

FYSM 1210B: Consciousness
Course Outline
Fall 2024

Class Information

Dates: Tuesdays and Thursdays

Time: 1:05 pm – 2:25 pm

Course Prerequisites: 1st year undergrad enrolled in either FASS or FPA

Instructor Information

Instructor: Dr. Josh Redstone

E-mail: joshredstone@cunet.carleton.ca

Office: Paterson Hall 3A61

Office Hours: By Appointment

Teaching Assistants:

Name: TBD

E-mail: TBD

Office hours: TBD

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, consciousness 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.

Accessing Course Materials

Important course materials are found on Brightspace. These materials include this course outline, our lecture schedule, readings, PowerPoint slides or notes that accompany the lectures, and other supplementary materials that may be made available throughout the class. To access these, log on to Brightspace (<http://brightspace.carleton.ca/>) using your Carleton University credentials. Then, select the course to navigate to the PowerPoint slides, lecture notes, Zoom Meeting links, etc.

Evaluation

Item	Weight of Grade	Date
Attendance and Participation	10%	N/A
Quiz #1	15%	Oct 1
Quiz #2	15%	Nov 15
Essay Proposal	15%	Nov 18
Quiz #3	15%	Dec 5
Final Essay (Take-Home Exam)	30%	Dec 21
TOTAL	100%	---

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

Date	Lecture Topic	Readings
Week 1 Sep 4	Welcome and Introduction	Course Outline and Blackmore (2010): Introduction
Week 2 Sep 10 & 12	"What's the Problem?"	Blackmore (2010): Chapter One
Week 3 Sep 17 & 19	"What's it like to be...?"	Blackmore (2010): Chapter Two
Week 4 Sep 24 & 26	"Conscious and Unconscious Action"	Blackmore (2010): Chapter Three
Week 5 Oct 1 & 3	"The Theatre of the Mind" Quiz #1	Blackmore (2010): Chapter Four
Week 6 Oct 8 & 10	"The Theatre of the Mind" cont'd.../"Attention and Timing"	Blackmore (2010): Chapter Four cont'd. and Chapter Five
Week 7 Oct 15 & 17	Essay Writing Lecture/Essay Topic Brainstorm	Essay Instructions

Week 8 Oct 21-25	Reading Week (No Classes)	None
Week 9 Oct 29 & 31	“Attention and Timing” cont’d.../“The Grand Illusion”	Blackmore (2010): Chapter Five cont’d. and Chapter Six
Week 10 Nov 5 & 7	“The Grand Illusion” cont’d.../“Egos, Bundles, and Multiple Selves”	Blackmore (2010): Chapter Six cont’d. and Chapter Seven
Week 11 Nov 12 & 14	“Egos, Bundles, and Multiple Selves” cont’d... Quiz #2	Blackmore (2010): Chapter Seven cont’d.
Week 12 Nov 19 & 21	“Agency and Free Will” Essay Proposal Due	Blackmore (2010): Chapter Nine
Week 13 Nov 26 & 28	“The Neural Correlates of Consciousness”	Blackmore (2010): Chapter Ten
Week 13 Dec 3 & 5	Special Topics Quiz #3	TBD

Lectures

Lectures will take place in person in Teraanga Commons (formerly Residence Commons), Room 208, on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1:05 pm – 2: 25 pm.

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).

Office Hours

Office hours will be held by appointment. You can also schedule an appointment with me by emailing me ahead of time. I can also hold virtual meetings via Zoom and/or Discord (by appointment) outside of my regular office hours if necessary.

Email and Class Discord Community Policies

If you need to reach me, then use your Carleton Email address to contact me at my Carleton email address (joshredstone@cunet.carleton.ca). I generally answer your emails within 24 hours (although I may not answer you right away after 5 pm, or on weekends). *Remember that all communications with me should take place using your Carleton University student email account. I will not answer your emails if they are not sent from this account.* Please do not email me with questions about anything that is already covered in this course outline.

Students who wish to may join the class Discord community. To do so, you must download and install the Discord app on your device. Once you have registered and logged in, you can join the community by clicking this link: <https://discord.gg/NbrGNuD>. My Discord community is a great way for students to interact amongst themselves online by asking questions, discussing the course material and assignments, or just getting to know one another better. *I expect everyone to be civil with one another while online. Any violations of the [Carleton University Human Rights](#)*

[Policies, Student Rights and Responsibilities](#), including but not limited to any kind of abuse, harassment, bullying, trolling, or disruptive behaviour, will result in you being removed from the server, and possible disciplinary action depending on the severity of the offence.

In short, treat everyone online and in the classroom as you wish to be treated yourself.

Quizzes

In this course you will complete three non-cumulative quizzes, which will take place in-person. Each quiz will cover key figures, terms, and concepts from the weeks prior to the quiz. They will consist of a mix of multiple choice, true/false, and short answer questions. Each quiz will be worth 15% of your final grade in this course. See the course schedule (above) for the dates of each quiz.

Essay Proposal

In this class you will be required to write an essay (see below). I will deliver a lecture on October 15 wherein we'll cover the requirements for this assignment, as well as how to write your essay proposal. During our class on October 17, we'll brainstorm some potential essay topics as a group. Your topic proposal should be approximately 300-500 words in length, and it should identify the topic of your essay, your thesis statement and/or research question, and a rough outline of your intended paper. The proposal is due at 11:59 pm on Monday, November 18 and is worth 15% of your final grade. Submit your proposal on Brightspace in .doc, .docx, or .pdf format (other file formats will not be accepted).

Final Essay (Take-Home Examination)

The final essay assignment serves as a take-home examination for this class. It is due at 11:59 pm on December 21. The paper is to be approximately 1500 words in length and should deal with an idea or concept from this class that interests you. I will provide detailed feedback on your essay proposals (see above), so I expect that the essays will be clearly and concisely written, will 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. Submit your term paper on Brightspace in .doc, .docx, or .pdf format (other file formats will not be accepted).

Plagiarism Policy Statement

Plagiarism is presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas, or work of others as one's own, *including content generated by AI tools* (e.g., Chat GPT...see below).

Plagiarism includes reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else's published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one's own without proper citation or reference to the original source. Examples of sources from which the ideas, expressions of ideas or works of others may be drawn from include but are not limited to: books, articles, papers, literary compositions and phrases, performance compositions, chemical compounds, art works, laboratory reports, research results, calculations and the results of calculations, diagrams, constructions, computer reports, computer code/software, material on the internet, content generated by artificial intelligence (AI) tools, and/or conversations.

Plagiarism is a serious academic offence which cannot be dealt with by your instructor alone. If you are found to have committed plagiarism, you can face serious penalties. The best practise to avoid plagiarism is to always cite anything you quote or paraphrase properly. If you have questions about how to make sure you avoid committing plagiarism, please ask me!

Policy on the Use of Generative AI and Similar Tools

Generative AI (e.g., ChatGPT) and any other similar tools are not to be used in this class. Any use of generative AI will be treated as plagiarism and prosecuted accordingly. As your instructor, I reserve the right to ask students to submit evidence of their work, including, e.g., their notes, rough drafts, video-recordings, photocopies or screenshots of the cover page and first cited page of each reference source, or any other material deemed relevant to the assignment. Furthermore, I reserve the right to ask students to explain the steps they took when completing any assignment in this course including quizzes, essay topic proposals, and final essays.

Assignment Deferral Policy

During this class, you may find that you are unable to complete an assignment owing to one of the following: illness (physical or mental), bereavement, extra-curricular activities, or a personal emergency. Should you miss any coursework 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, medical self-declaration form, 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.

Grading System

Letter grades assigned in this course will have the following percentage equivalents:

A+ = 90-100	B = 73-76	C - = 60-62
A = 85-89	B - = 70-72	D+ = 57-59
A - = 80-84	C+ = 67-69	D = 53-56
B+ = 77-79	C = 63-66	D - = 50-52

F Failure. No academic credit

DEF Official deferral (see "Petitions to Defer")

Requests for Academic Accommodation

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. Further details can be found on the next page.

Department of Philosophy and Carleton University Policies (Fall/Winter 2024-25)

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 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. 4 Classes start.

Sept. 17 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. Withdrawals after this date will result in a permanent notation of WDN on the official transcript.

Oct. 14 Statutory holiday. University closed.

Oct. 21-25 Fall Break – no classes.

Nov. 22 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. 6 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. 9-21 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. 21 All take-home examinations are due.

Jan. 6 Classes begin.

Jan. 17 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. 17 Statutory holiday. University closed.

Feb. 17-21 Winter Break – no classes.

Mar. 15 Last day for academic withdrawal from fall/winter and winter courses.

Mar. 25 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. 8 Last day of two-term 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 two-term and for winter term courses.

Apr. 9-10 No classes or examinations take place.

Apr. 11-26 Final examinations for winter term and two-term courses. Examinations are normally held all seven days of the week.

Apr. 18 Statutory holiday. University closed.

Apr. 26 All take-home examinations are due.

Addresses:

Department of Philosophy:

www.carleton.ca/philosophy

520-2110

Registrar's Office:

www.carleton.ca/registrar

520-3500

Academic Advising Centre:

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