

Metaphysics: PHIL 3150A

Carleton University, Philosophy Department
Winter 2018
Mondays and Wednesdays, 7:35-9:55 PM
Tory 447

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Office: Paterson Hall 3A-38

Office Hours: MW, 4:40 – 5:25, 7:00 – 7:30, and by appointment

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Description: This course is a topical introduction to metaphysics, a branch of philosophy that concerns itself with the most fundamental features of reality. We will investigate several enduring metaphysical problems which have concerned philosophers throughout history and are still under active debate in the present. This course aims to show you how to analyze arguments by past and contemporary philosophers on each chosen topic, and then to help you construct your own arguments.

Required Material

1. Brian Garrett, *What is this thing called Metaphysics?*, 3rd edition, Routledge 2017
2. Various supplementary readings that will be posted on cuLearn

Course requirements

There will be two in-class tests and a final exam, each consisting of 3 essay-type answers.

I will occasionally ask you to produce short (500 words) response papers throughout the semester (around 5 in the entire semester, possibly more, possibly fewer). These will be announced about 1 week in advance of the due date. The weakest grade will be dropped at the end of the semester.

Attendance is mandatory, and you must also be an active participant in the class. This can be achieved in a variety of ways: asking or answering questions in class, participating in class and smaller group discussions, coming to my office hours, or posting on the course forum in cuLearn.

Course sections

Metaphysics is a large topic, with a long and complex history, and covering many questions. Of this multitude of questions, this course will focus on a few main areas:

1. Personal Identity
2. Material constitution
3. Modality
4. Causation
5. Time

E-Mail & cuLearn

It is your responsibility to check your Carleton e-mail and cuLearn regularly. Important course documents, as well as the most current class schedule and reading assignments, are posted on cuLearn, which will be up to date at least until the next test. I can best be reached by email, but please note that I am not permanently “on-call”. I will do my very best to answer all messages in a timely manner, but it’s best not to leave important or emergency messages until the last minute, because they might not reach me on time. Also note that questions about the material covered in class or any other content matters are best addressed during my office hours – please take advantage of those.

Protocol

1. **Read and abide by the University and Departmental Policies outlined at the end of this document.**
2. **Preparation** – Do the reading and all other assignments before class. I recommend that you first skim the text to get a general idea of the content, then read slowly and carefully, outlining major points and noting your questions.
3. **Respect** – Please always be respectful and civilized toward other students and me. This includes, for example, not interrupting when others are talking, maintaining order and silence so others can make the best of their learning experience and, obviously, not displaying any sort of bigoted or discriminatory views. If I feel you are being disruptive, I will ask you to leave the classroom.
4. **Cell Phones and Laptops** – Phones must be turned off or silenced during class. Computers may be used only for taking notes, though I strongly encourage pen-and-paper note-taking instead. The use of a computer, unless it is for accessibility reasons, is disruptive to me and the other students, and it is against your own best interests.
5. **Plagiarism and cheating** are very serious offenses and are unacceptable. I expect all assignments to be completed independently by each student, except when explicitly noted by me otherwise (as in joint projects). Any work you submit and represent as your own must actually be your own. If I believe you have cheated, I will immediately send an incident report to the Dean's Office, which will determine further action, in accordance with University Policies.

Grades

Any work submitted late will receive a **50% grade reduction**. Exceptions will be granted only if I receive the request for late submittal with a valid and properly documented reason (such as a doctor's note indicating injury or illness) no later than the due date. Special arrangements for make-up tests must be made in advance and with proper documentation. Personal reasons will be accepted only in extremely rare cases, at the discretion of the instructor.

You can expect a return time for test grades of **2 weeks**.

It is against course policies to shift any portion of the grade to another assignment.

Final grades will be calculated as follows:

Response papers	20 % – late assignments will be penalized; lowest grade dropped
Tests:	50 % (2x25%) – no make-ups, unless with prior notice and documented excuse
Final Exam:	25 % – not cumulative
Participation and attendance:	5% - this includes coming to class, being active on the course forum, coming to office hours and participating in class discussions

Schedule is posted and regularly updated on cuLearn, with assigned readings.

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:
 - student name
 - student number
 - course number and section
 - instructor's name
- 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 Final Exams:

If you miss a final examination (formally scheduled or take-home) because of circumstances beyond your control, you may apply for a deferral. You must apply within **3 working days** after the scheduled date of your formally scheduled exam or within **3 working days** after the due date of a take-home exam. Visit the Registrar's Office for more information: <http://calendar.carleton.ca/undergrad/regulations/academicregulationsoftheuniversity/acadregsuniv2/#2.5>

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. <https://carleton.ca/registrar/academic-integrity/>

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 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 Equity Services website: <http://www2.carleton.ca/equity/>

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 Equity Services website: <http://www2.carleton.ca/equity/>

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 scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (*if applicable*). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with your professor to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (*if applicable*) at

<http://www2.carleton.ca/pmc/new-and-current-students/dates-and-deadlines/>

You can visit the Equity Services website to view the policies and to obtain more detailed information on academic accommodation at <http://www2.carleton.ca/equity/>

Important Dates:

Sept. 6	Classes start.
Sept. 19	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.
Oct. 9	Statutory holiday. University closed.
Oct. 23-27	Fall Break – no classes.
Nov. 24	Last day for summative or final examinations in Fall term courses before the official examination period.
Dec. 8	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. 10-22	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. 22	All take-home examinations are due.
Jan. 8	Classes begin.
Jan. 19	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.
Feb. 19	Statutory holiday. University closed.
Feb. 19-23	Winter Break – no classes.
Mar. 27	Last day for summative or final examinations in Winter term or two-term courses before the official examination period.
Mar. 30	Statutory holiday. University closed.
Apr. 11	Last day of two-term and Winter term classes. Classes follow a Friday schedule. 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. 14-26	Final examinations for Winter term and two-term courses. Examinations are normally held all seven days of the week.
Apr. 26	All take home examinations are due on this day.

Addresses:

Department of Philosophy:	3A35 Paterson Hall www.carleton.ca/philosophy 520-2110
Registrar's Office:	300 Tory www.carleton.ca/registrar 520-3500
Academic Advising Centre:	302 Tory www.carleton.ca/academicadvising 520-7850
Writing Services:	4 th Floor, Library http://www.carleton.ca/csas/writing-services/ 520-3822
MacOdrum Library	http://www.library.carleton.ca/ 520-2735