

**PHIL 1000 B – Introductory Philosophy****Winter 2025****Instructor:** Christopher McGrath**Email:** christopher.mcgrath@carleton.ca**Office Hours:** Monday and Wednesday, 4:00-5:00pm**Office:** 3A54 Paterson Hall**Lecture Times:** Monday and Wednesday, 2:30-4:00pm**Classroom:** TBD**Course Description:**

*What is metaphysics? Who was Socrates? What is Freedom? This introduction sketches many branches of philosophy and the important problems associated with each. It introduces great philosophers, present and past, and traces enduring philosophical themes.*

The aim of this course is to provide students with a general introduction to philosophy, by guiding them through the independent reading and classroom discussion of primary texts drawn from the history of philosophical work, which will introduce them to some of the major fields of research which make up this work, major concepts and analyses which motivate these fields, and major figures who have contributed to their development. As we pursue these goals, a particular emphasis will be put on introducing students to some influential conceptions of the nature and function of philosophical thinking, as it has operated in the development of culture and as it may continue to be practiced in people's lives today.

There are many ways to organize a general introduction to philosophy, like the one we're pursuing in this course. The approach we will be taking this semester is to structure our class work around the reading of two sequences of texts: the four dialogues by Plato that tell the story of the last days and the death of his teacher Socrates, and the work of Descartes presented in his *Discourse on the Method* and *Meditations on First Philosophy*. These two sequences are certainly among the most classic sources used to begin a philosophical education and a reading of the great works of philosophy's history, so to be able to read both of them in this course permits us an excellent way to introduce philosophy. We will also find, as we read them in parallel, that not only do each of these sequences present a paradigm of philosophical foundations on their own, but moreover that reading them together will highlight with only greater force certain themes central to philosophical thinking.

We will begin in Unit One by posing the first question that must naturally arise: "What is philosophy?" The answer to this question can only be gradually worked out as the semester proceeds, but in Unit One we will try to make some progress on it by studying the origins of ancient Greek philosophy as they are dramatized in the story of Socrates' trial, and then look at the emergence of modern European philosophy as it's presented in Descartes' self-reflections. We will continue to follow these two narratives as we move into Unit Two, and focus more on a particular question central to philosophical work: "What is knowledge?" This way of proceeding through the material will continue in Unit Three, where we will introduce the themes of ethics and justice, and in Unit Four, where we will conclude the semester with an introduction to metaphysics. In each unit we will follow the developing stories of Socrates and Descartes, while supplementing this material with additional texts to help flesh out the philosophical ideas it raises.

By the end of the semester, students who have been active in the class work should find that they have worked through two of the most classic sequences of texts that have been used to begin a philosophical education, will have become acquainted with some of the basic ideas of two of history's most influential philosophers, will have been introduced to three of the most central fields of philosophical research, will have begun to hone the skills needed to think philosophically, and will have developed an understanding of some of the ways that philosophy has operated as an orientation in culture and in people's personal lives.

### **Lecture Schedule:**

Lecture topics may be adjusted pending our ability to adequately get through the material in class.

<b>Date:</b>	<b>Topic:</b>	<b>Reading Selections Taken From:</b>
	<b>Introduction</b>	
Jan 06	Introduction to the Course	n/a
	<b>Unit One: On Philosophy (Plato's <i>Euthyphro</i> and Descartes' <i>Discourse</i>)</b>	
Jan 08	The Beginning of Philosophy: "Mythos and Logos"	Guthrie's <i>A History of Greek Philosophy</i>
Jan 13	Before Philosophy: "Mythos"	Hesiod's <i>Theogony</i> and <i>Works and Days</i>
Jan 15	The Story of Socrates: His Confrontation with the Mythological Worldview	Plato's <i>Euthyphro</i>
Jan 20	The Story of Descartes: His Confrontation with the Teachings of His Time	Descartes' <i>Discourse on the Method</i>
Jan 22	What is Philosophy?	Horkheimer's <i>The Social Function of Philosophy</i>
Jan 27	<b>QUIZ #1</b>	n/a
	<b>Unit Two: On Knowledge (Plato's <i>Apology</i> and Descartes' <i>First and Fourth Meditation</i>)</b>	
Jan 29	The Story of Socrates: His Trial for Impiety	Plato's <i>Apology</i>
Feb 03	On the Athenians who are Trying Socrates: More about "Mythos"	Hesiod's <i>Theogony</i> and <i>Works and Days</i> , Supplement on Rhetoric
Feb 05	The Story of Descartes: Putting His Own Beliefs on Trial	Descartes' <i>Meditations</i>
Feb 10	Socrates and Descartes on Skepticism	Descartes' <i>Meditations</i> and Plato's <i>Apology</i>
Feb 12	What is Epistemology?	Supplement on Epistemology
Feb 17	<b>No Class - Winter Break</b>	
Feb 19	<b>No Class - Winter Break</b>	
Feb 24	<b>QUIZ #2</b>	n/a

	<b>Unit Three: On Justice (Plato's <i>Crito</i>)</b>	
Feb 26	Philosophy and Popularity: More about "Mythos"	Plato's <i>Apology</i> and <i>Crito</i>
Mar 03	Philosophy and Justice I: The Critique of Justice	Plato's <i>Republic</i>
Mar 05	Philosophy and Justice II: The Defense of Justice	Plato's <i>Crito</i> , Supplement on Rawls
Mar 10	Philosophy and Justice III: The Critique of Injustice	Thoreau's <i>Civil Disobedience</i>
Mar 12	What is Ethics?	Supplement on Ethics
Mar 17	<b>QUIZ #3</b>	n/a
	<b>Unit Four: On Metaphysics (Plato's <i>Phaedo</i> and Descartes' <i>Second and Sixth Meditation</i>)</b>	
Mar 19	The Human Being as a Thinking Being	Descartes' <i>Meditations</i> and Plato's <i>Phaedo</i>
Mar 24	Philosophy, Purification, and Rationality	Descartes' <i>Meditations</i> and Plato's <i>Phaedo</i>
Mar 26	The Objects of Thought	Descartes' <i>Meditations</i> and Plato's <i>Phaedo</i> and <i>Republic</i>
Mar 31	Mind and Body: The Subject of Thought and The Object of Thought	Descartes' <i>Meditations</i> and <i>Correspondence</i> and Plato's <i>Phaedo</i>
Apr 02	What is Metaphysics?	Supplement on Metaphysics
	<b>Conclusion to the Course</b>	
Apr 07	Conclusion	n/a

### **Assessment:**

*Students who are unable to attend and submit a quiz on the scheduled day should contact the instructor at the earliest reasonable opportunity if they still wish to submit the assessment. In cases that reasonably excuse the absence, an alternate quiz and testing date may be arranged at the instructor's judgment and pending a discussion of the issue with the student. Note that the final quiz is due on the last day of the semester. If students are unable to submit the quiz by this date but still wish to submit the assessment, they should likewise contact the instructor at the earliest reasonable opportunity so that possible accommodations may be discussed.*

*All assessments are expected to be conducted according to due standards of academic integrity. All assignments submitted must be the student's own work, and any quotations or paraphrases of work other than the student's own must be duly cited.*

*Students should expect to receive their first evaluated assessment (Quiz #1) returned in class on February 10<sup>th</sup>.*

<b>Due Date:</b>	<b>Assignment:</b>	<b>Proportion of Final Mark:</b>	<b>Conducted:</b>
JAN 27	Quiz #1	25%	In Class
FEB 24	Quiz #2	25%	In Class
MAR 17	Quiz #3	25%	In Class
APR 26	Quiz #4	25%	During Final Exam Period

- Quizzes: 100% total, 25% each

*Four quizzes will be conducted throughout the term, each being non-cumulative and covering the material only from the preceding unit. The first three quizzes will be conducted during scheduled class hours, while the fourth will be conducted as a take-home assignment during the final exam period. Quizzes may be a combination of fill-in-the-blank, short answer, and long answer format, and will be based on the material covered in our in-class discussions of the readings. Quiz #1 will focus on basic comprehension of the major terms and concepts of the unit as assessed by fill-in-the-blank and short answer questions, and as we proceed through the semester short answer and long answer questions requiring more independent thought regarding the material will be introduced and progressively be given more weight in the quizzes, so that by the end of the semester Quiz #4 will focus entirely on this style of question. Review materials will be provided noting the specific terms, concepts, and arguments students are expected to know for the quizzes.*

### **Readings:**

Students will be expected to keep up on a timely basis with the work of the class, which includes the expectation that they will be independently reading the material assigned for each lecture.

All course readings will be distributed through the course website so that the purchase of a textbook is not mandatory. Students are not required to purchase textbooks or other learning materials for this course.

However some students may prefer to purchase a hard copy edition of our major readings and so I will recommend some options for those students to consider. The main readings we will be doing this semester are drawn from two sequences of texts: the dialogues of Plato detailing the last days and the death of his teacher Socrates, and the philosophical writings of Descartes. These writings are available from a number of sources. If you wish to purchase a hard copy of the Plato readings, I would recommend (1) for a cheaper edition with just these texts, or (2) if you would like a complete edition of all of Plato's writings. For the Descartes readings, I would recommend (3).

1. Plato's *Five Dialogues: Euthyphro, Apology, Crito, Meno, Phaedo*, 2nd Edition. Translated by G.M.A. Grube and Revised by John M. Cooper. Hackett, 2002.

2. *Plato: Complete Works*, edited by J.M. Cooper. Hackett, 1997.

3. René Descartes' *Philosophical Essays and Correspondence*. Edited by Roger Ariew. Hackett, 2000.

**Communications Regarding the Course:**

All students are strongly encouraged to come to the scheduled office hours with any questions they have, whether about the course material, troubleshooting issues with the course, or just informal questions about philosophy. If their course schedule or other commitments overlaps with scheduled office hours, students are encouraged to speak to the instructor about meeting under other conditions, and either in-person or virtual office hours can be arranged at other times.

Students may also contact the instructor via email. Emails will be checked throughout the day at least up to 5:00pm on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, while emails sent outside these time periods may not be received until the next of these work days.

## 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](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. 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. <b><i>Classes follow a Monday schedule.</i></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. 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](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