

**FYSM 1210-A: Consciousness**  
**Course Outline**  
***Winter 2022***

**Class Information**

Dates: Wednesdays and Fridays

Time: 11:35 am – 12:55 pm

Location: Initially Online/Tory Building, Room 447

Course prerequisites: 1<sup>st</sup> year undergrad enrolled in either FASS or FPA

**Instructor Information**

Instructor: Josh Redstone

Office: N/A

E-mail: josh.redstone@carleton.ca

Office Hours: By Appointment

**Course Description**

What is consciousness? On the one hand, consciousness is familiar to all of us since we are conscious beings. On the other hand, it is one of the most mysterious and intriguing phenomena in the known universe! How have philosophers answered the question: what is consciousness? Over the coming weeks, you'll gain an appreciation of some of the answers to this question by surveying the interdisciplinary field of *consciousness studies*.

Our learning journey will begin with a look at why consciousness is such a perplexing phenomenon. We'll examine whether consciousness represents something truly mysterious, or whether we can understand how conscious experience works with the tools of philosophy and the cognitive sciences. As we proceed, we'll learn about various theories of consciousness, our conscious experiences of the world and of the self, and the relationship between subjective conscious experience and physical events in the brain. We'll also learn about the unconscious mind, agency and free will, altered states of consciousness, the evolution of consciousness, and whether artificial consciousness is possible. Along the way, you will have the opportunity to develop your reading, writing and critical thinking skills, and to engage in some very interesting thought experiments.

**Required Text**

**Blackmore, S. (2010). *Consciousness: An Introduction, Second Edition*. New York: Oxford University Press.** Students can access this text for free via Carleton University's Library Portal. It can also be purchased from Amazon and other online book retailers. *Note that while a third edition of the book is available, we will be following the second edition for this class.* Supplementary materials may be made available on Brightspace as the course progresses. Any supplementary materials will be made available well in advance of the class for which they are required.

## Course Website

The course website can be found on Brightspace (<https://brightspace.carleton.ca/d2l/home>). Here you will find this course outline, our class schedule, PowerPoint slides, and other supplementary materials that will be made available as we proceed through this course.

While the materials on Brightspace are helpful, they are no substitute for attending lectures. Please note that we may occasionally hold group discussions, debates, or question/answer sessions during lecture. These will not be reproduced and posted on Brightspace. Therefore, I highly recommend that you attend lectures regularly.

## Evaluation

| Grade Item                   | Percent of Final Grade | Due Date |
|------------------------------|------------------------|----------|
| Attendance and Participation | 10%                    | ---      |
| Reading Response 1           | 10%                    | Jan 28   |
| Reading Response 2           | 10%                    | Feb 18   |
| Term Paper Topic Proposal    | 20%                    | Mar 11   |
| Reading Response 3           | 10%                    | Apr 1    |
| Final Term Paper             | 40%                    | Apr 28   |

**Lecture Schedule:** Note, this schedule may be subject to minor adjustments.

| Date                        | Lecture Topic   | Readings                 |
|-----------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| Week 1<br>Jan. 10, Jan. 12  | Course Overview<br>The Problem                          | Introduction & Chapter 1 |
| Week 2<br>Jan. 19, Jan. 21  | The Problem cont'd...                                   | Chapter 2                |
| Week 3<br>Jan. 26, Jan. 28  | The Problem cont'd...<br><i>Reading Response #1 Due</i> | Chapter 3                |
| Week 4<br>Feb. 2, Feb. 4    | The World   | Chapter 4                |
| Week 5<br>Feb. 9, Feb. 11   | The World cont'd...                                     | Chapter 5                |
| Week 6<br>Feb. 16, Feb. 18  | The World cont'd...<br><i>Reading Response #2 Due</i>   | Chapter 6                |
| Week 7<br>Feb. 21-25        | <b>Reading Week - No Class</b>                          | None                     |
| Week 8<br>Mar. 2, Mar. 4    | The Self  | Chapter 7                |
| Week 9<br>Mar. 9, Mar. 11   | The Self cont'd...<br><i>Essay Proposal Due</i>         | Chapter 8                |
| Week 10<br>Mar. 16, Mar. 18 | The Self cont'd...                                      | Chapter 9                |
| Week 11<br>Mar. 23, Mar. 25 | The Brain   | Chapter 10               |

|                            |   |            |
|----------------------------|---|------------|
| Week 12<br>Mar. 30, Apr. 1 | The Brain cont'd...<br><i>Reading Response #3 Due</i> | Chapter 11 |
| Week 13<br>Apr. 6          | The Brain cont'd...                                   | Chapter 12 |

### Lectures

Lectures will take place on Wednesdays and Fridays from 11:35 am – 12:55 pm. Per Carleton University’s recent announcement, our first three weeks of class will take place over Zoom. Students should make sure they have the latest version of Zoom downloaded and installed on their computer. Links to our Zoom meetings will be made available on Brightspace. Should we return to in-person classes in February, lectures will be held in Room 447, Tory Building. In that case, please make sure that you review Carleton University’s policies on vaccinations, masks, and social distancing for the winter semester. If we do not return to in person classes in February, lectures will continue to be held via Zoom.

### Office Hours

Due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, office hours will be held virtually using my Discord Server. Office hours will be held by appointment/as needed. To schedule an appointment, you’ll first need to download the Discord app, set up your account, and join my server using this link: <https://discord.gg/NbrGNuD>

Please don’t be shy! I encourage everyone to request an appointment for a virtual meeting at any time if they have any questions or concerns.

### Attendance & Participation

Regular participation is expected in this seminar. I will be taking attendance at the beginning of each class. Your attendance throughout the semester will count toward 10% of your final grade. I also encourage everyone to participate during seminars by asking questions, offering your thoughts, or engaging in group discussions (to be led by myself).

### Readings & Reading Responses

You are expected to keep up with the readings assigned for this class. My lectures will help make the readings more accessible, but they are no substitute for reading the readings themselves. See the Lecture Schedule (above) and our course module on Brightspace for a list of readings for this class.

In this course you will complete THREE reading responses, each worth 10% of your final grade. Each response should be approx. 400-500 words in length, and any works or ideas referenced must be properly cited. Your task is to identify an interesting idea from one of the lectures and critically engage with it. I will provide direction on how to choose an idea for your response, how you should approach critical analysis, and how to cite sources properly during the first lecture. Each of the three reading responses is to be submitted electronically in .doc format on Brightspace by 11:59 pm on each of the due dates given above.

### **Term Paper Topic Proposal**

In this class you will be required to write a term paper, for which you must also write a proposal. Your topic proposal should be 500-600 words in length, and it should identify the topic of your term paper, your thesis statement and/or research question, and a rough outline of your intended paper. The proposal is due at 11:59 pm on March 11 and is worth 20% of your final grade. Submit your proposal on Brightspace in .doc format.

### **Term Paper**

Your term paper, which serves as the final take-home examination for this class, is to be handed in via Brightspace on April 28 at 11:59 pm (the last day of the exam period). It is worth 40% of your final grade. The paper is to be approx. 1250-1500 words long and should deal with an idea or concept from this class that interests you. It must be submitted electronically on Brightspace in .doc format. I will post an instructional video on my YouTube channel (<https://www.youtube.com/c/MindandMetal/>) – which I will also share on Brightspace – that explains how to select a topic, how to write your essay proposal, and how to write your final paper. I will provide detailed feedback on your essay topic proposals (see above), so I expect that the essays will be clearly and concisely written, be well-researched, and will cite sources properly. I encourage students to contact me if they have any questions about this assignment at any time.

### **Assignment Deferral Policy**

Students who are unable to complete a test or an assignment may ask for a deferral only under two conditions: illness or bereavement. Should you miss a test for these reasons, you must contact me by email within 24 hours of missing the test/assignment due date to request a deferral and arrange to provide me with the appropriate documentation (e.g. doctor's note, etc.).

### **Electronic Devices in the Classroom**

Students may use electronic devices in the classroom such as laptops, tablets, and smartphones, if (and only if) they are used to take notes, view lecture materials, and so forth. Otherwise, these devices are to be left on silent and put away so as not to distract the students around you.

### **Other Policies**

Please review the Policies and Important Dates and Deadlines on the following pages.

**Assignments:**

Please follow your professor's instructions on how assignments will be handled electronically. There will be NO hard copies placed in the essay box this coming year.

**Evaluation:**

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by the instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

**Deferrals for Term Work:**

If students are unable to complete term work because of illness or other circumstances beyond their control, they should contact their course instructor no later than *three working days* of the due date. Normally, any deferred term work will be completed by the last day of the term. Term work cannot be deferred by the Registrar.

**Deferrals for Final Exams:**

Students are expected to be available for the duration of a course including the examination period. Occasionally, students encounter circumstances beyond their control where they may not be able to write a final examination or submit a take-home examination. Examples of this would be a serious illness or the death of a family member. If you miss a final examination and/or fail to submit a take-home examination by the due date, you may apply for a deferral no later than *three working days* after the original due date (as per the University Regulations in [Section 4.3 of the Undergraduate Calendar](#)). Visit the [Registrar's Office](#) for further 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. ([Section 10.1 of the Undergraduate Calendar Academic Regulations](#))

**Academic Accommodation:**

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term:

- *Pregnancy or 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 [EDC](#) website.
- *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 test or exam requiring accommodation. After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with your professor to ensure accommodation arrangements are made.
- *Survivors of Sexual Violence:* As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and where survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per [Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy](#).
- *Accommodation for Student Activities:* Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation must be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Please contact your instructor 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.

**Important Dates:**

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| Sept. 8    | Classes start.   |
| Sept. 22   | 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.<br>Withdrawals after this date will result in a permanent notation of WDN on the official transcript.  |
| Oct. 11    | Statutory holiday. University closed.  |
| Oct. 25-29 | Fall Break – no classes.   |
| Nov. 26    | Last day for summative tests or examinations, or formative tests or examinations totaling more than 15% of the final grade, before the official examination period.  |
| Dec. 10    | Last day of fall term classes. <b>Classes follow a Monday schedule.</b> 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. 11-23 | Final examinations for fall term courses and mid-term examinations in two-term courses.<br>Examinations are normally held all seven days of the week.  |
| Dec. 23    | All take-home examinations are due.  |
| Jan. 10    | Classes begin.   |
| Jan. 24    | 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. Withdrawals after this date will result in a permanent notation of WDN on the official transcript.  |
| Feb. 21    | Statutory holiday. University closed.  |
| Feb. 22-25 | Winter Break – no classes.   |
| Mar. 29    | Last day for summative tests or examinations, or formative tests or examinations totaling more than 15% of the final grade, in winter term or fall/winter courses before the official examination period.  |
| Apr. 12    | Last day of two-term and winter term classes. <b>Classes follow a Friday schedule.</b> 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. 13    | No classes or examinations take place.   |
| Apr. 14-28 | Final examinations for winter term and two-term courses. Examinations are normally held all seven days of the week.  |
| Apr. 15    | Statutory holiday. University closed.  |
| Apr. 28    | All take-home examinations are due.  |

**Addresses:**

Department of Philosophy:

[www.carleton.ca/philosophy](http://www.carleton.ca/philosophy)

520-2110

Registrar's Office:

[www.carleton.ca/registrar](http://www.carleton.ca/registrar)

520-3500

Academic Advising Centre:

[www.carleton.ca/academicadvising](http://www.carleton.ca/academicadvising)

520-7850

Writing Services:

<http://www.carleton.ca/csas/writing-services/>

520-3822

MacOdrum Library

<http://www.library.carleton.ca/>

520-2735