

**PHIL 2550**  
**MORAL PSYCHOLOGY**

**Term:** Winter 2012  
**Meetings:** TTh 4:05-5:25pm  
**Venue:** Mackenzie Building 3380

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

**Email:** [jordan\\_dodd@carleton.ca](mailto:jordan_dodd@carleton.ca)  
**Course Website:** via <http://jordandodd.wordpress.com>

### **1. Course description**

This course is an introduction to the core questions of moral psychology. These questions aren't pure moral (or pure ethical) questions. They aren't, for example, about what it is to be moral (or to be good). They also aren't pure psychological questions. They aren't, for example, about the stages of our moral development through childhood. Instead they are philosophical questions that walk a line: they are related to both pure moral questions and pure psychological questions, and so they live in a grey area between those two camps.

Here are some of the questions in moral psychology that we will examine:

- Do we ever act altruistically?
- What sorts of things, in the broadest sense, motivate our actions?
- What is the distinctive value of friendship and loving relationships?
- How should we make sense of the idea of having a weak will?
- To what extent should we explain someone's virtuous actions by attributing virtuous character traits to him or her?
- When should we forgive?
- When should we judge others morally responsible for their actions?

We will focus on contemporary work on these and other questions (in philosophy, that means work by people who are still alive, or just died recently).

No prior experience in philosophy is required.

Prerequisite: a course in philosophy or second-year standing.

### **2. Texts**

There's nothing to buy. All of the readings are 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 *pretty short things*. Specifically, the marking scheme is:

10% Mini-papers

3 Essays, each worth 30%

#### *Mini-papers*

Six 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 via email).

Sometimes 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*

Three short essays are required. Although the length of the essays is kind of flexible, the main touchstone range should be c.1000-1200. We'll talk about these essays when they get closer.

**Essay#1** will be assigned on February 2<sup>nd</sup> ... and is **due February 16<sup>th</sup>**

**Essay#2** will be assigned on March 6<sup>th</sup> ...and is **due March 20<sup>th</sup>**

**Essay#3** will be assigned on April 5<sup>th</sup> ... and is **due April 24<sup>th</sup>**

### 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 Info (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 reason.

**11. Read the official policies**

Various official Carleton U. and Department of Philosophy policies are laid out in the 'University Polices' document that follows. 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 <a href="http://www.carleton.ca/philosophy">www.carleton.ca/philosophy</a> 520-2110
Registrar's Office:	300 Tory <a href="http://www.carleton.ca/registrar">www.carleton.ca/registrar</a> 520-3500
Student Academic Success Centre:	302 Tory <a href="http://www.carleton.ca/sasc">www.carleton.ca/sasc</a> 520-7850
Paul Menton Centre:	500 University Centre <a href="http://www.carleton.ca/pmc">www.carleton.ca/pmc</a> 520-6608
Writing Tutorial Service:	4 <sup>th</sup> Floor, Library <a href="http://www.carleton.ca/wts">www.carleton.ca/wts</a> 520-6632
MacOdrum Library	<a href="http://www.library.carleton.ca/">http://www.library.carleton.ca/</a> 520-2735