

PHIL 1000: Introductory Philosophy (Winter 2023)

Class time/location: W/F 2:35 – 3:55 in Azrieli Theatre 101

Instructor: Matthew Scarfone, matthew.scarfone@carleton.ca

Office hours/location: TBD in 3A43 Paterson Hall

Teaching assistants: TBD

Coursepage: TBD

Course Description

Philosophy is an ancient discipline. It helps us think deeply, write clearly, and develop our reasoning skills. Philosophers focus on fundamental questions like: what is knowledge? are actions really right or wrong? can we prove that there is an external world? what is consciousness? does God exist? and so on. In philosophy, we subject these questions to intense scrutiny. This course serves as an introduction to these questions and others through some of the major subfields in philosophy: epistemology, ethics, metaphysics, philosophy of mind, philosophy of religion, aesthetics, feminist philosophy, and political philosophy. In looking at central questions from these subfields, we will be practicing philosophy as a skill, so that we can begin tackling some of the fundamental questions for ourselves.

Prerequisite: none

Preclusions: FYSM 1208, FYSM 1211, or PHIL 1100

Outcomes

Our course takes a thematic approach, allowing us to explore both historical and contemporary perspectives on prominent questions in philosophy. By the end of the course students should be able to (i) identify and reconstruct some basic philosophical arguments, (ii) plan and write a philosophical/argumentative essay, and (iii) identify, explain, and analyze some of the major issues throughout the history of philosophy.

Texts

There is one textbook you will need to purchase: *The Norton Introduction to Philosophy* 2nd Edition. Most of the class readings are in this textbook. Those which are not are indicated with † in the schedule below and will be posted to our coursepage. You can buy the textbook through the campus bookstore. Alternatively, you can purchase the 1st Edition elsewhere. The 2nd Edition has some readings not included in the 1st Edition, but I will post those differentiated readings on our coursepage so you can get either edition.

Plagiarism

Don't. Plagiarism is a serious offence that cannot be resolved directly by the course's instructor. The Associate Dean of the Faculty conducts a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Plagiarism consists of "presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one's own". This 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.

Evaluation

Overview

| | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| ▪ Argument Summary 1 | 15% of final grade | due January 25 |
| ▪ Argument Summary 2 | 15% of final grade | due February 15 |
| ▪ Midterm Essay | 25% of final grade | due March 8 |
| ▪ Argument Summary 3 | 15% of final grade | due March 29 |
| ▪ Take-home Exam | 30% of final grade | due April 27 |

45% (15% x3) Argument Summaries: Because this is a philosophy course, it is essential that we are able to accurately reconstruct the central arguments from the works we are studying. To practice this, you will submit three argument summaries throughout the term. These will each be 1 page, double-spaced (approx. 350 words). The due dates are **January 25, February 15, and March 29**. The specific readings and arguments that you should summarize will be noted one week in advance.

25% Midterm Essay: After gaining some familiarity with summarizing arguments, we will turn to analysis. A good philosophy essay will start by accurately reconstructing central arguments from the course, and then provide a reasoned defence of some claim. A good essay will make a small point, but it makes that point clearly and straightforwardly. Your Midterm should be 4 pages, double-spaced (approx. 1400 words). The due date is **March 8**. The specific topics and instructions will be noted 10 days in advance.

30% Take-home Exam: The exam is cumulative. It consists of short answer and essay questions regarding the entire course content, and will require a combination of argument reconstruction and analysis – i.e., the skills we have practiced throughout the course. The take-home exam will be released on **April 13** and is due by **April 27**.

Late Policy

1/3 alpha grade per 24 hours for the Argument Summaries and the Midterm Essay. No late submissions accepted for the Take-home Exam.

All the deadlines for your assignments are noted here, so you know them well in advance. But sometimes unforeseen circumstances arise that might prevent you from turning in work on time. To accommodate for this, you will have **five extension days** at your disposal for the entire course. You may use these extension days whenever and however you wish (except for on the Take-home Exam). No explanation for using these extension days is needed. Simply submit your assignment with a note that mentions how many of your (remaining) extension days are being used. For example, you can submit an assignment one day late and use one of your extension days; or you can submit an assignment five days late and use all five of your extension days; or you can submit two of your assignments two days late each and use four extension days; or you can refrain from using any extension days; and so on.

NB: If you are dealing with an extraordinary circumstance for which extension days would be insufficient (e.g. long-term illness, family crisis, etc.) please get in touch with me as soon as possible to make other arrangements.

Technology

Phones should be silenced and put away during class. Laptops and tablets should only be used for class-related purposes – please be considerate of the attention of those around you.

Communication

Given the class size, please be reasonable with your expectations regarding email response times. If you haven't received a response within 48 hours, feel free to send a quick "Just following up" message.

Schedule

| Date | Topic | Readings (page numbers for <i>Norton 2nd Edition</i>) | !!! |
|-------------------------|--|--|-----|
| Jan 11 | What is philosophy? | none | |
| §1. Epistemology | | | |
| Jan 13 | What is knowledge? | Plato <i>Meno</i> (137-142), Gettier "Is justified true belief knowledge?" (143-145) | |
| Jan 18 | How can we know about what we haven't observed? | Hume <i>Enquiry</i> , (166-174), G. Harman "The inference to the best explanation" (201-207) | |
| Jan 20 | Can we trust our senses? | Descartes <i>Meditations</i> (264-267), Hume <i>Treatise</i> (269-276) | |
| §2. Ethics | | | |
| Jan 25 | Which moral theory is correct? | Mill <i>Utilitarianism</i> (790-798), Kant <i>Groundwork</i> (801-810), Aristotle <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> (814-822) | |
| Jan 27 | What is the right thing to do? | Singer "Famine, affluence, and morality" (678-683), E. Harman "The moral significance of animal pain and animal death" (715-721) | |
| Feb 1 | Is morality objective? | Mackie "The subjectivity of values" (850-857), Enoch "Why I'm an objectivist about ethics (and why you are, too)" (†) | |
| Feb 3 | Midterm Prep: How to write a philosophy paper | none | |
| §3. Metaphysics | | | |
| Feb 8 | Are things as they appear? | Russell "Appearance and reality" (410-415), Berkeley "Three dialogues between Hylas and Philonous" (417-428) | |
| Feb 10 | What is there? | Yablo "A thing and its matter" (461-466), Unger "There are no ordinary objects" (467-473) | |

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| §4. Philosophy of Mind | | | |
| Feb 15 | Is mind material? | Descartes <i>Meditations</i> (312-319), Elisabeth of Bohemia “Correspondence with Descartes” (320) | |
| Feb 17 | What is consciousness? | Nagel “What is it like to be a bat?” (356-364), Jackson “Epiphenomenal qualia” (366-374) | |
| Winter Break | | | |
| §5. Philosophy of Religion | | | |
| Mar 1 | Does God exist? | Anselm “The ontological argument” (8-9), Aquinas “The five ways” (13-15), Paley “The argument from design” (20-27) | |
| Mar 3 | Is it reasonable to believe without evidence? | Pascal “The wager” (68-71), Clifford “The ethics of belief” (86-95), James “The will to believe” (97-105) | |
| §6. Aesthetics | | | |
| Mar 8 | What makes art good? | Hume “Of the standard of taste” (†), Cohen “High and low thinking about high and low art” (†) | |
| Mar 10 | What makes art art? | Danto “The artworld” (†) | |
| §7. Feminist Philosophy | | | |
| Mar 15 | What is a woman? | Beauvoir <i>The Second Sex</i> (†) | |
| Mar 17 | What does it mean to be gendered? | Barnes “Metaphysics of gender” (581-589), Young, “Throwing like a girl” (†) | |
| §8. Political Philosophy | | | |
| Mar 22 | How can the State be justified? | Hobbes <i>Leviathan</i> (1036-1043), Rousseau <i>The Social Contract</i> (1047-1053) | |
| Mar 24 | Does justice require equality? | Nussbaum “Political equality” (1146-1154), Okin “Is multiculturalism bad for women?” (1165-1173) | |
| §9. Make up week | | | |
| Mar 29 | TBD | | |
| Mar 31 | TBD | | |

| Wrap Up and Exam Preview | | | |
|---------------------------------|--|------|--|
| Apr 5 | Epistemology, Ethics, and Metaphysics | none | |
| Apr 7 | NO CLASS | | |
| Apr 12 | Mind, Religion, Aesthetics, Feminism, Politics | none | |
| Apr 13 | Take-home exam released | | |
| Apr 27 | Take-home exam due | | |

I will only make changes to the syllabus, including due dates, when unforeseen circumstances occur. The changes will be announced as soon as possible so that you can adjust your schedule and expectations accordingly.

Department of Philosophy and Carleton University Politics (Fall/Winter 2022-23)

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:

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| Sept. 7 | Classes start. |
| Sept. 20 | 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. 10 | Statutory holiday. University closed. |
| Oct. 24-28 | Fall Break – no classes. |
| Nov. 25 | 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. 9 | 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. 9 | Classes begin. |
| Jan. 20 | 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. 20 | Statutory holiday. University closed. |
| Feb. 20-24 | Winter Break – no classes. |
| Mar. 15 | Last day for academic withdrawal from fall/winter and winter courses. |
| 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. 7 | Statutory holiday. University closed. |
| Apr. 12 | Last day of two-term and winter term classes. Classes follow a Friday schedule. 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. 13-14 | No classes or examinations take place. |
| Apr. 15-27 | Final examinations for winter term and two-term courses. Examinations are normally held all seven days of the week. |
| Apr. 27 | 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