

PHIL 2405A: Philosophy of the Paranormal
Course Outline
Summer 2023

Class Information

Dates: Tuesdays and Thursdays

Time: 11:35 am – 2:25 pm

Location: Online (Synchronous)

Course prerequisites: One course in philosophy or second year standing.

Instructor Information

Instructor: Josh Redstone

Office: 3A38 Paterson Hall

E-mail: josh.redstone@carleton.ca

Office Hours: By Appointment

Teaching Assistant:

Name: TBD

E-mail: TBD

Office hours: TBD

Course Description

In this class we will critically examine claims, concepts and theories related to the paranormal, i.e., phenomena which purportedly lie outside of the realm of everyday experience and/or scientific explanation. Using an interdisciplinary approach, we will examine the scientific character of purported paranormal phenomena, in addition to their relation to philosophical questions surrounding human nature, thought, perception and reality. Such phenomena will include those typically studied by parapsychologists such as ESP, Telepathy and Psychokinesis. From there, we'll move onto other phenomena that are sometimes categorized as paranormal such as UFOs, Astrology, dreams, etc.

This class will take place online, synchronously. Students will participate in live lectures and discussions over Zoom. Lectures will be recorded for those who cannot be present during the lectures, or for those who simply wish to review the lectures.

Required Text

There is no required textbook for this class. Readings and other learning materials will be made available on Brightspace in advance of lectures.

Course Website

The course website can be found on Brightspace (<https://brightspace.carleton.ca/d2l/home>). Here you will find this course outline, our class schedule, PowerPoint slides from lectures, and other supplementary materials that will be made available as we proceed through this course.

While the materials on Brightspace are helpful, they are no substitute for attending lectures. Please note that we may occasionally hold group discussions, debates, or question/answer sessions during lecture. These will not be reproduced and posted on Brightspace. Therefore, I highly recommend that you attend lectures regularly.

Evaluation

Item	Weight of Grade	Date & Time
Reading Response #1	20%	May 16
Essay Proposal	20%	May 31
Reading Response #2	20%	June 8
Research Essay (Final Take-home Exam)	40%	June 25, 11:59 pm
TOTAL	100%	---

Lecture Schedule: Note, this schedule may be subject to minor adjustments.

Date	Lecture Topic
Week 1 May 4	Introduction: What is the Paranormal?
Week 2 May 9 & 11	The Uncanny: Part I The Uncanny: Part II
Week 3 May 16 & 18	Extrasensory Perception & Psychokinesis Mediumship and Ghost Hunting
Week 4 May 23 & 25	Astrology and Horoscopes Dreams, OBEs, Astral Projection and “Reality Shifting”
Week 5 May 30 & June 1	Cryptozoology Beyond Parapsychology: Anomalistic Psychology
Week 6 June 6 & 8	TBD*
Week 7 June 13 & 15	TBD*

Lectures

Lectures will take place online on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11:35 am – 2: 25 pm. Since this is an online synchronous course, students will join lectures using Zoom. Links to join the lectures will be available on Brightspace well in advance of lectures. Recordings of these lectures will be made available on my YouTube channel for students who may have missed a lecture no later than 48 hours after the lecture was held. You can find my YouTube channel here: <https://www.youtube.com/c/MindandMetal>

*Students will have the opportunity to help me choose some of the topics I will lecture on later in the course. I am also working on bringing in a guest lecturer who will discuss his research in Dark Tourism, i.e., tourism of purportedly haunted, supernatural, or paranormal places.

Office Hours

Office hours will take place by appointment. Students can schedule an appointment by emailing me. I can meet students in-person, or online (via Zoom).

Class Discord Server

If you wish, you can join the class Discord server by (1) downloading and installing the Discord app on your computer or smartphone, and (2) clicking this link: <https://discord.gg/NbrGNuD>. It's a great place to get to know one another, and to chat amongst yourselves about the learning materials!

Readings and Reading Responses

You are expected to keep up with the readings assigned for this class. My lectures will help make the readings more accessible, but they are no substitute for reading the readings themselves. See the Lecture Schedule (above) and our course module on Brightspace for a list of readings for this class.

In this course you will complete TWO reading responses, each worth 20% of your final grade. Each response should be approx. 750-1000 words in length, and any works or ideas referenced must be properly cited. Your task is to identify an interesting idea from one of the lectures and critically engage with it. I will provide directions on how to choose an idea for your response, how you should approach your critical analysis, and how to cite sources properly during the first lecture. Each of the reading responses is to be submitted electronically in .doc or .pdf format on Brightspace by 11:59 pm on each of the due dates given above.

Term Paper Topic Proposal

In this class you will be required to write a term paper, for which you must also write a proposal, which is worth 20% of your final grade. Your topic proposal should be 750-1000 words in length, and it should identify the topic of your term paper, your thesis statement and/or research question, a rough outline of your intended paper, and a bibliography of scholarly sources you'd like to use. I will provide detailed instructions on how to complete this assignment, as well as a template that you can use to put your proposal together. Submit your proposal on Brightspace in .doc or .pdf format by the due date given above.

Term Paper

Your term paper, which serves as the final take-home examination for this class, is to be handed in via Brightspace on June 25 at 11:59 pm (the last day of the exam period). It is worth 40% of your final grade. The paper is to be approx. 2000-2500 words long (excluding titles pages and references section) and should deal with an idea or concept from this class that interests you. It must be submitted electronically on Brightspace in .doc or .pdf format. I will provide detailed instructions on how to select a topic, how to write your essay proposal, and how to write your final paper. I will provide detailed feedback on your essay topic proposals (see above), so I expect that the essays will be clearly and concisely written, be well-researched, and will cite sources properly. I encourage students to contact me if they have any questions about this assignment at any time.

Assignment Deferral Policy

Students who are unable to complete a test or an assignment may ask for a deferral only under two conditions: illness or bereavement. Should you miss a test for these reasons, you must contact me by email within 24 hours of missing the test/assignment due date to request a deferral and arrange to provide me with the appropriate documentation (e.g., self-report, doctor's note, etc.).

Other Policies

Please review the Policies and Important Dates and Deadlines on the following pages.

Department of Philosophy and Carleton University Policies (Summer 2023)

Assignments:

Please follow your professor's instructions on how assignments will be handled electronically.

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:* 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. For more details, visit the [Equity Services website](#).
- *Academic accommodations for students with disabilities:* If you have a documented disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation or contact your PMC coordinator to send your instructor your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term. You must also contact the PMC 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 your instructor as soon as possible to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. For more details, visit the [Paul Menton Centre website](#).
- *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: carleton.ca/sexual-violence-support
- *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:

May 4	Classes start.	July 3	Statutory holiday, University closed.
May 10	Last day for registration and course changes for <u>early</u> summer courses.	July 4	Late summer courses begin and full summer courses resume.
May 17	Last day for registration and course changes for <u>full</u> summer courses.	July 10	Last day for registration and course changes for <u>late</u> summer courses.
May 17	Last day for a full fee adjustment when withdrawing from <u>early</u> summer courses. Withdrawals after this date will result in a permanent notation of WDN on the official transcript.	July 17	Last day to withdraw from <u>late</u> summer courses with a full fee adjustment. Withdrawals after this date will result in a permanent notation of WDN on the official transcript.
May 22	Statutory holiday, University closed.	Aug. 1	Last day for academic withdrawal from full and late summer courses.
May 31	Last day to withdraw from full summer courses with a full fee adjustment. Withdrawals after this date will result in a permanent notation of WDN on the official transcript.	Aug. 7	Civic holiday, University closed.
June 9	Last day for summative tests or examinations, or formative tests or examinations totaling more than 15% of the final grade for <u>early</u> summer courses before the official examination period.	Aug. 9	Last day for summative tests or examinations, or formative tests or examinations totaling more than 15% of the final grade for <u>late</u> summer and <u>full</u> summer courses before the official examination period.
June 16	Last day for <u>early</u> summer classes. Classes follow a Monday schedule. Last day for handing in term work, subject to any earlier course deadline.	Aug. 16	Last day of <u>late</u> and <u>full</u> summer term classes. Classes follow a Monday schedule. Last day for handing in term work, subject to any earlier course deadline.
June 17-18	No classes or examinations take place.	Aug. 17-18	No classes or examinations take place.
June 19-25	Final examinations.	Aug. 19-25	Final examinations.
June 25	Take-home examinations for <u>early</u> summer courses are due.	Aug. 25	Take-home examinations for <u>late</u> or <u>full</u> summer courses 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