

COURSE OUTLINE: PHIL 3002
17th CENTURY PHILOSOPHY
Winter 2025: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10:05 – 11:25 AM

Professor Melissa Frankel
Office: Paterson Hall 3A53
Office Hours: TBA on Brightspace
Email: Melissa.frankel@carleton.ca, or through Brightspace

Course description:

(from the Undergraduate Calendar)

European philosophy of the 17th century. Representative works of writers such as Francis Bacon, Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz, and Locke.

Prerequisite: 0.5 credits in philosophy and second-year standing in a philosophy program, or permission of the department.

(for Winter 2025)

The early modern period of philosophy in Europe, which (depending on how one counts these things) covers philosophical work from the late 16th to late 18th century, is often associated with the work of 17th century philosopher René Descartes, sometimes called the ‘father of modern philosophy.’ Without taking a position on the accuracy of this narrative, in this class we will look in depth at some of the epistemological and metaphysical themes that Descartes articulates, and the ways in which some of his contemporaries and successors in the 17th century develop those themes. We will consider theories of substance and cause – how many substances / kinds of substances are there? One, two, an infinite number? Do substances causally interact with one another – can substances be causes at all, or is God the only possible cause? We will consider questions about God and the creation of the universe – can we prove that God exists? What is our relation to God? Does God create the best of all possible worlds – or is this perhaps the only possible world? We will explore these and other questions primarily through the work of Descartes, Malebranche, Spinoza, and Leibniz.

Required text (available at the Carleton bookstore, or online):

Modern Philosophy: An Anthology of Primary Sources (Third Edition). Eds. Roger Ariew and Eric Watkins. Hackett 2019. **Current cost of this text at the Carleton bookstore: \$79.50 CAD (new).**

If you purchase this anthology (which I recommend), please bring it to class with you, as we will be reading the texts carefully together.

An electronic copy of the anthology will also be on reserve through the library’s ARES reserve system, which is accessible through the Brightspace page for the course. Please note that the library has a **limit of 3 users at a time** for this electronic copy.

Course material may also sometimes include readings that are not in the required anthology. Those readings will be made available on Brightspace.

Important information about the required anthology:

Note about anthology editions: For this course, I am assigning the third edition of this anthology, which came out in 2019. You may find copies of the second edition available for purchase. You are welcome to use either the second or the third edition, but when I assign readings, **I will only provide references to the third edition**, and it is also possible that some of the readings will only be available in the third edition. If you choose to use the second edition, you will be responsible for finding the right page numbers for the readings, and you will also be responsible for finding readings that might not be available in that edition. **All references in all course assignments (including the final exam) must be to the third edition of this anthology.** You are welcome to contact me to discuss this.

Note about online sources: My preference is that you use the course anthology; as per above, if you don't purchase a copy, the anthology will be available online, through ARES. That said, many of the primary sources in this anthology can also be found online in various places. However, some online sources are abridged or otherwise altered (or weirdly translated). If you wish to consult an online source, you **must** discuss this with me, so I can help you evaluate whether the source is appropriate. Unless you consult with me, **you may not use outside online sources for any of your course assignments, including the final exam.**

Note about other editions of primary texts: Some of you may wish to purchase some of the primary sources individually (rather than in an anthology.) If you wish to do this, please let me know. I will be happy to recommend specific editions of the texts. If you do this, you will still be asked to provide references to the anthology in course assignments.

Email:

You can email me using the email address at the top of this course outline, or through Brightspace. If you choose not to email me through Brightspace, then please be sure that your email is sent from your **official Carleton email address**. You should also check your Carleton email account regularly, because when I send you emails, it will be to that email address. Please allow 24-48 hours for an email response; if I do not respond after 48 hours, please feel free to send me a gentle nudge.

Office hours:

Office hours this semester will be in person. You will find my office hours listed on the Brightspace page for the course. I am also available (and happy!) to meet virtually outside of office hours, by appointment; send me an email and we will work out a time.

Brightspace:

It is important for you to regularly check the Brightspace page for the course, which is where you will find (among other things) the most up-to-date information regarding our schedule of readings and dates for assignments and tests, which are open for revision through the semester.

Students are responsible for reading and responding appropriately to all information distributed through Brightspace. Information provided on Brightspace will be considered to have been provided to all registered students within 24 hours of posting.

Technology requirements:

This course is an **in-person** course. The majority of the course will take place on campus, during regularly scheduled course hours. That said, some elements of the course require use of technology, including supplemental readings. I may also occasionally schedule Zoom class meetings or Zoom office hours, if needed. For these and other purposes, you will need access to a computer or some other device that allows you to reliably access the internet, with a camera and microphone for videoconferencing. If you anticipate having any problems with technology or internet access, please email me so that we can discuss possible solutions.

Evaluation:

1. Passage discussions (2 x 10%)

At **two** points during the semester, you will be provided with a short prompt on Brightspace. For each prompt, I will provide a passage from the assigned readings. You will be asked to write a short discussion of that passage (**about 1-1.5 pages, double-spaced**), connecting the text to the material that we go over in class. Each passage discussion will be worth **10%** of your final grade, for a total of **20%**.

Not all students will be provided with the same two prompts. Instead, the class will be divided into three groups (Group 1, Group 2, and Group 3) on Brightspace. Group membership will be randomly assigned. You will be informed of your group number within the first week of the semester. Your group membership will determine which passage discussion prompts will be assigned to you. *Please note:* even though group membership determines your prompts, passage discussions should be the result of **individual work; collaboration is not permitted**.

Passage discussions will be due two weeks after prompts are made available on Brightspace. Passage discussions should be in either .doc, .docx, or .pdf format, and should be uploaded to Brightspace. **I will not accept emailed documents.**

Passage discussion dates (tentative) (seriously):

- Group 1:
 - Passage 1 assigned on January 16; due on January 30
 - Passage 2 assigned on February 27; due on March 13
- Group 2:
 - Passage 1 assigned on January 23; due on February 6
 - Passage 2 assigned on March 6; due on March 20
- Group 3:
 - Passage 1 assigned on January 28; due on February 11
 - Passage 2 assigned on March 20; due on April 3

2. In-class tests (2 x 25%)

There will be two in-class tests. These tests will be non-cumulative. Tests will be each be worth **25%** of your final grade, for a total of **50%**.

Tests will be closed-book, but you will be permitted to bring a one-page, double-sided “cheat sheet” to each, on which you may write or type whatever you like, using whatever sized fonts / margins you like. (Note however that you will not be permitted to use any visual aids such as magnifying glasses during the test.)

In-class test dates (tentative) (seriously)

- Test 1: Feb 13, 2025
- Test 2: March 25, 2025

3. Take-home exam (1 x 30%)

There will be one cumulative take-home examination, which will count towards **30%** of your final grade. The exam will primarily be essay-based; you will be expected to adhere to the normal requirements for essays, including citation requirements. Collaboration on this exam is not permitted.

Finalized instructions for the take-home exam will be available on Brightspace on the last day of classes for the semester: April 8, 2025.

Take-home exam due date (firm) (seriously)

- The take-home exam will be due at the end of final exam period: April 26, 2025.

It is university policy that no student work for the Winter 2025 semester may be accepted after April 26, 2025. As such, I will not be accepting late take-homes, and no extensions will be granted.

If you require extra time, you will need to obtain a deferral through the Registrar’s Office. Please feel free to let me know if this is the case, as I will be glad to support you through the deferral process, if such support is desired.

Course policies for tests and assignments:

Lateness penalties for passage discussion assignments: Passage discussion assignments will be penalized by one third of a grade per day for every day that they are late. For instance, an assignment marked B+ on its merits will be reduced to a B on the first day that it is late, and to a C- on the fifth day.

Extensions for passage discussion assignments: Extensions for passage discussions *may* be granted if requested at least 24 hours in advance and with a valid reason (e.g., medical reason).

Academic Integrity Policy: According to Carleton's Academic Integrity Policy, there are a number of activities that constitute violations of academic integrity, including plagiarism, collaborating on non-collaborative assignments, misrepresenting or falsifying your work, and more. For the purposes of this course, **this includes the use of computer applications or tools, such as artificial intelligence tools (AI)**; use of such tools will automatically be considered to be violations of academic integrity.

I reserve the right to ask you to submit evidence of your work, including e.g. rough notes, drafts, or an explanation of the steps taken in completing the assignment.

If you are at all unsure about what constitutes plagiarism or a violation of academic integrity, please feel free to contact me and we can discuss it. You can also consult Carleton's Academic Integrity Policy, which you can find here: <https://carleton.ca/secretariat/wp-content/uploads/Academic-Integrity-Policy-2021.pdf>

Philosophy department and university policies: see the final page of this course outline.

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. <i>Classes follow a Monday schedule.</i> 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