**Animal Consciousness**

**(PHIL 4220 B/PHIL 5200 B)**

Carleton University, Winter 2024

**Day/Time:** Mondays, 11:35am – 2:35pm

Prof. Myrto Mylopoulos

**Office:** 3A47 Paterson Hall

**Office Hours:** By appointment (over Zoom)

**E-mail:** Myrto.Mylopoulos@carleton.ca

**Course Website:** <https://brightspace.carleton.ca/d2l/home/224755>

**Course Description**

In this seminar, we will examine the topic of animal consciousness through the lens of contemporary philosophical work, drawing on insights from empirical research and findings where relevant. Questions addressed will include:

* What is the best approach to studying animal consciousness?
* What, if anything, can major theories of consciousness tell us about animal consciousness?
* Which animals are conscious?
* What is the moral significance of consciousness?

**Course Objectives**

Our aim in this course will be to support and develop the following:

* An understanding of key issues surrounding the philosophy of consciousness as it pertains to nonhuman animal minds.
* An ability to read philosophical work in a careful, active, and engaged manner.
* An ability to articulate, in writing, a critical viewpoint on an issue clearly and effectively.
* An ability to critically summarize a philosophical work and guide a group discussion of its content.
* An ability to clearly and effectively argue in favour of a position on a debate within the philosophy of animal consciousness in a well-researched paper.

**Course Materials**

* All required readings and additional resources will be made available on Brightspace.

**Course Requirements**

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| **Course Component** | **Percentage of Final Grade** |
| Reading Assignments (Perusall) | 20% |
| Class Participation  | 10% |
| Critical Reading Responses (x 5) | 25% |
| Class Presentation | 15% |
| Term Paper (Incl. outline worth 10%) | 30% |

**Reading Assignments**

Readings will be assigned for every class session except the first. All readings are required, except for those marked ‘optional’ on the course syllabus. While optional, you are strongly encouraged to do these readings, as they’ll help both to fill in the background for and expand on some of the material we’ll be covering in class.

To work through the readings, we will be using Perusall, a collaborative e-reading platform that enables you to tackle the readings together as a group in between our class sessions. The reading assignments you complete on Perusall will be worth **20%** of your final grade. They will be due the day before class **(Sundays) by 8pm**.

We will discuss further details on the first day of class. Reading assignments on Perusall will only be counted from week 3 onwards, to allow you to try out the platform and gain some familiarity with it first.

To register for a free Perusall account, go here: <https://app.perusall.com/> For info on how to use it, please see the *Guide to Perusall* posted under Week 1 on Brightspace.

**Class Participation**

Participation is a key component of this course and worth **10%** of your final grade.

There are three main ways to actively participate in this class:

1. By attending class and contributing to our weekly class discussion. You can do so by raising questions pertaining to the course material, answering questions asked by myself or one of your classmates, and generally being active and engaged throughout the duration of each class.

2. By contributing to the weekly class discussion about the course readings on Perusall (especially going above and beyond what is strictly required for the reading assignment).

3. By asking questions during the Q&A session after a class presentation.

If for any reason you expect to miss class, I would appreciate your sending me a quick note letting me know.

**Critical Reading Responses**

You may write **up to six** critical reading responses (max. 500 words each) over the course of the semester (starting in week 3). Only your **best five** responses will be counted. These will each be worth **5%** of your final grade for a total of **25%**.

The responses are intended to give you an opportunity to critically reflect, in structured writing, on the main claims, arguments, or theories you encounter in the readings. (You may wish to use discussion activity on Perusall as a springboard for these responses.) As such, **you should not merely summarize** the material you are addressing, though of course some summary will be necessary, but rather **evaluate** and **expand** on it.

I will go over a grading rubric in class and some general guidelines for how you might approach these responses.

Responses will be submitted via Brightspace and are due **by 8pm on the day before** the start of the class for which the relevant reading is assigned **(Mondays)**. **Late submissions will not be accepted.**

You are encouraged to use ideas you develop in these responses as the basis for your term paper.

You may not use generative AI tools (e.g., chatGPT) for these responses.

**Class Presentation**

Starting in **week 3**, each of you will have the opportunity to do a class presentation, which will be worth **15%** of your final grade. Presentations will be approximately 15-20 mins. with an additional 10 mins. for Q&A (25-30 mins. total). You will sign up for presentation slots on a first-come, first-served basis.

The presentation will be based on one of the optional readings (my suggestions are indicated with an asterisk) from those listed for the week on which you’re presenting.

You should:

(i) Email/talk to me at least one week before your presentation date to let me know what article you will be presenting on.

(ii)Prepare a handout (3-4 pages) or slides that will guide the class through your presentation. The content should consist primarily of a focused summary of the article you’ve chosen, a reflection on how it relates to the main (required) readings for that week, and some discussion questions for the class.

(iii) Email me your handout/slides **by 10am** on the morning of the class during which you’ll be presenting.

A marking rubric for the presentations will be made available on Brightspace.

**Term Paper/Take-Home Exam**

You will write a term paper of **8-10 pages** due on **April 25th** and worth **30%** of your final grade.

You will write a one-page outline for this paper, to be submitted no later than **Friday, March 15th**. This will be worth **10%** of your paper grade, and will be graded on the basis of completion only (pass/fail).

We will discuss further instructions as well as guidelines on the use of AI tools, e.g., chatGPT, in class closer to the due date.

**Course Readings/Topics Schedule**

**\*Details TBA. Check Brightspace for most up-to-date information.\***

**Week 1 (Jan. 8):**

**Week 2 (Jan. 15):**

**Week 3 (Jan. 22):**

**Week 4 (Jan. 29):**

**Week 5 (Feb. 5):**

**Week 6 (Feb. 12):**

**Week 7 (Feb. 19): No Class (Fall Break)**

**Week 8 (Feb. 26):**

**Week 9 (March 4):**

**Week 10 (March 11):**

**Week 11 (March 18):**

**Week 12 (March 25):**

**Week 13 (April 1):**

**Week 14 (April 8):**

**Department of Philosophy and Carleton University Policies (Fall/Winter 2023-24)**

**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](https://calendar.carleton.ca/undergrad/regulations/academicregulationsoftheuniversity/examinations/#deferred-final-exams)). 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. ([Section 10.1 of the Undergraduate Calendar Academic Regulations](https://calendar.carleton.ca/undergrad/regulations/academicregulationsoftheuniversity/academic-integrity-and-offenses-of-conduct/#academic-integrity-policy))

**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](https://carleton.ca/edc/teachingresources/administrative-pedagogy/academic-accommodations/) 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 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](https://carleton.ca/sexual-violence-support/).
* *Accommodation for* [*Student Activities*](https://carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf)*:* 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 for Winter Term:**

Jan. 8 Classes begin.

Jan. 19 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. 19 Statutory holiday. University closed.

Feb. 19-23 Winter Break – no classes.

Mar. 15 Last day for academic withdrawal from fall/winter and winter courses.

Mar. 27 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.

Mar. 29 Statutory holiday. University closed.

Apr. 10 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. 11-12 No classes or examinations take place.

Apr. 13-25 Final examinations for winter term and two-term courses. Examinations are normally held all seven days of the week.

Apr. 25 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