

SKILLED ACTION (PHIL5000)

Carleton University, Fall 2022

Day/Time: Tuesdays, 11:35am – 2:35pm **Location:** Richcraft Hall 3224

Prof. Myrto Mylopoulos

Office: 3A47 Paterson Hall **Office Telephone:** 613-520-2600 x3943

Office Hours: Mondays, 2:45-3:45pm (in person); Tuesdays, 2:45-3:45pm (in person); and by appointment (over Zoom)

E-mail: Myrto.Mylopoulos@carleton.ca

Course Website: <https://brightspace.carleton.ca/d2l/home/147938>

Course Description

Reflection on skilled action in a range of areas, including sports, the performing arts, and everyday life, reveals a number of fascinating questions to explore within the philosophy of action, philosophy of mind, epistemology, philosophy of perception, aesthetics, and moral psychology. Among the questions we will examine in this course are the following: What is the nature of skill, and how does it differ from mere habit? Is skill essentially tied to the knowledge an agent possesses? If so, what is the best way to understand this knowledge and the precise relationship that skill bears to it? How is skill related to automaticity and control? What is the role, if any, of consciousness, attention, and metacognition in the control of skilled action? Do they simply interfere with the smooth execution of skill as is commonly supposed, or might they be important, and even necessary? Finally, what can be said about the relationship between skill and moral capacities? Can the classical view that virtue itself is a skill that moral agents develop with practice over time be sustained? We will explore these questions and others through the lens of contemporary philosophy and, where relevant, cognitive psychology and neuroscience.

Course Objectives

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

- An understanding of key issues surrounding the philosophy of skill within the context of major debates in epistemology, philosophy of mind, action theory, and ethics.
- 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 skill in a well-researched paper.

Course Materials

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

Course Requirements

Course Component	Percentage of Final Grade
Reading Assignments (Perusall)	20%
Class Participation	10%
Critical Reading Responses (x6)	30%
Class Presentation	10%
Term Paper (Incl. abstract worth 5%)	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 (Mondays) by 5pm.

We will discuss further details and a grading rubric 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: <https://support.perusall.com/hc/en-us/categories/360002173133-Students>

Class Participation

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

There are four 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.
4. By attending office hours to discuss course material.

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 seven** critical reading responses (max. 500 words each) over the course of the semester (starting in week 2). Only your **best six** responses will be counted. These will each be worth **5%** of your final grade for a total of **30%**.

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 5pm 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.

Class Presentation

Starting in **week 3**, each of you will have the opportunity to do a class presentation, which will be worth **10%** 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 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 me/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

You will write a term paper of **15-20 pages** due on **Friday, December 9th** and worth **30%** of your final grade.

You will write an abstract (**150 – 250 words**) for this paper, to be submitted no later than **Friday, November 18th**. This will be worth **5%** of your paper grade, and will be graded on the basis of completion only (pass/fail).

We will discuss further instructions/guidelines in class closer to the due date.

Electronic Devices in the Classroom

Please turn off (or silence) your cell phones and put them away before the start of class. The use of laptops for the **sole purpose** of note-taking is permitted.

Office Hours and Availability

My regular office hours are as stated up top. I'm happy to meet you at other days/times as well—just make arrangements with me over email or in person.

I will do my best to respond to your emails within 24 hours, but I may not always be able to do so. If you think your message will require a lengthy reply from me, please arrange to come and see me in person instead.

Course Readings/Topics Schedule (may be revised)

Week 1 (Sept. 13): Introduction

Week 2 (Sept. 20): Knowing How and Knowing That

- Ryle (1949), *The Concept of Mind*, Ch.2
- Ryle (1945), “Knowing How and Knowing That”
- Optional:
 - Pavese (2016a), “Skill in Epistemology: Skill and Knowledge”
 - Pavese (2016b), “Skill in Epistemology: Skill and Know How”

Week 3 (Sept. 27): Intellectualism/Anti-Intellectualism About Skill and Know How

- Stanley & Williamson (2001), “Knowing How”
- Noë (2005), “Against Intellectualism”
- Optional:
 - Devitt (2011), “Methodology and the Nature of Knowing How”*
 - Snowdon (2004), “Knowing How and Knowing That: A Distinction Reconsidered”

Week 4 (Oct. 4): Intellectualism/Anti-Intellectualism About Skill and Know How

- Pavese & Beddor (2022), “Skills as Knowledge”
- Stanley & Williamson (2017), “Skill”
- Optional:
 - Beddor & Pavese (2021), “Practical Knowledge Without Luminosity”

- Shepherd & Carter (Forthcoming), “Knowledge, Practical Knowledge, and Intentional Action”*

Week 5 (Oct. 11): Skill and Psychological Reality

- Levy (2015), “Embodied Savoir-Faire: Knowledge-How Requires Motor Representations”
- Stanley & Krakauer (2013), “Motor Skill Depends on Knowledge of Facts”
- Optional:
 - Pavese (2019), “The Psychological Reality of Practical Representation”*

Week 6 (Oct. 18): Skill and Psychological Reality (cont’d)

- Dreyfus & Dreyfus (1988), *Mind Over Machine: The Power of Human Intuition and Expertise in the Era of the Computer*, Ch.1
- Dreyfus (2002), “Intelligence Without Representation: Merleau Ponty’s Critique of Representation”
- Optional:
 - Dreyfus (2005), “Overcoming the Myth of the Mental: How Philosophers Can Profit from the Phenomenology of Everyday Expertise”*

Week 7 (Oct. 25): No Class (Fall Break)

Week 8 (Nov. 1): Skill and Psychological Reality (cont’d)

- Fridland (2014), “Reflections on Skill: They’ve Lost Control”
- Christensen, Sutton, McIlwain (2016), “Cognition in Skilled Action: Meshed Control and the Varieties of Skilled Experience”
 - Fridland (2017), “Skill and Motor Control: Intelligence All the Way Down”*
 - Mylopoulos & Pacherie (2020), “Beyond Automaticity: The Psychological Complexity of Skill”

Week 9 (Nov. 8): Skill and Psychological Reality (cont’d)

- Montero (2015), “Is Monitoring One’s Actions Causally Relevant to Choking Under Pressure?”
- Bermudez (2017), “Do We Reflect While Performing Skillful Actions? Automaticity, Control, and the Perils of Distraction”
- Optional:
 - Papineau (2015), “Choking and the Yips”*
 - Papineau (2013), “In the Zone”

Week 10 (Nov. 15): Skill and Virtue

- Annas (1995), “Virtue as Skill”
- Stichter (2016), “Practical Skills and Practical Wisdom in Virtue”
- Optional:
 - Stichter (2007), “Ethical Expertise: The Skill Model of Virtue”*

Week 11 (Nov. 22): Skill and Virtue (cont’d)

- Dougherty (2020), “The Importance of Roles in the Skill Analogy”
- Shepherd (2022), “Practical Structure and Moral Skill”
- Optional:
 - Stalnaker (2010), “Virtue as Mastery in Early Confucianism”*

Week 12 (Nov. 29): Skill and Virtue (cont’d)

- Fridland (2017), “Motor Skill and Moral Virtue”
- Stokes & Nanay (2020), “Perceptual Skills”
- Optional:
 - Stokes (2020), “On Perceptual Expertise”*

Week 13 (Dec. 6): Skill and Aesthetics

- Nguyen (2019), “Games and the Art of Agency”
- Optional:
 - Matthen (2015), “Play, Skill, and the Origins of Perceptual Art”*

Department of Philosophy and Carleton University Policies (2022/2023)

In accordance with the Carleton University Undergraduate Calendar (p 34), the letter grades assigned in this course will have the following percentage equivalents:

A+ = 90-100	B+ = 77-79	C+ = 67-69	D+ = 57-59
A = 85-89	B = 73-76	C = 63-66	D = 53-56
A - = 80-84	B - = 70-72	C - = 60-62	D - = 50-52
F = Below 50			

Grades entered by Registrar:

WDN = Withdrawn from the course

DEF = Deferred

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 takehome 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

The University Academic Integrity Policy defines plagiarism as "*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. Examples of sources from which the ideas, expressions of ideas or works of others may be drawn from include but are not limited to: books, articles, papers, literary compositions and phrases, performance compositions, chemical compounds, artworks, laboratory reports, research results, calculations and the results of calculations, diagrams,

constructions, computer reports, computer code/software, material on the internet and/or conversations. Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

- any submission prepared in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, paraphrased material, algorithms, formulae, scientific or mathematical concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another's data or research findings without appropriate acknowledgement; and
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another's work and/or failing to use quotations marks.

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. Penalties are not trivial. They can include a final grade of "F" for the course.

Statement on Student Mental Health

As a University student you may experience a range of mental health challenges that significantly impact your academic success and overall well-being. If you need help, please speak to someone. There are numerous resources available both on- and off-campus to support you. Here is a list that may be helpful:

Emergency Resources (on and off campus): <https://carleton.ca/health/emergencies-and-crisis/emergencynumbers/>

Carleton Resources:

- Mental Health and Wellbeing: <https://carleton.ca/wellness/>
- Health & Counselling Services: <https://carleton.ca/health/>
- Paul Menton Centre: <https://carleton.ca/pmc/>
- Academic Advising Centre (AAC): <https://carleton.ca/academicadvising/>
- Centre for Student Academic Support (CSAS): <https://carleton.ca/csas/>
- Equity & Inclusivity Communities: <https://carleton.ca/equity/>

Off Campus Resources:

- Distress Centre of Ottawa and Region: (613) 238-3311 or TEXT: 343-306-5550, <https://www.dcottawa.on.ca/>
- Mental Health Crisis Service: (613) 722-6914, 1-866-996-0991, <http://www.crisisline.ca/>
- Empower Me: 1-844-741-6389, <https://students.carleton.ca/services/empower-me-counselling-services/>
- Good2Talk: 1-866-925-5454, <https://good2talk.ca/>
- The Walk-In Counselling Clinic: <https://walkincounselling.com>

Statement on Pandemic Measures

It is important to remember that COVID is still present in Ottawa. The situation can change at any time and the risks of new variants and outbreaks are very real. There are [a number of](#)

[actions you can take](#) to lower your risk and the risk you pose to those around you including being vaccinated, wearing a mask, staying home when you're sick, washing your hands and maintaining proper respiratory and cough etiquette.

Feeling sick? Remaining vigilant and not attending work or school when sick or with symptoms is critically important. If you feel ill or exhibit COVID-19 symptoms do not come to class or campus. If you feel ill or exhibit symptoms while on campus or in class, please leave campus immediately. In all situations, you should follow Carleton's [symptom reporting protocols](#).

Masks

Masks are no longer mandatory in university buildings and facilities. However, the university continues to recommend masking when indoors, particularly if physical distancing cannot be maintained. Personally, I will be wearing a mask for the duration of each class session. I'm aware that personal preferences regarding optional mask use will vary greatly, and I ask that we all show consideration and care for each other during this transition.

Vaccines

While proof of vaccination is no longer required to access campus or participate in in-person Carleton activities, it may become necessary for the University to bring back proof of vaccination requirements on short notice if the situation and public health advice changes. Students are strongly encouraged to get a full course of vaccination, including booster doses as soon as they are eligible and submit their booster dose information in [cuScreen](#) as soon as possible. Please note that Carleton cannot guarantee that it will be able to offer virtual or hybrid learning options for those who are unable to attend the campus.

All members of the Carleton community are required to follow requirements and guidelines regarding health and safety which may change from time to time. For the most recent information about Carleton's COVID-19 response and health and safety requirements please see the [University's COVID-19 website](#) and review the [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#). Should you have additional questions after reviewing, please contact covidinfo@carleton.ca.

Requests for Academic Accommodations

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

- **Pregnancy obligation:** Please write to me 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 accommodation regarding a formally-scheduled final exam, you must complete the Pregnancy Accommodation Form ([click here](#)).
- **Religious obligation:** Please write to me 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 [click here](#).

- 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 me your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and 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 me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (if applicable).
- 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: <https://carleton.ca/equity/sexual-assault-support-services>
- 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 will be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Write to me 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.
<https://carleton.ca/senate/wpcontent/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf>

Important Dates:

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. <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. 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. 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 academic withdrawal from fall/winter and winter 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 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.

Important Contact Information

Department of Philosophy:
www.carleton.ca/philosophy
Tel: 613-520-2110

Registrar's Office:
www.carleton.ca/registrar
Tel: 613-520-3500

Academic Advising Centre:
www.carleton.ca/academicadvising
Tel: 613-520-7850

Writing Services:
<http://www.carleton.ca/csas/writing-services/>
Tel : 613-520-3822

MacOdrum Library
<http://www.library.carleton.ca/>
Tel : 613-520-2735