

COURSE OUTLINE: PHIL 2010
ISSUES IN THEORETICAL PHILOSOPHY
Fall 2020: Tues-Thurs, 10:05 - 11:25, online

Professor M. Frankel
Office: Paterson Hall 3A53 (but for Fall 2020, my “office” will be virtual)
Office Hours: TBA (will also be virtual)
Email: Melissa.frankel@carleton.ca, or through cuLearn

Course description:

(From the Undergraduate Calendar):

PHIL 2010 [0.5 credit]

Issues in Theoretical Philosophy

Issues drawn from epistemology, metaphysics, philosophy of mind, philosophy of language, and related fields will be examined through careful study of significant philosophical texts after 1900, along with some ensuing debates.

Prerequisite(s): enrolment in Honours or Combined Honours Philosophy programs, or in philosophy, Ethics, and Public Affairs, or permission of the Department.

Lectures and discussion three hours a week.

(For Fall 2020):

The aim of this course is to introduce students to long-standing conversations in theoretical philosophy, in particular, about the possibility of knowledge, the existence of God, the possibility of human freedom, and the question of personal identity, so that they themselves may become participants in these conversations. This will involve not only familiarizing students with the existing philosophical terrain, but also helping students develop the skills of reading philosophical texts, reconstructing and critically evaluating philosophical arguments, and researching and writing philosophical papers.

Required text:

There is no single required text for this class.

All of the required readings will be available online, either through links on cuLearn or through the library’s Ares online reserves system, which is also available through a link on cuLearn.

Technology requirements:

This course will be a blended course. That is to say, some elements of the course will be asynchronous: they will be available online, for students to work through at a time of their choosing during a given week; but some elements of the course will be synchronous: I will expect students to complete them live, during regularly scheduled course hours, that is, Tuesdays-Thursdays from 10:05-11:25. These will include both videoconference meetings as well as quizzes that will be available through cuLearn only during the designated class times.

For both the synchronous and asynchronous elements of this course, you will need access to a computer or to some other device that allows you to access the internet. It will be helpful if this computer or alternative device also has a camera and microphone for videoconferencing. You

will need to be able to access cuLearn, as well as the other online platforms that we will be using in this class, Perusall and Zoom; you will also need a pdf reader to be able to read articles linked through cuLearn or Ares, which will often be in pdf format. In addition, since you will sometimes need to complete quizzes during class time through cuLearn, you will need to have steady internet access during those times.

If you anticipate having any problems with technology or internet access, especially for the synchronous elements of the course, please email me so that we can discuss possible solutions.

cuLearn:

This course will be supported by the cuLearn Course Management System. You can access your cuLearn account by going to www.carleton.ca/culearn and entering your MyCarletonOne username and password.

Because we are online this semester, it is especially important for you to regularly check the cuLearn page for the course. It is on cuLearn that you will find the most up-to-date information regarding schedules of readings and due dates for assignments, which are open for revision through the semester.

The cuLearn page for this course will be divided into weekly segments. In each of these weekly segments, you will find a list of the resources, assignments, and activities that are meant to be either begun or completed during that week, as well as links to those resources, assignments, and activities. On a weekly basis this will include readings, lecture videos, Perusall assignments, quizzes, and links to videoconference meetings; sometimes this will also include larger assignments such as paper topics.

Students will be fully responsible for reading (or watching) and responding appropriately to all information distributed through the cuLearn Course Page. Information provided on cuLearn will be considered to have been provided to all registered students within 24 hours of posting.

Perusall:

In this course we will use the Perusall online platform for text annotation. You can find Perusall at <http://perusall.com>. To do work on Perusall, you will need to create an account, and log in with your account. Accounts on Perusall are free. You can also (if you want) sign in with your Facebook, Google, or Twitter account. Once you log in with your account, you will need a course code to get to the home page for PHIL 2010, which is where you will find the articles for annotation. The course code for PHIL 2010 will be available through cuLearn.

Perusall assignments will typically be assigned on Thursdays of a given week, and due on the Tuesday immediately following that Thursday. You will find more information about Perusall assignments below, in the section on evaluation.

Zoom:

In this course, we will occasionally meet live online, using the videoconferencing platform Zoom. You can find Zoom at <https://zoom.us/>. To use Zoom, you do not need a Zoom account; you only need a Zoom meeting ID, or a link to a Zoom meeting. Meeting IDs and links to meetings will be provided on cuLearn in advance of scheduled meetings. If you have never used Zoom before, it may be useful for you to try a dry run; I will be scheduling a trial meeting for all

interested students during the first week of classes, prior to our first class meeting, on **Tuesday, September 8th** in the afternoon. You can find information about that trial meeting, including the meeting ID and link, on cuLearn.

Zoom meetings for this class will be scheduled during regular class hours, typically on Thursdays. You are expected to attend these meetings, but they will also be recorded. Recordings will be made available on cuLearn within about 24 hours of the meeting.

The first Zoom meeting for this class will take place on the first day of class (**Thursday, September 10th**); you will find the meeting ID and link on cuLearn.

Evaluation:

Because of the online format of this course, there will not be any formally scheduled mid-term tests or final exams. Instead, I will be evaluating you regularly to be sure that you are carefully reading the course material (through Perusall: **25%**), that you are understanding the concepts and arguments that we are discussing (through short quizzes and activities on cuLearn: **30%**), and that you are able to reconstruct and critically evaluate the material you are reading, through a short mid-term paper (**15%**), and a slightly longer final paper, for which I will ask you to do a bit of independent research (**30%**).

Here is the breakdown of assignments, with some further information about each:

1. Perusall (1 x 1%, 6 x 4%)

In order to participate in a philosophical discussion, you need to have a good sense of what the discussants' views are, and how they support these views. This requires a lot of careful reading. As you read the material, I will be asking you to annotate, that is, to make notes on the material. To do this, you will use Perusall, which is a digital annotation platform.

To get things started, in the first week of classes, I will ask you to make at least one annotation to this course outline, for **1%** of your final grade. For instance, you might consider highlighting this short paragraph using Perusall, so that I can see that you understand the course outline annotation assignment.

Perusall can be used to make individual annotations, but also to annotate collaboratively. This is the feature that we will be using in this class. You will be divided into small groups at the beginning of the semester. Then, for each philosophical topic, your group will be assigned one or more papers to annotate as a group. You can make your own annotations, comment on other group members' annotations, 'like' each other's annotations, and so forth. You will be assigned papers to annotate **6 times** during the semester; each of these assignments will be worth **4%**, for a total of **24%** of your final grade. Annotations will typically be assigned on **Thursday mornings**, and will be due on the **Tuesdays** immediately following that Thursday.

You do not have to annotate any given document extensively – if you only make three or four comments, that is fine (but you shouldn't make fewer than three annotations). I will expect annotations to be placed throughout a given reading, and not all to be clustered on a single page (e.g. not all of your annotations should be in the introduction to the reading). You will find some ideas for annotations below.

Note: I can also comment on or 'like' your annotations, and I may very well do so!

Small group membership:

Depending on how many students register for the course, you will be assigned to either a group of 4 students or a group of 5 students. If you would like to choose the members of your group, or some subset of the members of your group, you may do so; otherwise, I will assign you to a group.

Small groups will be assigned by the second class on the second week of classes (so: by **Thursday, Sept 17th**.) If you intend to choose your own group members, *each member* of the intended group must email me in advance of that date to let me know the intended group membership (so: by **Wednesday, Sept 16th**). Similarly, if there is a particular person or people with whom you would like to be grouped (even if there are not enough of you to constitute an entire group), *each of you* must email me in advance of my assigning groups (so again: by **Wednesday, Sept 16th**).

Note: although you are being asked to annotate as a group, your grade will be individual, that is, based on your annotations alone.

Some ideas for annotation:

If you've never annotated a document before, you might be wondering what you should be looking for or commenting on. Here are a few possibilities for annotation:

As you read philosophical material, it can be helpful to try to focus in on (e.g.)

- what the philosopher's thesis is
- what their argument(s) is (or are) for that thesis
- whether they discuss any counter-arguments or counterexamples

You can highlight these aspects of the paper you are reading, you can comment on them, say whether you think they're plausible or not, try to support them, try to undermine them, etc.

As you read philosophical material, it can also be helpful to try to zero in on

- the confusing bits (there are usually lots of these), or
- the illuminating bits (hopefully there are lots of these as well).

You can highlight these bits of the paper, comment on them, try to figure out what's puzzling you, explain why you find that part of the paper illuminating, etc.

This is not meant to be an exhaustive list of the ways you can annotate; it's just a few ideas. Ultimately you should feel free to focus / comment on whatever you like.

2. Quizzes / activities (6 x 5%)

In order to make sure that we are all on the same page in terms of understanding the philosophical concepts and arguments that we are discussing this semester, I will set a number of activities (typically, short argument reconstructions) or short quizzes (typically 30 mins, with a mix of multiple choice / true-false type questions) for the various philosophical topics that we cover.

Quizzes will all be scheduled to be completed on cuLearn **during regularly scheduled course times** (Tuesdays-Thursdays between 10:05-11:25).

Activities can be completed outside of regularly scheduled course times, but will be due by **Fridays at 11:59 PM** on the weeks that they are assigned.

There will be **six** quizzes or activities set at various times throughout the semester. The first activity is due on **Friday, Sept 25th**; subsequent dates will be posted on cuLearn. Each activity / quiz is worth **5%**, for a total of **30%** of your final grade.

3. Short mid-term paper (15%)

You will be asked to produce one very short mid-term paper for this course. This paper should be the result of individual (non-collaborative) work. Papers will be due on cuLearn by **11:59 PM** on the due date. Papers submitted after that time will be marked as late. Please see the course policy section, below, for lateness penalties.

For the short paper, I will ask you to reconstruct and evaluate an argument, as well as an objection or counter-argument, based on the readings and class discussion. This should involve not only reconstructing the reasoning behind the premises / how they support the conclusion, but also reconstructing the reasoning behind the objection or counter-argument, and explaining just what aspect of the argument this objection or counter-argument is meant to undermine.

This paper should be two-three pages long, double-spaced, with standard font and margins.

Mid-term papers will be due either at the end of October or the beginning of November (the weeks of **Oct 19th** and **Nov 2nd**). A more specific date will be announced on cuLearn.

4. Bibliography + Final paper (take-home exam) (1 x 5%, 1 x 25%)

Your final take-home exam will be a final paper. In preparation for this final paper, you will be asked (near the end of term) to produce a short bibliography. Both the paper and the bibliography should be the result of individual (non-collaborative) work.

Bibliography (due near end of term; more specific due date TBD): 5%

As part of the work for the final paper, you will be asked to produce a short bibliography, which should include both full citations and also brief descriptions of the texts that you will be using for this paper. We will discuss the details of this assignment further in class. Bibliographies will be due during the last few weeks of term (**date TBA**).

Bibliographies should be about one page long, double-spaced, with standard font and margins.

Final paper (due **Dec 23rd**): 25%

For your take-home exam (final paper), I will ask you to reconstruct and evaluate some arguments on a particular philosophical topic, using the texts that you detail in your bibliography. This will involve reconstructing and evaluating the arguments in their own rights as well as evaluating their success relative to one another.

The paper should be four-five pages long, double-spaced, with standard font and margins.

Final take-home papers will be due at the end of final exam period (**Dec 23rd, 2020**.) This date is firm, not tentative; it is set by the university, and not by me, and so I have no ability to change it.

Some course policies:

Lateness penalties:

Midterm papers will be penalized by one third of a grade per day for every day that they are late. For instance, a paper 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.

I will not be accepting late Perusall annotations, or late final papers.

Extensions:

Extensions for papers or quizzes *may* be granted *only* if requested *at least 24 hours in advance* and *with a valid reason* (e.g., medical reason). For the final, you will need to obtain a deferral through the Registrar's Office.

Philosophy department and university policies:

See final page of course outline.

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 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. 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. <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. 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