

# PHIL 2340 Philosophy and Popular Culture Carleton University

## Course Outline

**Term:** Summer 2023

**Time:** Tues & Thurs 11:35-2:25 pm

**Location:** Online

**Instructor:** Philippe-Antoine Hoyeck

**Teaching Assistant:** Kay Wagg

**Office:** N/A

**Office hours:** By appointment only

**Phone:** N/A

**Email:** [philippeantoin.hoyeck@carleton.ca](mailto:philippeantoin.hoyeck@carleton.ca)

**Email:** [kaywagg@cmail.carleton.ca](mailto:kaywagg@cmail.carleton.ca)

### Course Description

Philosophy is all around us; it permeates culture. This course explores philosophical questions through the lens of popular culture. Materials used may include films, shows, music, novels, video games, advertising, comic books, and so on. This semester, the course will focus on the genre of science fiction, in particular in film and television.

### Learning Outcomes

This course will serve as a general introduction both to the genre of science fiction and to the discipline of philosophy. In the first place, students will become familiar with the history of science fiction, its subgenres and characteristic elements. They will also learn to analyze texts using key works of science fiction in film and television from the 1960s to the 2010s.

In the second place, students will be introduced to contemporary debates in contemporary analytic philosophy. They will learn to think critically about arguments and thought-experiments in contemporary epistemology, metaphysics, and ethics. Special emphasis will be placed on argument reconstruction. No prior knowledge of philosophy is required.

### Course Materials

Materials for this course include both audiovisual materials and readings. Almost all required audiovisual materials can be accessed via the MacOdrum library website. The remaining materials may be accessed on Netflix Canada or purchased individually online. All readings are also available online via the MacOdrum Library website. Students do not need to purchase any books or course packs for this course.

### Course Requirements

This is an online course. All classes will take the form of synchronous lectures on Zoom. However, *lectures will be recorded, so the course can be followed asynchronously*. Students are expected to watch the relevant media, to review readings ahead of time and to come prepared to discuss them. Synchronous attendance is strongly recommended, but students who take the course asynchronously will not be disadvantaged in any way.

**Evaluations:**

Short written assignment #1 (due July 20 <sup>th</sup> )	15%
Short written assignment #2 (due August 3 <sup>rd</sup> )	15%
Final essay (due August 25 <sup>th</sup> )	20%
Unit quizzes (x4)	50%

**Course Calendar — Summer 2023**

<b>July 4<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Introduction</b> No readings
<b>Unit 1 - Knowledge of the External World</b>	
<b>July 6<sup>th</sup></b> <b>July 12<sup>th</sup></b> <b>July 13<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Media:</b> <i>The Matrix</i> (1999) <i>Inception</i> (2010) <b>Readings:</b> David Chalmers, "The Matrix as Metaphysics" (2003) Nick Bostrom, "Are You Living in a Computer Simulation?" (2003) Robert Nozick, "Happiness" (1989)  <b>Unit 1 Quiz open July 13<sup>th</sup> to July 16<sup>th</sup></b>
<b>Unit 2 - The Nature of the Mind</b>	
<b>July 18<sup>th</sup></b> <b>July 20<sup>th</sup></b> <b>July 25<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Media:</b> <i>Ghost in the Shell</i> (1995) <i>Ex Machina</i> (2014) <b>Readings:</b> David Chalmers, <i>The Conscious Mind</i> (1996), p. 1-12, 24-25, 93-99 John Searle, "Minds, Brains, and Programs" (1980), p. 417-424 (1980) Mary Anne Warren, "On Moral and Legal Status" (1973), p. 135-136.  <b>Unit 2 Quiz open July 25<sup>th</sup> to July 30<sup>th</sup></b>
<b>Unit 3 - Personal Identity and the Self</b>	
<b>July 27<sup>th</sup></b> <b>August 1<sup>st</sup></b> <b>August 3<sup>rd</sup></b>	<b>Media:</b> <i>Annihilation</i> (2018) <i>Star Trek TOS S1 E5 "The Enemy Within"</i> (1966) <i>Star Trek TNG S6 E24 "Second Chances"</i> (1993) <i>Star Trek VOY S2 E24 "Tuvix"</i> (1996)  <b>Readings:</b> Derek Parfit, <i>Reasons and Persons</i> (1984), excerpts Judith Jarvis Thomson, "The Trolley Problem" (1984)  <b>Unit 3 Quiz open August 3<sup>rd</sup> to August 6<sup>th</sup></b>
<b>Unit 4 - Free Will and Determinism</b>	
<b>August 8<sup>th</sup></b> <b>August 10<sup>th</sup></b> <b>August 15<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Media:</b> <i>12 Monkeys</i> (1995) <i>Minority Report</i> (2002)  <b>Readings:</b> Harry Frankfurt, "Alternate Possibilities and Moral Responsibility" (1969) Robert Kane, "The Dual Regress of Free Will" (2002).  <b>Unit 4 Quiz open August 15<sup>th</sup> to August 20<sup>th</sup></b>

## Department of Philosophy and Carleton University Policies (Summer 2023)

### **Assignments:**

Please follow your professor's instructions on how assignments will be handled electronically.

### **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:* 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. For more details, visit the [Equity Services website](#).
- *Academic accommodations for students with disabilities:* If you have a documented disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) at 613-520-6608 or [pmc@carleton.ca](mailto:pmc@carleton.ca) for a formal evaluation or contact your PMC coordinator to send your instructor your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term. You must also contact the PMC 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 instructor as soon as possible to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. For more details, visit the [Paul Menton Centre website](#).
- *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. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit: [carleton.ca/sexual-violence-support](http://carleton.ca/sexual-violence-support)
- *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:**

May 4	Classes start.	July 3	Statutory holiday, University closed.
May 10	Last day for registration and course changes for <u>early</u> summer courses.	July 4	Late summer courses begin and full summer courses resume.
May 17	Last day for registration and course changes for <u>full</u> summer courses.	July 10	Last day for registration and course changes for <u>late</u> summer courses.
May 17	Last day for a full fee adjustment when withdrawing from <u>early</u> summer courses. Withdrawals after this date will result in a permanent notation of WDN on the official transcript.	July 17	Last day to withdraw from <u>late</u> summer courses with a full fee adjustment. Withdrawals after this date will result in a permanent notation of WDN on the official transcript.
May 22	Statutory holiday, University closed.	Aug. 1	Last day for academic withdrawal from full and late summer courses.
May 31	Last day to withdraw from full summer courses with a full fee adjustment. Withdrawals after this date will result in a permanent notation of WDN on the official transcript.	Aug. 7	Civic holiday, University closed.
June 9	Last day for summative tests or examinations, or formative tests or examinations totaling more than 15% of the final grade for <u>early</u> summer courses before the official examination period.	Aug. 9	Last day for summative tests or examinations, or formative tests or examinations totaling more than 15% of the final grade for <u>late</u> summer and <u>full</u> summer courses before the official examination period.
June 16	Last day for <u>early</u> summer classes. Classes follow a Monday schedule.	Aug. 16	Last day of <u>late</u> and <u>full</u> summer term classes. Classes follow a Monday schedule.
June 17-18	No classes or examinations take place.	Aug. 17-18	No classes or examinations take place.
June 19-25	Final examinations.	Aug. 19-25	Final examinations.
June 25	Take-home examinations for <u>early</u> summer courses are due.	Aug. 25	Take-home examinations for <u>late</u> or <u>full</u> summer courses 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