

COURSE OUTLINE: PHIL 2010
ISSUES IN THEORETICAL PHILOSOPHY
Fall 2021: Mon-Weds, 10:05 - 11:25, Health Science 1301

Professor M. Frankel

Office: Paterson Hall 3A53 (but for Fall 2021, my “office” will primarily be virtual)

Office Hours: TBA (will also be virtual)

Email: Melissa.frankel@carleton.ca, or through Brightspace

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 2021):

The aim of this course is to introduce students to long-standing conversations in theoretical philosophy, for example, 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 concepts and terrain, but also helping students develop the skills of reading philosophical texts, reconstructing and critically evaluating philosophical arguments, sketching and developing their own arguments, and researching and writing philosophy 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 Brightspace or through the library’s Ares online reserves system, which is also available through a link on Brightspace.

Technology requirements:

This course will be an in-person course. The majority of the course will take place on campus, during regularly scheduled course hours. That said, a number of elements of the course will require use of technology, including course reading materials, course assignments, office hours, and one-on-one meetings. I may also occasionally schedule Zoom class meetings. For these and other purposes, you will need access to a computer or some other device that allows you to reliably 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 Brightspace, as well as the other online platforms that we will be using in this class; you will also need a pdf reader to be able to read articles in pdf format.

If you anticipate having any problems with technology or internet access, please email me so that we can discuss possible solutions.

Brightspace:

This course will be supported by the Brightspace Learning Management System. It is important for you to regularly check the Brightspace page for the course, which is where you will find (among other things) the most up-to-date information regarding schedules of readings and due dates for assignments, which are open for revision through the semester.

Students will be fully responsible for reading and responding appropriately to all information distributed through the Brightspace Course Page. Information provided on Brightspace 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 like) 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 Brightspace.**

You will find more information about Perusall assignments below, in the section on evaluation.

Evaluation:

This is a course in which I want to help you develop the skills (in reading, logical analysis, argument reconstruction, and so forth) that will allow you to become participants in the conversations surrounding issues in theoretical philosophy. As such, there will be a number of short assignments or activities meant to help you develop those skills, some of which will be online and some of which will be done in class, as well as some longer, more traditional philosophical assignments.

Here is a short breakdown of your grades, followed by a more detailed breakdown:

- 1. Perusall assignments: 25%**
- 2. In-class / online assignments: 25%**
- 3. Mid-term paper: 20%**
- 4. Longer final paper (incl annotated bibliography): 30%**

Here is the detailed breakdown:

1. Perusall (25%)

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. This is just so that you have a chance to get a look at and feel for the platform. For instance, you might consider highlighting this short paragraph using Perusall, so that I can see that you understand the course outline annotation assignment. This assignment will be due on **Monday, Sept 13th, 2021, at 11:59 PM**.

Perusall can be used to make individual annotations, but also to annotate collaboratively. This is the feature that we will mainly be using in this class. You will be divided into groups at the beginning of the semester. Then, for various philosophical topics, your group will be assigned a paper 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 be assigned on **Wednesdays**, and will be due on the **Mondays** immediately following that Wednesday, at **11:59 PM**. Issues that arise from these annotations will then be discussed in class on the Wednesday after the assignment.

You do not have to annotate any given document extensively, but you do need to make at least three substantive annotations for full grades. You will find some ideas for annotations on the Brightspace page for the course.

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

Small group membership:

Depending on how many students register for the course, you will be assigned to a group of either 4, 5, or 6 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. You can find more information about group assignments on the Brightspace page for the course.

2. In class / online assignments: argument sketching (25%)

In many ways, arguments – argument construction, argument reconstruction, argument analysis – are at the core of the philosophical process. In this class we'll spend a lot of time thinking about arguments. We'll use different ways of representing and illuminating philosophical argument structures, including standard schematisations, but also using a visual tool called 'argument mapping.'

We will be working on these argument sketches in class together, but I will ask you to submit them independently on Brightspace by **Fridays at 11:59 PM** on the weeks that they are due. There will be a number of argument sketch activities, each worth a slightly different percentage of your grade, and totalling 25%.

Argument activity 1: playing around with argument maps (4%)

Argument activity 2: identifying and schematizing / mapping a basic argument (5%)

Argument activity 3: mapping a philosophical argument (5%)

3.5: adding an objection to the map (3%)

Argument activity 4: mapping a philosophical argument and philosophical objection (8%)

3. Short mid-term paper (20%)

You will be asked to produce one short (about three pages long, double-spaced) mid-term paper for this course. This paper should be the result of individual work. Papers will be due on Brightspace 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.

I will ask you to reconstruct and evaluate an argument, as well as an objection or counter-argument, based on the readings, class discussion, and an argument sketch that you have already produced. 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.

Mid-term papers will be due at the beginning of November (**the week of Nov 1-7**). A more specific date will be announced on Brightspace.

4. Take-home exam: final paper incl. annotated bibliography (30%)

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

Annotated bibliography (5%):

In order to conduct philosophical research, some useful skills including knowing how to use library search tools to find papers related to your topic, knowing how to cite those papers properly, and knowing how to very briefly summarize some of the main points of those papers (what is sometimes called an 'abstract.')

For your final paper, you will be asked to discuss at least two articles on a particular philosophical topic. As part of the work for this paper, I will ask you to write what we might call an annotated bibliography, in which you produce full citations and an abstract for each of these articles. We will discuss the details of this bibliography assignment further in class. Bibliographies will be due during the second-to-last week of term (**the week of Nov 29-Dec 3**). A more specific date will be announced on Brightspace.

Important: In the final week of classes, we will have mandatory one-on-one meetings to discuss your bibliography, and how to develop that bibliography into the final paper. The bibliography on its own is worth 4% of your grade; you can only earn a full 5% if you attend the individual meeting.

Paper (25%)

For your take-home exam, I will ask you to write a paper reconstructing and evaluating 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, 2021**.) 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 assignments *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 2021-22)

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. 8	Classes start.
Sept. 22	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. 11	Statutory holiday. University closed.
Oct. 25-29	Fall Break – no classes.
Nov. 26	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. 10	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. 11-23	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. 10	Classes begin.
Jan. 24	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. 21	Statutory holiday. University closed.
Feb. 22-25	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. 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 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 two-term and for winter term courses.
Apr. 13	No classes or examinations take place.
Apr. 14-28	Final examinations for winter term and two-term courses. Examinations are normally held all seven days of the week.
Apr. 15	Statutory holiday. University closed.
Apr. 28	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