PHIL 2501 A: Introduction to Philosophy of Mind

Summer 2019

Tuesdays & Thursdays 2:35-5:25 P.M.

*Instructor Information*

Dr. Nalini E. Ramlakhan

Department of Philosophy Paterson Hall

Office: 3A38 Paterson Hall

Office hours: Tuesdays 12:30 P.M.-2:00 P.M. or by appointment

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*Official Calendar Description*

An introduction to major philosophical issues concerning human cognition. Topics may include: the relation of mind to body, knowledge of other minds, the relation of mental states to personhood and personal identity, mental illness, consciousness, intentionality, action, mental realism.

Precludes additional credit for PHIL 2502.

Prerequisite(s): a course in philosophy or second-year standing.

*TA Information*

Information regarding teaching assistants for this course will be posted on CULearn.

*Description & Objective*

The purpose of this course is to introduce you to some of the major philosophical issues concerning human cognition. Some of the topics we will explore include, but are not limited to, the relationship between mind and body, knowledge of other minds, mind and knowledge of the external world, animal minds, personal identity, mental illness, the nature of consciousness, free will, and moral responsibility.

The goal of the course is to stimulate your thinking about the chosen issues and provoke you to form views about them. The objective is not merely for you to understand how philosophers and others have answered these questions, but to understand and evaluate their arguments, recognizing their strengths and weaknesses, possibly trying to improve upon them. You are required to formulate your own arguments and defend them. In order to assist with this, this class will engage in discussions that require your participation throughout the course. You are expected to come to class prepared with answers for discussion if a question is given before class, or to think about and discuss ideas with peers when a question or activity is presented in class.

*Course Website*

CULearn will be used for access to the course syllabus, grades, announcements, and discussion boards. It is recommended that you regularly check CULearn for course updates and other information. You are responsible for keeping current with the information on CULearn. You must check CULearn regularly for important messages and course information.

*Attendance*

In order to succeed in this course, you must attend class. It will be difficult to do well if you regularly skip class, especially since participation is part of your evaluation (you can’t participate if you’re not in attendance), and you will be missing out on valuable information. If you skip class for anything other than a verifiable reason, such as medical attention (please check with me if you’re unsure what is considered a verifiable reason), it is your responsibility to make up missed material. Please do not email me to ask if you’ve missed anything important. If you have a verifiable reason for missing class, I am happy to go over missed material during office hours. If you’re regularly attending class and having difficulty with course material, please see me during office hours.

Notes and/or lecture slides posted on CULearn are not a replacement for attending class, and the material posted is a guideline for content discussed in class, and lacks sufficient content for understanding the course material on its own. Student or professor materials created for this course (including presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the author(s). They are intended for personal use and may not be reproduced or redistributed without prior written consent of the author(s).

Please note that you must seek my permission to record lectures, and permission is granted based on academic accommodation.

*Email Protocols*

The typical response time to answer email is 48 hours, not including weekends. Please include the course title or course code (e.g., PHIL 2501) in the subject line of your email, and send emails from your Carleton University email address. Emails that do not follow these guidelines will not be opened and answered. If the answer to your question can be found on the course syllabus or was discussed in class, your email will not be answered. If your question is detailed and requires quite a bit of explaining, please see me during office hours.

Emails are for personal and/or administrative issues that arise. All other questions about course material can be asked before, after, or during class or during office hours. Grades won’t be sent over email, so please don’t ask.

*Electronic Device Policy*

You should not use your electronic device for emailing, messaging, posting on Facebook, etc. during class. Using your device in class to do anything other than take notes is distracting and disrespectful to me and your classmates. Succeeding in this course requires your full attention. If you multi-task during class time, you are likely to miss important information.

Your cell phones should be turned off or in silent mode during class. It should not be visible or audible during class. If, for whatever reason, you feel the need to be on your cellphone during class and are distracting others, you will be asked to leave. If you need to take an important call during scheduled class time, please let me know prior to class.

Laptops and tablets should be used for note-taking only if absolutely necessary. I suggest taking notes by hand since it is more effective.

*Other Classroom Policies*

Please do not wear any perfumes, colognes, or other heavily scented products. These trigger migraines in those with chemical sensitivities. Please refrain from eating foods with a high aroma in class.

Please arrive on time and leave **at the end of class.** Do not start packing up your things until the end of class. It gets loud and it is very distracting to other students. Do not leave in the middle of class unless you must use the washroom or there is an emergency. A break will be provided during class.

*Other Important Information*

During class discussions, please be respectful toward your peers and objective in your discussions. Please come and see me during office hours if you are uncomfortable with a specific topic.

*Evaluation*

Test 1

The purpose of this test is to ensure that you are understanding the ideas and theories we explore in class and the readings, and that you are developing the relevant evaluative skills. The test is worth 20% of your total grade. The test will begin at 2:35 PM and end at 3:55 PM. If you arrive late, you will not be given additional time to complete the test. If you arrive thirty minutes after the test has started, you will be unable to write the test. The test will be held on May 21st. Material presented during lectures/class discussions and material from required readings will be on the test. The test will take the form of short and long answer, multiple choice, and true/false.

A make-up test will be **considered** only upon presentation of verifiable documentation (e.g., a doctor’s note). A failure to provide one will result in a zero. It is your responsibility to contact me if you miss the test. You must contact me within 48 hours of the missed test to schedule a make-up. This is your responsibility. Arrangements must be made directly with me. There are no exceptions.

Test 2

The purpose of this test is to ensure that you are understanding the prominent theories discussed and their strengths and weaknesses, and evaluates your ability to think critically and defend or argue against specific theories and ideas. The test is worth 20% of your total grade and will be held on June 6th. The test will begin at 2:35 PM and end at 3:55 PM. If you arrive late, you will not be given additional time to complete the test. If you arrive thirty minutes after the test has started, you will be unable to write the test. Material presented during lectures/class discussions and material from required readings will be on the test. The test will take the form of short and long answer, multiple choice, and true/false.

A make-up test will be **considered** only upon presentation of verifiable documentation (e.g., a doctor’s note). A failure to provide one will result in a zero. It is your responsibility to contact me if you miss the test. You must contact me within 48 hours of the missed test to schedule a make-up. This is your responsibility. Arrangements must be made directly with me. There are no exceptions.

Participation

This course takes a flipped class and interactive approach to learning. You will be asked to participate during class discussions both individually and in groups. This enhances the learning experience and allows you to engage with important course material. Class participation is important if you want to do well in this course. You are expected to be in attendance so that you are able to participate. During group presentations (see below), you are expected to engage with the group presenting and ask and answer questions. Your participation grade is worth 30% of your final grade.

Group Presentation

You will be required to give a 7-10 minute presentation as a group of 4-5. Smaller groups (2-3) or those who opt, or who are asked, to work individually will be required to give a 5 minute presentation. You will be given sufficient class time to work on your presentations (see schedule below), but you are encouraged to meet with your group outside of class. Presentations will be held on the final day of class, June 18th, unless you make other arrangements with me. Groups are welcome to present on any issue in philosophy of mind, and must have their presentation topic approved by me no later than May 21st. Further instructions will be given in class during the first two weeks of class. Your presentation is worth 10% of your final grade, and members of the same group will receive the same grade unless a group member does not put in an equal share of work. If this occurs, members of the group must speak with me prior to the presentation date.

Mini In-Class Assignments

You will engage in course material by completing activities/assignments during class time. Assignments will enhance your ability to create and analyze arguments, debate theories and ideas, and contribute to scholarly writing. If you are unable to attend class when assignments take place, you will receive a 0 for the assignment unless verifiable documentation is received (e.g., doctor’s note). Upon verified documentation, a make-up assignment will be **considered.** There are a total of four assignments each worth 5% for a total of 20% of your final grade.

As much as possible, I will be using a flipped class approach where students support each other in learning activities in small groups. For some of the classes, traditional lecturing will be swapped in favour of a peer learning environment. It is in your best interest to attend all classes and participate as much as possible. Some in-class assignments may take the form of group work.

*Grades*

The standard time for returning graded tests, assignments, etc. is two weeks from the date of the test or assignment due date. If additional time is needed for grading, announcements will be made in class or posted on the CULearn website. If a disagreement over a grade occurs, you must see the TA who graded your work before seeing me. Upon review of your work, I will decide if you deserve a different grade. This grade may be higher or lower than your original grade. You must discuss grades with me during office hours. I will not discuss grades through email.

The deadlines and dates set for assignments and tests are non-negotiable. You are given all of the deadlines and dates for tests and assignments in advance, and should manage your time wisely. The value of tests and assignments will not be reweighed or redistributed.

Your official grade is made available once the term is over. Please do not email me before that asking what your final grade is.

*Readings & Textbook*

You should do all of the scheduled readings before class in order to understand lecture material, and I recommend reviewing the readings after class. These readings are required, and are listed below. All of the readings will be drawn from the following required textbook, which is available at the University Bookstore:

Blackmore, Susan. *Consciousness* (2nd edition). New York: Oxford University Press, 2012.

I may suggest readings outside of the course textbook. These suggestions will be made in class or on CULearn and are not required. They are recommendations for students who wish to further their interest in a specific topic.

Videos

Videos and films screened in class are the equivalent of required readings. You should pay attention and take notes, and not chat through them.

Disclaimer: I reserve the right to change the readings or topics assigned. Changes will not add substantial workload.

*Schedule*

May 7th

Introduction to the Course

Introduction to Consciousness Studies

Mind, World, and Knowledge

**Readings:** Blackmore, Sections One and Two

May 9th

Mind, World, and Knowledge

*Movie: The Matrix*

\*Assignment 1\*

**Readings:** No Readings

May 14th

Consciousness and Personal Identity

**Readings:** Blackmore, Section Three

May 16th

Consciousness and The Brain

\*Assignment 2\*

**Readings:** Blackmore, Section Four

May 21st

Test 1

Time reserved to work on group presentations (after Test 1)

**Readings:** No Readings

May 23rd

Evolution and Consciousness

Animal Minds

Animal Ethics

**Readings:** Blackmore, Section Five

May 28th

Animal Ethics

*Documentary: Live and Let Live*

\*Assignment 3\*

**Readings:** No Readings

May 30th

Artificial Consciousness

Unconscious Processing and Borderlands

**Readings:** Blackmore, Sections Six and Seven

June 4th

Altered States of Consciousness

*Documentary: Ancient Drugs*

**Readings:** Blackmore, Section Eight

June 6th

Test 2

Time reserved to work on group presentations (after Test 2)

**Readings:** No Readings

June 11th

Full class time reserved to work on group presentations

**Readings:** No Readings

June 13th

First-Person Approaches to Consciousness

\*Assignment 4\*

**Readings:** Blackmore, Section Nine

June 18th

Group Presentations

**Readings:** No Readings

**Department of Philosophy and Carleton University Policies (Summer 19)**

**Assignments:**

Unless specifically told otherwise by their instructors, students:

* Must not use a plastic or cardboard cover or paper clips.
* Must staple the paper (there is a stapler on the essay box).
* Must include the following on the first page: student name and number; course name and number; instructor’s name.
* No assignments will be accepted after the last day for handing in term work – see dates below.
* Assignments handed in through the essay box (just inside the glass doors, Paterson Hall, Floor 3A) must be dropped into the box by **4:15** on a regular business day in order to be date-stamped with that day’s date. Assignments handed in after 4:15 or on a non-business day will be stamped as having been handed in on the next business day.
* Students are required to keep copies of their assignments. If your paper is lost at any point, you will be considered not to have submitted it if you cannot produce a copy immediately on request.

**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 Examinations:**

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 2.4, 2.5 and 2.5.1 of the Undergraduate Calendar](http://calendar.carleton.ca/undergrad/regulations/academicregulationsoftheuniversity/acadregsuniv2/#2.5)). Visit the [Registrar’s Office](https://carleton.ca/registrar/special-requests/) 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. (Undergraduate Calendar Academic Regulations, section 12.0, or [Academic Integrity < Carleton University](https://calendar.carleton.ca/undergrad/regulations/academicregulationsoftheuniversity/academicintegrity/)

**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 [Equity Services](https://carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/) website.
* *Academic accommodations for students with disabilities:*The [Paul Menton Centre](https://carleton.ca/pmc/) 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.

**Important Dates:**

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| May 6 Classes start.  May 13 Last day for registration and course changes for early summer courses.  May 17Last day for registration and course changes for full summer courses.  May 20 Statutory holiday, University closed.  May 24 Last day for a full fee adjustment when withdrawing from early and full summer courses. Withdrawals after this date will result in a permanent notation of WDN on the official transcript.  June 11 Last day for summative tests or examinations, or formative tests or examinations totaling more than 15% of the final grade for early summer courses before the official examination period.  June 18 Last day for early summer classes.  Last day for handing in term work.  Last day for academic withdrawal from early summer courses.  June 21-27 Final examinations.  June 27 Take-home examinations for early summer courses are due. | July 1 Statutory holiday, University closed.  July 2 Late summer courses begin and full summer courses resume.  July 9 Last day for registration and course changes for late summer courses.  July 22 Last day to withdraw from late summer courses with a full fee adjustment. Withdrawals after this date will result in a permanent notation of WDN on the official transcript.  Aug. 5 Civic holiday, University closed  Aug. 7 Last day for summative tests or examinations, or formative tests or examinations totaling more than 15% of the final grade for late or full summer courses before the official examination period.  Aug. 14 Last day of late and full summer term classes.  **Classes follow a Monday schedule.**  Last day for handing in term work.  Last day for academic withdrawal from late summer and full summer courses.  Aug. 17-23 Final examinations.  Aug. 23 Take-home examinations for late or full summer courses are due. |

**Useful Contacts:**

Department of Philosophy: 3A35 Paterson Hall – (613) 520-2110 Registrar’s Office: 300 Tory Building – (613) 520-3500

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