

Philosophy 250I Introduction to Philosophy of Mind

0.5 credit

An introduction to major philosophical issues concerning human cognition. Topics may include: the relation of mind to body, knowledge of other minds, the relation of mental states to personhood and personal identity, mental illness, consciousness, intentionality, action, mental realism.

Precludes additional credit for PHIL 2502.

Prerequisite(s): a course in philosophy or second-year standing

This course is dedicated to the memory of Jaegwon Kim

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TA: tbd

Winter 2020-21

Wednesdays & Fridays

10:05am-11:25am (this is a *blended course*, see details below)

Office hours: by appt

Course Overview and Learning Outcomes:

This course has two related aims. A first aim is to introduce you to some of the major themes and problems in philosophy of mind, to enrich your understanding of the mind and mental phenomena. Our focus will be *the metaphysics of mind* – what kind of thing the mind and mental phenomena are. A second aim is to help you develop critical philosophical capacities, especially the abilities to grasp and manipulate highly abstract ideas, to engage in reasoning that is both creative and logically disciplined, and to express yourself clearly and argue responsibly. The course aims involve, therefore, both *learning content* and *developing abilities*, and these aims complement one another.

How the Course Will be Run:

This course will involve:

- a number of recorded short lectures each week, intended to complement the assigned reading
- a live Q&A session most weeks, intended to give you a chance to clarify, test and deepen your understanding of the material
- three tests, to assess your achievement of the course aims
- an optional final essay, to give you an opportunity for more advanced work

Lectures: The nature of the lectures will vary depending on the week. Sometimes they will point you toward those parts of the reading I think are especially important. Sometimes they will provide context

to the reading as a whole, to help you understand it. Sometimes they will try to summarise the reading, or explain a particularly thorny bit of it. Sometimes they will expand on the reading, by discussing a related topic or providing further information or argument about the topic at hand. Each week I will try to do what I think will help you best. Think of the lectures as complementing, rather than replacing, the reading material, and as a guide to help you make the most of it. I will organise the material into multiple short (10-15 minute) lectures each week, rather than one long one, as I think that will be easier and more useful for you.

Q&A Sessions: It is very difficult to do well in philosophy unless one asks a lot of questions, to clarify and correct one's understanding of the topic. This is because philosophical ideas, issues, arguments, etc., are almost always hard to understand but easy to misunderstand. That is, it's very easy to do a reading or listen to a lecture and either (i) not really know what is going on, at all, or (ii) think you understand what is being said without really understanding it. Moreover, by asking questions you practice and develop your ability to express yourself clearly and engage philosophically.

Here is an analogy: You could not learn to play tennis by watching someone explain how to play tennis, or by watching two people playing tennis. To really learn, someone would have to serve you the ball and you'd have to try to hit it back. This is what philosophy is like. The more you watch for and identify things you don't understand and ask questions about them, the more you will learn, and the more your philosophical capabilities will develop.

Note, too, that in this class as in any philosophy class, it's not just *your* questions you should be learning from. Listening carefully to the questions other students ask, and to what is said in reply, helps you clarify your own understanding of the material and further develop your critical capacities.

See below for a detailed schedule.

Readings:

The main text is Jaegwon Kim's *Philosophy of Mind*, 3rd edition. There are a few additional readings available online, which are linked to in the syllabus. You may need to log into your CU account or connect to the university's VPN to access them.

A note about the reading: I have not assigned very much reading in this course. That is because you can't just breeze through a philosophy reading the way you can readings in some other subjects. You have to work continuously to follow and understand what is being said. You should plan to do reading *at least twice* and it will probably help to work iteratively, doing the reading first, then watching the videos, then doing the reading a second time.

Evaluation:

There are three scheduled tests in this course, plus an optional final essay of up to 2500 words. Your mark in the course will be determined by your mark on the three tests, weighted equally. I will give feedback on the essay, and an indicative mark, but the indicative mark will not contribute to your overall course mark. The essay is intended as an opportunity, for any students interested, to engage more deeply with some aspect of the course material and to further develop their philosophical abilities.

Schedule:

Week 1, January 13 + 15: Welcome and Introduction to the Class

- Read: This syllabus
Kim obituaries: <https://tinyurl.com/KimObit1> and <https://tinyurl.com/KimObit2>
Kim letter from a couple of years before he died: <https://tinyurl.com/JKLetter>
- Watch: Introductory videos (posted by Monday)
- Do: Attend Q&A Session Friday at 10.05am via Zoom

Week 2, January 20 + 22: The Mark of the Mental

- Read: Kim, Chapter 1
- Watch: Lectures (posted by Monday)
- Do: Attend Q&A Session Friday at 10.05am via Zoom

Week 3, January 27 + 29: Substance Dualism (part 1)

- Read: Kim, Chapter 2, up to middle of pg 46
Descartes, *Meditations* I, II and VI, <https://tinyurl.com/DescartesReadingMeditations>
- Watch: Lectures (posted by Monday)
- Do: Attend Q&A Session Friday at 10.05am via Zoom

Week 4, February 3 + 5: Substance Dualism (part 2)

- Read: Kim, Chapter 2, from bottom of pg. 46 through the end
Kim, "Lonely Souls", <https://tinyurl.com/KimLonelySouls>
- Watch: Lectures (posted by Monday)
- Do: Test on the Friday

Week 5, February 10 + 12: Behaviourism

- Read: Kim, Chapter 3
- Watch: Lectures (posted by Monday)
- Do: Attend Q&A Session Friday at 10.05am via Zoom

Week 6, February 24 + 26: Identity Theory (part 1)

- Read: Kim, Chapter 4, to bottom of page 114
- Watch: Lectures (posted by Monday)
- Do: Attend Q&A Session Friday at 10.05am via Zoom

Week 7, March 3 + 5: Identity Theory (part 2)

- Read: Kim, Chapter 4, from bottom of page 114 through the end of the chapter

Watch: Lectures (posted by Monday)
Do this: Test on the Friday

Week 8, March 10 + 12: Functionalism

Read: Kim, Chapter 5 (optional)
Kim, Chapter 6
Watch: Lectures (posted by Monday)
Do: Attend Q&A Session Friday at 10.05am via Zoom

Week 9, March 17 + 19: Multiple Realisation, the Special Sciences, and Reduction

Read: Fodor, "Special Sciences" <https://tinyurl.com/FodorSS>
Kim, "Multiple Realization and the Metaphysics of Reduction" <https://tinyurl.com/MRMOR>
Watch: Lectures (posted by Monday)
Do this: Attend Q&A Session Friday at 10.05am via Zoom

Week 10, March 24 + 26: Mental Causation

Read: Kim, Chapter 7
Watch: Lectures (posted by Monday)
Do: Test on the Friday

Week 11, March 31 + April 2:

Read: Kim, Chapter 9
Watch: Lectures (posted by Monday)
Do this: Attend Q&A Session Friday at 10.05am via Zoom

Week 12 + 13, April 7 + 14 (no class on the 9th):

Read: Kim, Chapter 10
Watch: Lectures (posted by Monday the 5th)
Do this: Attend Q&A Session Wednesday the 14th at 10.05am via Zoom

Note: Web conferencing sessions in this course may be recorded and made available only to those within the class. Sessions may be recorded to enable access to students with internet connectivity problems, who are based in different time zone, and/or who have conflicting commitments. If students wish not to be recorded, they need to leave your camera and microphone turned off.

You will be notified at the start of the session when the recording will start, and Zoom will always notify meeting participants that a meeting is being recorded. It is not possible to disable this notification.

Please note that recordings are protected by copyright. The recordings are for your own educational use, but you are not permitted to publish to third party sites, such as social media sites and course materials sites.

You may be expected to use the video and/or audio and/or chat during web conferencing sessions for participation and collaboration. If you have concerns about being recorded, please email me directly so we can discuss these.

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. 11	Classes begin.
Jan. 25	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. 31	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. 14	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. <i>Classes follow a Friday schedule.</i>
Apr. 15	No classes or examinations take place.
Apr. 16-27	Final examinations for winter term and two-term courses. Examinations are normally held all seven days of the week.
Apr. 27	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