

PHIL 1301
MIND, WORLD, AND KNOWLEDGE

Term: Winter 2012
Meetings: MW 2:35-3:55pm
Venue: Southam Hall KM-TH

Instructor: Jordan Dodd
Office: Paterson Hall 329B
Office hours: TBD

Email: jordan_dodd@carleton.ca
Course Website: via <http://jordandodd.wordpress.com>

1. Course description

This course is a general introduction to some of the major issues in metaphysics, epistemology, and philosophy of mind. Metaphysics is the study of the nature of reality (e.g., of what there is, of what is real). Epistemology is the study of the nature of knowledge (e.g., of what knowledge is). Philosophy of mind is the study of metaphysical and epistemological questions about minds (e.g., of what minds are and of our knowledge of minds). The goal is of the course is to engage with an array of ideas and questions in these areas.

The goal is also to have some fun. There will be a fair bit of work. But if you engage with them, these issues can rack your mind in a potentially very intellectually gratifying way. Some of the questions we address might even leave you wanting to read more and more about them. Here are some of the questions that we will examine:

Does God exist?
Is it rational to have religious faith?
Is the mind a physical thing?
Could we create an intelligent computer?
Do you know whether there is a world outside of your mind? How?
What does it take to know that something is the case?

Open to first-year students

2. Texts

There is a course reader. It contains the vast bulk of the readings for the course. It's available at Octopus Books in the Glebe, at Bank & 3rd (116 3rd Avenue). You can pick it up from Octopus yourself, or you can order it from them through their website: www.octopusbooks.ca

The other readings will be linked to via WebCT.

3. Course Requirements

All of the evaluation in this course will involve writing. All the writing will either consist of writing *very very short things* or *very short things*. Specifically, the marking scheme is:

10% Mini-papers

- 5 Mini-papers, each worth 2% of the course mark

90% Essays

- 4 Essays, each worth 22.5% of the course mark

Mini-papers

Five mini-papers (.75-1 page each) are required. These are very brief critical evaluations of arguments in the assigned readings. You can do them whenever you please during the semester, except for the following restrictions:

- (1) You may write no more than one in any given week;
- (2) You must hand in your mini-paper at the start of a class in which we address the reading that your mini-paper addresses (so, mini-papers will not be accepted by email).

The mini-papers are marked 'Pass' or 'Fail'. If you receive 'Fail' on any mini-paper, you may re-write that mini-paper to turn it into a 'Pass' or write a new mini-paper on another topic to replace it.

Often we will spend two days on a reading. In these cases, you may hand in a mini-paper on the reading on either day that we discuss the reading.

See the WebCT handout on mini-papers for more information about them.

Essays

Four very short essays are required. They should be about 3 pages long (so c. 750-850 words).

Essay#1 will be assigned on February 1st ... and is **due February 15th**

Essay#2 will be assigned on March 7th ... and is **due March 21st**

Essay#3 will be assigned on April 4th ... and is **due April 24th**

Essay#4 is somewhat different. Here are the details. You need to either write two essays on the topics for **Essay#1**, or two essays on the topics for **Essay#2**, or two essays on the topics for **Essay#3**. This additional essay is what I'm calling '**Essay#4**'. So there are no separate topics for **Essay#4**. It is just an additional essay on any of the topics assigned for the other essays in the course.

(The instructions for **Essay#4** continue on the next page).

It is your choice whether to write your **Essay#4** on a topic for **Essay#1**, or instead on a topic for **Essay#2**, or instead on a topic for **Essay#3**.

What topic you choose to write your **Essay#4** on determines when your **Essay#4** is due:

- If you choose to write your **Essay#4** on a topic for **Essay#1**, then your **Essay#4** is due at the same time as your **Essay#1**: so, due February 15th
- If you choose to write your **Essay#4** on a topic for **Essay#2**, then your **Essay#4** is due at the same time as your **Essay#2**: so, due March 21st
- If you choose to write your **Essay#4** on a topic for **Essay#3**, then your **Essay#4** is due at the same time as your **Essay#3**: so, due April 24th

4. Respect

Please be respectful of your classmates (and me!) at all times during classes. This includes, for example, not talking when others are, and – obviously – not espousing any sort of bigoted views. If I feel that you're being disruptive, I'll kick you out.

5. Cell phones

Please turn off your cell phones before class starts. It's really annoying when they make noises during class. If for some reason you're expecting an urgent call, just mention this to me before class.

6. Email

I do generally respond to emails ... but usually not quickly. In other words, you shouldn't think of me as being 'on call' via email at all times. One reason to note this is that you *should not* put off contacting me about pressing matters until the last minute. Odds are that last minute emails won't reach my attention in time.

8. Cheats!

Plagiarism and academic dishonesty are stupid. Don't do either, on anything you write for this course (or any other course!) The penalty for plagiarism will be 0% on that assignment with no opportunity to rewrite, and an incident report will be sent to the Dean's Office (which will determine further action).

Be sure that you are familiar with the university plagiarism rules, which can be found in the Undergraduate Calendar, Academic Regulations, section 14.3, pg. 56 – or online: <http://www.carleton.ca/cu0809uc/regulations/acadregsuniv14.html#14.3>

9. Feedback

The university asks for your feedback on this course at the end of the semester. That sort of feedback has its place, but it doesn't really help me change things on the fly – namely, in ways that will help you, as opposed to just helping future students. So give me feedback: after class, via email, around campus, whenever. Tell me that I should go faster or slower on certain material, that such and such topic should be covered in more detail, that our discussion of such and such wasn't clear – or tell me that you think we are going a good speed, that such and such topic was covered in good detail, that our discussion of such and such topic was nice and clear. The moral of the story is that feedback, be it positive, negative, or some shade in between, is welcome and appreciated.

10. Miscellaneous Information (about formatting, references, and late penalties)

(1) Formatting requirements:

- All mini-papers and essays must be handed in type written, in double-spaced, 12pt Times New Roman font with 1" margins on all sides.
- Don't put a title page on *anything*
- Put your name, your student number, the course number, and my name at the top of any document that you hand in, like this:

Student's Name, Student Number
Course Number, Course Instructor's Name

(2) Citations:

- Bibliographies and footnotes/parenthetical notation are not required for the mini-papers. But they are required for the essays.

(3) Late essays

- Late essays will be penalized one letter step per day late.
- So: If an 'A' paper is handed in a day late, it will receive an 'A-', and if it's handed in two days late, it will receive a 'B+'.
- Late essays will be accepted without penalty if, and only if, there are well-documented, legitimate reasons.

11. Read the official policies

Various official Carleton U. and Department of Philosophy policies are laid out in the 'University Policies' that follow. You're responsible for knowing all of the material that's presented there. That requirement just follows from being a student in this class.

Department of Philosophy and Carleton University Policies

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 in the lower right corner of the cover sheet:
 - student name
 - student number
 - course number and section
 - instructor's name
- The Philosophy Department does not accept assignments by FAX. You may send them by courier, if necessary.
- No assignments will be accepted after the last day for handing in term work – see dates in next column.
- 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.

Deferrals for Term Work:

If you miss a final examination and/or fail to submit a final assignment by the due date because of circumstances beyond your control, you may apply for a deferral of examination/assignment. For deferred examinations, you must apply within 5 working days after the scheduled date of your exam. To apply for deferral of a final assignment, you must apply within 5 working days of the last scheduled day of classes. Visit the Registrar's Office for more 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 14.3, or <http://www4.carleton.ca/calendars/ugrad/current/regulations/acadregs/univ14.html#14.3>)

Academic Accommodation:

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

Pregnancy obligation: 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 visit the Equity Services website <http://www2.carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/>

Religious obligation: 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 visit the Equity Services website <http://www2.carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/>

Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations in this course must register with the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) for a formal evaluation of disability-related needs. Documented disabilities could include but are not limited to mobility/physical impairments, specific Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/psychological disabilities, sensory disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), and chronic medical conditions. Registered PMC students are required to contact the PMC, 613-520-6608, every term to ensure that I receive your Letter of Accommodation, no later than two weeks before the first assignment is due or the first in-class test/midterm requiring accommodations. If you only require accommodations for your formally scheduled exam(s) in this course, please submit your request for accommodations to PMC by

the deadlines published on the PMC website: <http://www2.carleton.ca/pmc/new-and-current-students/dates-and-deadlines/>

Important Dates:

Sept. 8	Classes start (after Orientation events).
Sept. 21	Last day for registration and course changes in Fall term and two-term courses.
Sept. 30	Last day for entire fee adjustment when withdrawing from fall term or two-term courses.
Oct. 7	University Day – no classes.
Oct. 10	Thanksgiving Day – university closed.
Nov. 21	Last day for tests or examinations in courses below 4000 level before the Final Examination period.
Dec. 5	Last day of classes, Fall term. Last day for handing in term assignments, subject to any earlier course deadline.
Dec. 5	Last day to withdraw from Fall term courses (academic purposes only).
Dec. 8-21	Final examinations for Fall courses, mid-terms for Fall/Winter courses.
Jan. 4	Winter term classes begin.
Jan. 17	Last day for registration and course changes in Winter term classes.
Jan. 31	Last day for entire fee adjustment when withdrawing from winter courses or winter portion of two-term courses.
Feb. 20	Family Day – university closed
Feb. 20-24	Winter Break, classes suspended.
Mar. 22	Last day for tests or examinations in courses below 4000 level before the Final Examination period.
Apr. 5	Last day of Fall/Winter and Winter term classes. Last day for handing in term assignments, subject to any earlier course deadline.
Apr. 5	Last day to withdraw from Fall/Winter and Winter term courses (academic purposes only).
Apr. 6	Good Friday – university closed.
Apr. 11-24	Final Examinations.

Addresses:

Department of Philosophy:	3A46 Paterson Hall www.carleton.ca/philosophy 520-2110
Registrar's Office:	300 Tory www.carleton.ca/registrar 520-3500
Student Academic Success Centre:	302 Tory www.carleton.ca/sasc 520-7850
Paul Menton Centre:	500 University Centre www.carleton.ca/pmc 520-6608
Writing Tutorial Service:	4 th Floor, Library www.carleton.ca/wts 520-6632
MacOdrum Library	http://www.library.carleton.ca/ 520-2735