

# PHIL 3150: Metaphysics

Fall 2019; Mondays 6:05-8:55pm

**Prof: Katherine Wayne**

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**Office hours:** Mondays 3:30-5:00pm, PA 3A38

**NOTE:** This syllabus is as complete as possible. Details will be filled in as the class progresses, and some minor changes may be implemented as necessary.

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this course, we will examine metaphysical problems regarding modality (possibility and necessity), the self, personal identity, determinism, free will and moral responsibility, and normative claims. We will also examine the study of metaphysics itself.

### Carleton's course calendar description:

Philosophical issues concerning the fundamental nature of being. Topics may include: time and temporality, space, substance, universals/particulars, identity, causation, freedom/determinism, the nature of norms.

Precludes additional credit for PHIL 2302.

Prerequisite(s): 0.5 credit in philosophy and third-year standing in a philosophy program, or permission of the department.

## COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students taking this course can be expected to acquire understanding of our target metaphysical problems and their surrounding debates. Students will also develop and refine their skills in:

- Critical analysis, comparison, and evaluation of arguments raised in response to metaphysical problems
- Argumentation in defense and refutation of claims regarding those problems
- Scholarly discussion and peer collaboration aimed at analyzing and addressing those problems
- Philosophical writing

Success in realizing the course learning objectives will depend on a variety of factors, including keeping up with the course readings and reading them carefully, attending class and participating in class regularly, completing all course work as required, and honouring course policies.

## CLASS TEXTS

Our required textbook is *Riddles of Existence: A Guided Tour of Metaphysics*, by Earl Conee and Theodore Sider (second edition, 2014).

Many required course readings are not in the textbook; outside articles and chapters will be accessible through cuLearn.

## METHODS AND POLICIES

I encourage you to take advantage of office hours wherever feasible. While I will respond to e-mails as promptly and fully as possible, e-mail exchanges should generally be reserved for brief and/or logistical/administrative questions. You can typically expect to receive a response to e-mail inquiries from me within twenty-four hours during the work week, barring noted exceptions.

Please check cuLearn regularly for notices and updates e.g., re: scheduling, readings, and assignment instructions. You are also encouraged to use the student discussion forum on cuLearn for peer discussion, forming study groups, exchanging class notes, etc. I will post my lecture slides to cuLearn the day after each class.

If you have any concerns about your ability to fulfill any of the course requirements but are unsure of how to proceed, please speak with me as soon as possible and take care to inform yourself on relevant departmental and university policies and accommodations services. There is a complete list of these on the last pages of the course outline, with which all students should become familiar.

Violations of academic integrity will not be tolerated. If you are unclear on the nature of academic integrity or Carleton's academic integrity policy, please consult with me and/or the information and links to further resources on the last pages of the syllabus.

## **EVALUATION**

### **1) Attendance and participation (15%)**

This course requires consistent attendance and participation. Classes will regularly include discussion, individual in-class exercises, and peer-supported learning activities. Active participation can be demonstrated in several ways, e.g., asking or answering questions in class, contributing to class or small group discussion, completing in-class exercises, and attending office hours.

### **2) Quizzes (15%)**

Students will take four in-class quizzes on the assigned reading(s) for that day. Of these, the top three will each count for 5% of your final grade. Quizzes will be graded in class.

### **3) Reading response papers (30%)**

Students will submit three short (600-800 words) response papers on the dates indicated below and on the reading schedule, on the reading(s) assigned for that day. Of these papers, the top two will each count for 15% of your final grade. Response papers will also be used in structured small group discussion; to this end, students are expected to bring a copy of the completed assignment to class on the due date. Papers must be submitted (through cuLearn) by the time class begins (6:05pm). Grades and feedback will be provided the following week.

### **4) Take-home final exam (40%)**

The take-home final exam will consist in three essay questions. Students will choose **two** questions and write a 1200-1500-word essay style response to each of these. This is an open-book take-home; students will be expected to appeal to course material in their responses. While discussion with peers is acceptable (and encouraged) in the early preparation process, the essays must be written individually and independently. Each essay response contributes 20% to your final grade. As per university policy, the take-home deadline is the last day of the exam period, December 21<sup>st</sup>.

Note: Further information and instructions for all major course tasks will be posted on cuLearn and discussed in class.

## COURSE SCHEDULE: OVERVIEW OF TOPICS AND IMPORTANT DATES

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### **Part 1, week 1: Introduction to the course**

Syllabus and reading schedule review; introduction to the nature and methods of metaphysics and metaphysical problems

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### **Part 2, weeks 2-3: Modality**

*First quiz September 23<sup>rd</sup>*

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### **Part 3A, weeks 4-5: Persons and Personal Identity**

*First reading response due September 30<sup>th</sup>*

*Second quiz October 7<sup>th</sup>*

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### **Weeks 6-7: no classes (statutory holiday and reading break)**

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### **Part 3B, week 8: con't persons and personal identity**

*Third quiz October 28<sup>th</sup>*

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### **Part 4, weeks 9-11: Freedom, determinism, and moral responsibility**

*Second reading response due November 11<sup>th</sup>*

*Fourth quiz November 18<sup>th</sup>*

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### **Part 5, weeks 12-13: Metaphysics of morals**

*Third reading response due November 25<sup>th</sup>*

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### **Part 6, week 13 con't (last class, Friday Dec 6 on Monday schedule)**

Concluding remarks and review; take-home assistance

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### **Exam period (December 9-21)**

Take-home final must be submitted no later than Saturday December 21<sup>st</sup>

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**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 on the first page: student name and number; course name and number; instructor's name.
- No assignments will be accepted after the last day for handing in term work – see dates below.
- 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.

**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 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:

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](mailto: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. [carleton.ca/pmc](http://carleton.ca/pmc)

**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/>

**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 is 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](http://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. <https://carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf>

For more information on academic accommodation, please contact the departmental administrator or visit: [students.carleton.ca/course-outline](https://students.carleton.ca/course-outline)

**Important Dates:**

Sept. 4	Classes start.
Sept. 17	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. 14	Statutory holiday. University closed.
Oct. 21-25	Fall Break – no classes.
Nov. 22	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. 6	Last day of fall term classes. <b>Classes follow a Monday schedule.</b> 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. 9-21	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. 21	All take-home examinations are due.
Jan. 6	Classes begin.
Jan. 17	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. 17	Statutory holiday. University closed.
Feb. 17-21	Winter Break – no classes.
Mar. 24	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. 7	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.
Apr. 10	Statutory holiday. University closed.
Apr. 13-25	Final examinations for winter term and two-term courses. Examinations are normally held all seven days of the week.
Apr. 25	All take-home examinations are due on this day.

**Addresses:**

Department of Philosophy:	3A35 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
Academic Advising Centre:	302 Tory <a href="http://www.carleton.ca/academicadvising">www.carleton.ca/academicadvising</a> 520-7850
Writing Services:	4 <sup>th</sup> Floor, Library <a href="http://www.carleton.ca/csas/writing-services/">http://www.carleton.ca/csas/writing-services/</a> 520-3822
MacOdrum Library	<a href="http://www.library.carleton.ca/">http://www.library.carleton.ca/</a> 520-2735