

Looking at Philosophy, Part One

FYSM 1208 A – Fall 2017

Lectures: Mon/Wed 14:30-16:00

Classroom: 1200 Richcraft Hall

Professor: Christopher McGrath

Email: christopher.mcgrath@carleton.ca

Office: 3A54 Paterson

Office Hours: Tue/Thu 10:00-11:30 or by appointment

Class Description:

An examination of the following: What is logical thinking? Does God exist? Are values relative? Do we have responsibilities? What is a just society? Do we have free will? What is the mind? What is the nature of reality?

In this course, we will try to cover a broad introduction to philosophy. To do this, we'll be pursuing two general sorts of aims: we'll introduce some of the main fields of philosophical research, and we'll discuss some of the perennial questions which have occupied philosophical interest in both the professional and the popular sphere. The main fields of philosophical research will be introduced by considering multiple viewpoints on some of their definitive preoccupations, so that we can get a sense of both what sorts of questions these fields ask and what sorts of approaches have been influential in attempting to answer them. Similarly, our discussion of perennial philosophical questions will try to clarify what is compelling about multiple, conflicting sides on a given issue, so that we can better understand why people have continued finding the issue a challenge and an interest.

In this first part of the course, occupying us for the fall semester, we will pursue two broad themes. First, organized around a theme of "theoretical philosophy", we will introduce two major fields of philosophical research: epistemology, then logic and the philosophy of language. Second, organized around a theme of "practical philosophy", we will introduce two additional fields: ethics and political philosophy. Throughout our engagement with each of these fields, we will try to pay attention in a general way to the additional field of meta-philosophy; namely, the field which asks: what is philosophy? So one of our aims in this semester will be to obtain an introductory understanding of what these fields are, i.e. what sorts of questions they ask, and to understand some influential ways in which these questions have been approached. As time permits for discussion, we will also introduce some perennial philosophical questions that pertain to these fields: What relation does philosophy have to a feeling of cultural crisis? What relation does philosophy have to science? What relation does the mind have to the body? What demands does ethics make against our selfishness, and vice-versa? What relation does ethics have to science? And what challenges does globalization pose to traditional concepts of politics?

Schedule of Lectures and Reading Assignments:

| # | Date | Lecture | Reading |
|-------------------------------------------|--------|----------------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1 | Sep 06 | Introduction to the Course | |
| I. Introduction to Theoretical Philosophy | | | |
| 2 | Sep 11 | Introduction to Theoretical Philosophy | Descartes (I)^, Locke^ |
| 3 | Sep 13 | Discussion - Crisis and Culture | |

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| 4 | Sep 18 | Epistemology I: Foundationalism I | Descartes (II)^ |
| 5 | Sep 20 | Epistemology II: Anti-Foundationalism I | Daniels |
| 6 | Sep 25 | Epistemology III: Foundationalism II | Hume^ |
| 7 | Sep 27 | Epistemology IV: Anti-Foundationalism II | TBD... |
| 8 | Oct 02 | Discussion - Science and the Mind-Body Problem | |
| 9 | Oct 04 | Logic and Language I: Ideal Language | |
| | Oct 09 | Statutory Holiday - No Class | |
| 10 | Oct 11 | Logic and Language II: Ordinary Language | |
| 11 | Oct 16 | Review | |
| 12 | Oct 18 | Test #1 | |
| | Oct 23 | Fall Break – No Class | |
| | Oct 25 | Fall Break – No Class | |
| II. Introduction to Practical Philosophy | | | |
| 13 | Oct 30 | Introduction to Practical Philosophy | |
| 14 | Nov 01 | Discussion - Ethics and Selfishness | |
| 15 | Nov 06 | Ethics I: The Queerness of Norms | |
| 16 | Nov 08 | Ethics II: The Ordinarity of Norms | |
| 17 | Nov 13 | Ethics III: Supreme Goods in Ethics | |
| 18 | Nov 15 | Ethics IV: Experimentalism in Ethics | |
| 19 | Nov 20 | Discussion - Ethics and Science | |
| 20 | Nov 22 | Political Philosophy I: A Classical View | |
| 21 | Nov 27 | Political Philosophy II: Loyalty and Politics | |
| 22 | Nov 29 | Political Philosophy III: A Liberal View | |

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| 23 | Dec 04 | Political Philosophy IV: Freedom and Politics | |
| 24 | Dec 06 | Discussion - Politics and Globalization | |
| 25 | Dec 08* | Review | |
| | Dec 10-22 | Final Exam Period | |

Note: Study notes are due in those classes when a '^' sign is noted next to the reading which the study notes should summarize.

Assessment:

Final marks will be based on two tests and your weekly study notes. The first test will be held in class and the second during the final exam. These tests will be non-cumulative, the second covering only the material since the first test, and will involve short answer questions derived from the readings as they are covered in class. Study notes will be due most classes, and will involve a short (~0.5page per reading) summary of the reading for the day, following the method taught in class. Each test will be worth 40% of the final grade, and your study notes as a whole will be worth 20%. Consult the schedule of lectures for the dates of the in-class test and when study notes are due.

Note: Alternative assessment dates will be provided in the case of documented medical problems interrupting your studies, or similar unavoidable events. To obtain an alternate date, you must contact the professor as soon as is feasible, once you are aware of the problem.

Readings:

Note: Readings for at least much of the course are in the public domain and can be accessed online. For readings not available online, the relevant materials will be posted to the CULearn page or distributed in class. We may adjust the reading schedule as the term progresses, according to our ability to adequately cover the material.

Descartes (I), *Discourse on the Method*
Parts I and II

<http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/59>

Locke, *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*
Epistle (from the first edition- just the first seven paragraphs) and Introduction

<http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/10615>

Descartes (II), *Meditations on First Philosophy*
Meditation I and Meditation II

<http://www.wright.edu/~charles.taylor/descartes/mede.html>

Daniels, "Reflective Equilibrium" (*Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*)

* You can skip sections 2.2, 3.2.2, 4.2, and 4.3.

<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/reflective-equilibrium/>

Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*
Sections II-III

<http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/9662>

Department of Philosophy and Carleton University Policies (Fall/Winter 2017-18)

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
- 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 Final Exams:

If you miss a final examination (formally scheduled or take-home) because of circumstances beyond your control, you may apply for a deferral. You must apply within 3 working days after the scheduled date of your formally scheduled exam or within 3 working days after the due date of a take-home exam. Visit the Registrar's Office for more information:

<http://calendar.carleton.ca/undergrad/regulations/academicregulationsoftheuniversity/acadregsuniv2/#2.5>

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. <https://carleton.ca/registrar/academic-integrity/>

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 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:

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| Sept. 6 | Classes start. |
| Sept. 19 | Last day for registration and course changes for Fall term and Fall/Winter (two-term) courses. |
| Sept. 30 | Last day for entire fee adjustment when withdrawing from Fall term or two-term courses. |
| Oct. 9 | Statutory holiday. University closed. |
| Oct. 23-27 | Fall Break – no classes. |
| Nov. 24 | Last day for summative or final examinations in Fall term courses before the official examination period. |
| Dec. 8 | Last day of Fall term classes. Classes follow a Monday schedule. Last day for academic withdrawal from Fall term courses. 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 a Fall term course. |
| Dec. 10-22 | Final examinations for Fall term courses and mid-term examinations in two-term courses. Examinations are normally held all seven days of the week. |
| Dec. 22 | All take-home examinations are due. |
| Jan. 8 | Classes begin. |
| Jan. 19 | Last day for registration and course changes in the Winter term. |
| Jan. 31 | Last day for a full fee adjustment when withdrawing from Winter term courses or from the Winter portion of two-term courses. |
| Feb. 19 | Statutory holiday. University closed. |
| Feb. 19-23 | Winter Break – no classes. |
| Mar. 27 | Last day for summative or final examinations in Winter term or two-term courses before the official examination period. |
| Mar. 30 | Statutory holiday. University closed. |
| Apr. 11 | Last day of two-term and Winter term classes. Classes follow a Friday schedule. Last day for academic withdrawal from Fall/Winter and Winter courses. Last day for handing in term work and the last day that can be specified by a course instructor as a due date for two-term and for Winter term courses. |
| Apr. 14-26 | Final examinations for Winter term and two-term courses. Examinations are normally held all seven days of the week. |
| Apr. 26 | All take home examinations are due on this day. |

Addresses:

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| Department of Philosophy: | 3A35 Paterson Hall www.carleton.ca/philosophy 520-2110 |
| Registrar's Office: | 300 Tory www.carleton.ca/registrar 520-3500 |
| Academic Advising Centre: | 302 Tory www.carleton.ca/academicadvising 520-7850 |
| Writing Services: | 4 th Floor, Library http://www.carleton.ca/csas/writing-services/ 520-3822 |
| MacOdrum Library | http://www.library.carleton.ca/ 520-2735 |