman, <i>Philosophical Traditions</i> , Chapter 1, "What Is Philosophy?" (Toronto: Thomson/Wadsworth, 2006) pp. 3-11
II. Cartesian Skepticism
Reading 2: René Descartes, <i>Meditations</i> (selections), from <i>Philosophical Horizons: Introductory Readings</i> , (Toronto: Wadsworth publishing Company, 2006) pp. 162-188 Reading 3 (online): Gideon Rosen, "Cartesian Skepticism", available at http://www.princeton.edu/~grosen/puc/phi203/descartes.html

Reading 4 (online): Gideon Rosen, “Responses to Cartesian Skepticism”, available at: <http://www.princeton.edu/~grosen/puc/phi203/responses.html>

Reading 5: G.E. Moore, “Proof of an External World,” from *Epistemology: Contemporary Readings*, edited by Michael Huemer, (New York, Routledge, 2002) pp. 602-605

Reading 6 (online): Bertrand Russell, Chapter 2, “The Existence of Matter” from *The Problems of Philosophy* (Just Google “the problems of philosophy”)

Reading 7: Martin Curd, “Putnam’s Dismissive Reply”, from *Argument and Analysis: An Introduction to Philosophy*, by Martin Curd, (St. Paul Minnesota: West Publishing Company, 1992) pp. 523-524

Reading 8: Robert Audi, “The Structure of Knowledge,” from *Argument and Analysis: An Introduction to Philosophy*, edited by Martin Curd, (New York, NY, West Publishing Company, 1991) ... pp. 453-460

III. John Locke’s Empiricism: Thought, Perception and Reality

Reading 9: John Chaffee, *The Philosopher’s Way: A Text With Readings*, 2nd edition, (Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Pearson Prentice hall, 2005) pp. 274-293

Reading 10 (online): Peter Markie, “Rationalism Versus Empiricism”, Section 4, The Innate Concept Thesis, Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy,

<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/rationalism-empiricism/#4>

Reading 11 (online): Noam Chomsky, “On Language”, available at:

<http://www.answers.com/topic/language-chomsky-s-theory>

Reading 12 (online): “Chomsky’s Universal Grammar” from the website: *The Brain from Top to Bottom*, sponsored by McGill University, available at

http://thebrain.mcgill.ca/flash/capsules/outil_rouge06.html

IV. Bishop Berkeley’s Idealism

Reading 13: George Berkeley, *Three Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous*, “The First Dialogue” from *Philosophical Problems : An Annotated Anthology*, 2nd edition, edited by Lawrence Bonjour and Ann Baker, (Toronto, Pearson/Lonman, 2007) pp. 74-88

Reading 14 (online): Curtis Brown, “Berkeley: An Overview” (from the website of the Dept. of Philosophy, Trinity University, 2009) available at:

<http://www.trinity.edu/cbrown/modern/berkeley.html>

Reading 15 (online): Russell, Chapter IV, “Idealism,” from *The Problems of Philosophy*

V. Proofs of God’s Existence

Reading 16: René Descartes, Meditation 5: “Of The Essence of Material Things; and Again, of God, That He Exists” (This is in Reading 2)

Reading 17: Richard Taylor, “The Cosmological argument”, from *Philosophical Horizons: Introductory Readings*, ed by Steven Cahn and Maureen Eckert, (Toronto: Thomson-Wadsworth, 2006) pp. 36-41

Reading 18 (online): Ron Rosenbaum, “Has The Meaning of Nothing Changed?” from the website www.slate.com (to view article Google title)

Reading 19: William Paley, selections from *Natural Theology*, available at:

<http://philosophy.lander.edu/intro/introbook2.1/x4063.html>

Reading 20 (Optional online): Gideon Rosen, “The Argument from Design”, available at:

<http://www.princeton.edu/~grosen/puc/phi203/design.html>

Reading 21: David Hume, *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, Section X, “On Miracles” (selections) from the Website “LivingPhilosophy” at

http://www.livingphilosophy.org.uk/philosophy/David_Hume/on_Miracles.htm

VI. David Hume’s Puzzle about Causation

Reading 22: Manuel Velasquez, *Philosophy: A Text With Readings*, (Toronto, Wadsworth publishers, 2005) Chapter 5.7 : “Hume”, pp. 419-425

Reading 23: Michael Lacewing, “Hume on Causation”, Google author and title, or go to <http://cw.routledge.com/textbooks/alevelphilosophy/data/A2/Hume/HumeCausation.pdf>

Reading 24: David Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, (selections) taken from *Classic Philosophical Questions*, edited by Robert Mulvaney (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2009) pp. 298-305

Reading 25: A.C. Ewing, “Cause”, from *Argument and Analysis*, edited by Martin Curd ... pp. 496-505

VIII. The Mind/Body Problem

Reading 26: Manuel Velasquez, *Philosophy: A Text With Readings* (Toronto, Wadsworth publishers, 2005) Chapter 2, "How Do Mind and Body Relate?" pp. 104-118

Reading 27: Rene Descartes, Meditations (from Meditation VI) from *Twenty Questions*, edited by G.L. Bowie et al, (Boston: Wadsworth, 2011) pp.217-220

Reading 28 (online): Website: *The Mind Project* – Read the following modules: Functionalism: An Introduction; The Turing Test; Artificial Intelligence: Can a Machine Think?; and Searle and the Chinese Room Argument

Reading 29: Susan Blackmore, *Consciousness: An Introduction*, Chapter 2 “What is it Like to be ...?” (Oxford: Oxford university press, 2012) pp. 19-31

Reading 30 (online): Marvin Minsky, “Communicating With Alien Intelligence”, available at: <http://web.media.mit.edu/~minsky/papers/AlienIntelligence.html>

IX. Personal Identity

Reading 31: Manuel Velasquez, *Philosophy: A Text With Readings* 11th edition (Boston, Wadsworth publishers, 2011) Chapter 2.4: “Is There an Enduring Self? ”, and “Are we Independent and Self-Sufficient beings?”, pp.88-107

Reading 32: Derek Parfit and Godfrey Vesey, “ Brain Transplants and Personal Identity: A Dialogue” from *Introduction to Philosophy: Classical and Contemporary Readings*, 3rd edition, edited by Louis Pojman ... pp. 341-346

Reading 33: (optional online): Eric Olson, “Personal Identity”, Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/identity-personal/>

X. Science and Religion

Reading 34: Manuel Velasquez, *Philosophy: A Text With Readings*, 11th edition ... Chapter 5.5, Does Science Give us Knowledge? pp. 339-348

Reading 35 (online): “God vs Science: A Debate between Richard Dawkins and Francis

Collins”, Time Magazine, Nov. 5, 2006, available at: <http://richarddawkins.net/articles/4047>
Reading 36 (online): Richard Dawkins, “Is Science a Religion?” (Just Google the title.)
Reading 37 (online): Tim Crane, “Mystery and Evidence”, available at:
<http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2010/09/05/mystery-and-evidence/>

XI. The Concept of Truth

Reading 38: Russell, *The Problems of Philosophy* ... Chapter XII, “Truth and Falsehood”
Reading 39: “Truth”, Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, available at:
<http://www.iep.utm.edu/truth/#H3>

XII. Realism, Constructivism and Relativism

Reading 40: Manuel Velasquez, “Kant: Does the Knowing Mind Shape the World”, taken from *Philosophy: A Text With Readings* ... 394-403
Reading 41: Chris Swoyer, “The Linguistic Relativity Hypothesis”, *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, available at: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/relativism/supplement2.html>
Reading 42 (online): “Epistemological Relativism”, Anonymous (To download this article, Google the title.)
Reading 43 (optional online): Donald Davidson, “On the Very Idea of a Conceptual Scheme” (To download this article, Google the title.)

X. The Nature of (Linguistic) Meaning

Reading 44: William Hughes and Jonathan Lavery, *Critical Thinking*, (Toronto, Broadview Press, 2004) pp. 33-39
Reading 45 (online): A.J. Ayer, (selections from) *Language, Truth and Logic*, available at: <http://sqapo.com/ayar.htm>
Reading 46: William Lycan, *Philosophy of Language: A Contemporary Introduction*, (New York, Routledge, 2000) selections from Part II: “Theories of Meaning, pp. 90-7,102-7, 116-25
Reading 47 (Optional): Alexander Miller, “Introduction [to Saul Kripke’s *Wittgenstein on Rules and Private Language*]”, from *Rule-Following and Meaning*, edited by Alexander Miller and Crispin Wright, (McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2002) pp. 1-15

Department of Philosophy and Carleton University Policies (Summer 2013)

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 in the lower right corner of the cover sheet:
 - 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://www4.carleton.ca/calendars//ugrad/current/regulations/acadre/gsuniv14.html#14.3>)

Academic Accommodation 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 for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me 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 me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (if applicable).

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

Important Dates:

May 6	Classes start.
May 13	Last day for registration and course changes for early summer courses.
May 17	Last day for registration and course changes for full summer courses.
May 20	Statutory holiday, university closed.
May 31	Last day for a full fee adjustment when withdrawing from early summer courses.
June 7	Last day to withdraw from full summer courses with a full fee adjustment.
June 18	Last day for early summer 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 courses that end on this day.
June 18	Last day for academic withdrawal from early summer courses.
June 21-26	Final examinations.
July 1	Statutory holiday, university closed.
July 3	Late summer courses begin and full summer courses resume.
July 9	Last day for registration and course changes for late summer courses.
July 19	Last day for entire fee adjustment when withdrawing from late summer courses.
Aug. 5	Statutory holiday, university closed
Aug. 15	Classes follow a Monday schedule. Last day for late and full summer 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 courses that end on this day.
Aug. 15	Last day for academic withdrawal from late summer and full summer courses.
Aug. 17-22	Final examinations.

Addresses:

Department of Philosophy:	3A46 Paterson Hall www.carleton.ca/philosophy 520-2110
Registrar's Office:	300 Tory www.carleton.ca/registrar 520-3500
Student Academic Success Centre:	302 Tory www.carleton.ca/sasc 520-7850
Paul Menton Centre:	500 University Centre www.carleton.ca/pmc 520-6608
Writing Tutorial Service:	4 th Floor, Library www.carleton.ca/wts 520-6632
MacOdrum Library	http://www.library.carleton.ca/ 520-2735