

PHIL 1301. Mind, World, and Knowledge

Carleton University - Fall 2020

Course website (must visit frequently): <https://mindworldknowledge.weebly.com/>

* Note that the content of the course will mainly be on that site, and not on CuLearn. We will only use CuLearn for evaluations. Apart from that, everything will be on <https://mindworldknowledge.weebly.com/>

Instructor: Charles Côté-Bouchard, PhD (<https://www.charlescotebouchard.com/>); **TA:** see website

Contact charles.cote-bouchard@carleton.ca

Please allow 48 hours to get a response; you may send me a reminder after 48 hours

Office Hours Schedule a Zoom appointment via the course website at:

mindworldknowledge.weebly.com/office-hours.html

Course description

Objectives. This course introduces central philosophical notions, questions, theses, and arguments about the mind (philosophy of mind), reality (metaphysics), and knowledge (epistemology). Drawing from both historical and contemporary sources in the Western tradition, we will focus on three philosophical questions that combine these areas. First, how, if at all, can we know about the external world? Second, how, if at all, can we know about minds? Finally, is there such a thing as knowable objective truth, or is all knowledge relative or constructed?



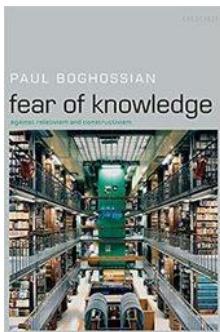
Learning outcomes. Become familiar with the methods of philosophy and with important notions, questions, theses, and arguments in philosophy of mind, metaphysics, and epistemology. Develop fundamental philosophical and critical thinking skills. These include the ability to (i) construct, defend, and evaluate arguments in one's own words, (ii) understand and think creatively (both individually and in teams) about complex concepts, arguments, theories, and problems, (iii) understand and analyze complex academic texts, (iv) write clearly and concisely, and (v) discuss constructively and respectfully with others about complex questions.

Course format and weekly schedule: Because of COVID-19, this course will be entirely online. Its format will be a blend of pre-recorded (asynchronous) video lectures and mandatory Zoom (synchronous) classes. Unless specified otherwise, our weekly schedule will be the following.

Tuesdays 2:30 Pre-recorded (asynchronous) lecture uploaded on course website

Thursdays 2:30-4:00 Live (synchronous) online class via Zoom

Course materials



Book you must purchase. Paul Boghossian. 2006. *Fear of Knowledge: Against Relativism and Constructivism*. Oxford University Press.

Other readings: PDFs freely available on the course website at
<https://mindworldknowledge.weebly.com/calendar-and-content.html>

Technological requirements. Computer with Internet connection, microphone, and video camera. Please visit this page for details: <https://carleton.ca/its/help-centre/faq-technical-specs-for-new-students/>

How this online course will work

Visit the course website frequently. The course website (<https://mindworldknowledge.weebly.com/>) is where you will find the material and instructions for each week. Each week has its own page, under Calendar and Content. The site offers many additional resources, such as an FAQ page, a forum, optional readings, podcasts, and videos.

Asynchronous video lectures. A pre-recorded video lecture will be uploaded every week. It will be accessible via that week's page on the website. Video lectures are meant to complement the readings and prepare you for the Zoom class. So, you must do the readings before watching the video. You then have a couple of days to watch the lecture before attending the Zoom meeting.

Synchronous Zoom classes. Two days after the video lecture has been uploaded, we will meet synchronously via Zoom. Attending the weekly Zoom meeting is mandatory. It is meant to (i) complement the video lecture and the readings, and (ii) give you the opportunity to ask questions about the material. It will require your active participation and attention. It will usually feature a team exercise using breakout rooms and a Q&A session. You will need a microphone to talk with your teammates and to ask questions. Turn on your camera during the team exercises and when you ask a question. Turn off your microphone when you are not talking, but don't forget to unmute when you are talking!

Readings. For the first half of the course, the readings will be available as PDFs on the website. For the second half, the mandatory readings will be from Boghossian's book. You will still have to check the website to every week to know what part of the book to read and see what optional readings and media is available for that week.

Forum (visit frequently). Online courses can be cold and impersonal. To fight this and to help us build a community, we will use a discussion forum, accessible via the course website. You are strongly encouraged to use it for things like: asking for help with material you don't understand; asking for help with logistical or technical issues; helping others with those issues; discussing philosophical questions raised in class, etc. Note, also, that the forum is where I will make weekly announcements and post homework feedback.

Online civility. The course will feature a lot of synchronous and asynchronous discussion. For that to work, it is crucial that you all observe basic norms of civility and respect. Please start by taking a look at this page: <https://carleton.ca/online/online-learning-resources/netiquette/>. To ask a question or make a comment during Zoom meetings, either raise your hand virtually, say that you have a question in the chat, or write your question directly in the chat. Do not interrupt others. When debating, state your own views directly and substantively: focus on reasons, assumptions and consequences rather than on who is offering them, or how. Engage others' views in the same terms. No topic or claim is too obvious or controversial but claims and opinions have a place in the discussion only when they are presented in a respectful, collegial, and constructive way. Violations of these guidelines will not be tolerated. Please reach out to me if you feel like those norms are not being respected.

If you have questions. Before emailing or booking an appointment for a 1-on-1 chat, please do the following. First, check the syllabus and the FAQ page on the website. Chances are you will find your answer there. Second, check the forum to see if that question has not been asked and answered there already. If you still don't have an answer after that, then you may either email me directly, post your question on the forum, or book an appointment. On that topic, please visit the following pages before the start of the semester <https://carleton.ca/online/online-learning-resources/communicating-for-academic-success/> and <https://carleton.ca/online/online-learning-resources/emailing-your-instructor/>.

Resources for online learning. Please visit the following pages for helpful advice and tips on how to transition to online courses: <https://carleton.ca/online/getting-started-in-your-online-course/>; <https://carleton.ca/online/online-learning-resources/>; <https://students.carleton.ca/>

If you have accessibility requirements. Please visit: <https://carleton.ca/accessibility/student-support-services/>

Assessments and grading policy

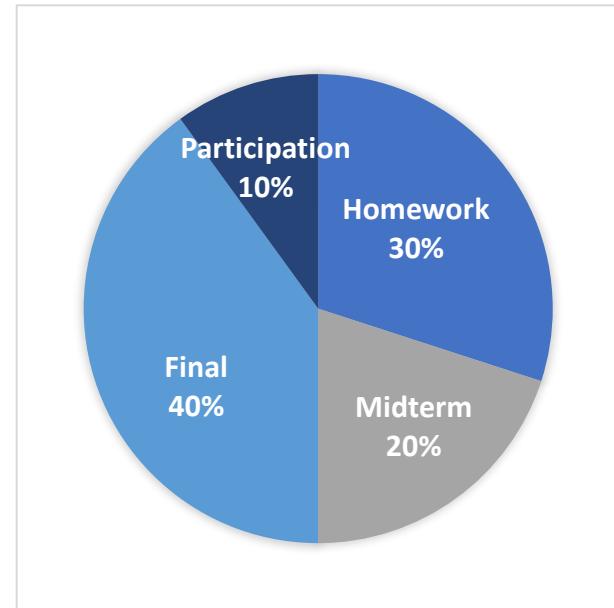
Summary of assessments

Points	Assessment	Description	Questions distributed on	Deadline
30%	Five homework	Online quizzes (CuLearn) Only four best count.	See schedule	See schedule
20%	Midterm take-home essay	1000-1200-word essay about material from weeks 1 to 7	October 15 th	November 5 th 2:29pm
40%	Final take-home essay	1200-1500-word essay about material from weeks 8 to 13	December 3 rd	December 23 th 11:59pm
10%	Participation	Taking part in team exercises on Zoom		N/A

Carleton's grading system	
A+	90-100
A	85-89
A-	80-84
B+	77-79
B	73-76
B-	70-72
C+	67-69
C	63-66
C-	60-62
D+	57-59
D	53-56
D-	50-52
F	0-49

Homework. You will do five homework during the semester. They will be online quizzes on CuLearn. The format will be multiple choice, true or false, and the like. They will test your comprehension of the readings and the lectures. You will have about a week to do each of them. Only your four best homework will count. Late homework won't be accepted. The homework answers will be posted on the forum, with explanation, soon after the deadline.

Midterm and final take-home essay. You will write two papers in which you will answer questions about the material from the readings, the lectures, and the Zoom classes. You will be required to explain parts of the material clearly, concisely, accurately, and in your own words. To a certain extent, you will also be asked to give and defend your own view, with your own arguments. You will submit both papers electronically, on CuLearn, in .doc or .docx format. You will have about three weeks to write each essay. Late papers will receive penalties. You will lose 5% of your assignment grade for each day late. You will receive more instructions when the midterm questions will be distributed, including a grading rubric and writing advice. You will receive feedback within three weeks of submitting your essays.



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. <https://carleton.ca/registrar/academic-integrity/>

Participation. As mentioned above, the activities of this course will include team exercises during Zoom meetings. You will lose participation points for missing team exercises without justification. The way we verify this will be specified in due course.

Extra credit. I don't do extra credit, unless some truly exceptional circumstances demand it.

Tentative Calendar PHIL 1301 (subject to change)

Topics	Date	What happens on that date	What you must do before that date
1) Introduction to the course + logic and argumentation	Sep 8	- Lecture 1 uploaded	Read <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rosen et al. "A brief guide to logic and argumentation"
	Sep 10	- Zoom meeting 1	By 2:29pm: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Watch video lecture 1
2) Logic and argumentation continued + important concepts	Sep 15	- Lecture 2 uploaded	Read <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ David Papineau. <i>Philosophical Devices</i> (Selection)
	Sep 17	- Zoom meeting 2 - First homework distributed	By 2:29pm: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Watch video lecture 2
Part 1 of 3. The external world and how we can know about it			
3) Is knowledge possible?	Sep 22	- Lecture 3 uploaded	Read <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ René Descartes. First Meditation ○ G.E. Moore. Proof of an external world ○ Jonathan Vogel. Skepticism and Inference to the Best Explanation
	Sep 24	- Zoom meeting 3	By 2:29pm: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Watch video lecture 3 ○ Submit first homework
4) Can we know what we have not observed?	Sep 29	- Lecture 4 uploaded	Read <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ David Hume. <i>Enquiry</i> (Excerpt) ○ Harman. The Inference to the Best Explanation
	Oct 1	- Zoom meeting 4 - Second homework distributed	By 2:29pm: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Watch video lecture 4
Part 2 of 3. Minds and how we can know them			
5) Can science know minds?	Oct 6	- Lecture 5 uploaded	Read <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Frank Jackson. Epiphenomenal Qualia ○ Patricia Churchland. <i>Neurophilosophy</i>
	Oct 8	- Zoom meeting 5	By 2:29pm: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Watch video lecture 5 ○ Submit second homework
6) Can you know about other minds?	Oct 13	- Lecture 6 uploaded	Read <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Bertrand Russell. Analogy ○ Saul Kripke. Wittgenstein and Other Minds
	Oct 15	- Zoom meeting 6 - Third homework and midterm distributed	By 2:29pm: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Watch video lecture 6
7) Can you know your own mind?	Oct 20	- Lecture 7 uploaded	Read <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sarah K. Paul. John Doe and Richard Doe ○ Alex Byrne. Skepticism about the Internal World
	Oct 22	- Zoom meeting 7	By 2:29pm: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Watch video lecture 7 ○ Submit third homework

26-30 Oct: Fall Break – No lecture upload; no Zoom meeting			
Topics	Dates	What happens on that date	What you must do before that date
Part 3 of 3. Objective facts and how we can know them			
8) Knowledge and social construction	Nov 3	- Lecture 8 uploaded	Read <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Boghossian Ch.1-2
	Nov 5	- Midterm deadline at 2:29pm - Zoom meeting 8	By 2:29pm: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Submit midterm essay ○ Watch video lecture 8
9) Are there objective facts?	Nov 10	- Lecture 9 uploaded	Read <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Boghossian Ch.3-4
	Nov 12	- Zoom meeting 9 - Fourth homework distributed	By 2:29pm: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Watch video lecture 9
10) The case for epistemic relativism	Nov 17	- Lecture 10 uploaded	Read <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Boghossian Ch.5
	Nov 19	- Zoom meeting 10	By 2:29pm: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Watch video lecture 10 ○ Submit fourth homework
11) Epistemic relativism rejected	Nov 24	- Lecture 11 uploaded	Read <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Boghossian Ch.6-7
	Nov 26	- Zoom meeting 11	By 2:29pm: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Watch video lecture 11
12) Epistemic objectivism defended	Dec 1	- Lecture 12 uploaded	Read <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Boghossian Ch.8-9
	Dec 3	- Zoom meeting 12 - Fifth homework distributed + final essay distributed	By 2:29pm: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Watch video lecture 12
13) Conclusion	Dec 8	- Lecture 13 uploaded	Read: TBD
	Dec 10	- Zoom meeting 13	By 2:29pm: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Watch video lecture 13 ○ Submit fifth homework
Final essay deadline	Dec 23	Submit final essay by 11:59pm on Wednesday December 23	

Some useful resources for students at Carleton

- [Health and Counselling Services](#): Counselling services for students: hcs@carleton.ca, 613-520-6674
- [Online Student Success Module](#): Helping prepare students for online teaching and learning
- [Academic Advising](#): Advising students on course selection and related matters academicadvising@carleton.ca, 613-520-7850
- [Centre for Student Academic Support \(CSAS\)](#): Academic support, especially learning support workshops / sessions; Contact info: csas@carleton.ca, 613-520-3822
- [Writing Services](#): Writing support for students; Contact info: csas@carleton.ca, 613-520-3822
- [Science Student Success Centre \(SSSC\)](#): for students in sciences: sssc@carleton.ca, 613-520-2600 x3111
- [Math Lab](#): Academic support, especially for students studying math, Contact info: jo-anne.lefeuvre@carleton.ca, 613-520-2600 x2696
- [Elsie MacGill Learning Centre](#): Academic support, especially for Engineering students. Contact info: info_engdesign@carleton.ca, 613-520-5790

Department of Philosophy and Carleton University Policies (Fall/Winter 2020-21)

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 Merton 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. 9 Classes start.

Sept. 23 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. 12 Statutory holiday. University closed.

Oct. 26-30 Fall Break – no classes.

Nov. 27 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. 11 Last day of fall term classes. ***Classes follow a Monday schedule.*** 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. 12-23 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. 23 All take-home examinations are due.

Jan. 6 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. 15 Statutory holiday. University closed.

Feb. 15-19 Winter Break – no classes.

Mar. 26 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. 2 Statutory holiday. University closed.

Apr. 9 Last day of two-term and winter term classes. 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. 10 No classes or examinations take place.

Apr. 11-23 Final examinations for winter term and two-term courses. Examinations are normally held all seven days of the week.

Apr. 23 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