

PHIL 1000 A – Introductory Philosophy

Fall 2018

Instructor: Christopher McGrath

Email: christophermcgrath@carleton.ca

Office Hours: Wednesday and Friday, 14:30-16:00 **Office:** 3A54 Paterson Hall

Lectures: Wednesday and Friday 16:00-17:30 **Classroom:** 231 University Centre

Description:

The aim of this course is to provide students with a general introduction to the academic field of philosophy, with a focus on providing a basic survey of some major fields, topics, and problems in philosophy, and on conveying the culture or attitude characteristic of philosophical work.

The course will be organized around a reading of the four dialogues written by Plato which retell the last days and the death of his teacher Socrates. This will provide us with a certain thematic unity spanning the semester, give us an opportunity to wrestle with primary sources from the history of philosophy, and introduce us to one of the founding myths or examples which set the course for philosophical work.

However, the aim of the course is not to focus on Plato or Socrates as particular philosophers. Rather, we will use the themes Plato introduces in these writings as a starting point for a more general consideration of philosophical problems. So from the four dialogues retelling the last days of Socrates, our course will produce four units of study. In each we will begin by reading and discussing one of these four events surrounding Socrates' death. Then we will spend a couple weeks having a more general discussion of the themes it has raised, which will involve reading and discussing other philosophical texts pertaining to those themes.

Accordingly, in Unit I we will read Plato's *Euthyphro* and then spend some time discussing ethics and philosophy's role in the critique of society. In Unit II we will read Plato's *Apology* and then consider how different species of philosophical skepticism help clarify what is at stake in the field of epistemology. In Unit III we will read Plato's *Crito* and then engage in a broader consideration of philosophical themes in politics and law. And in Unit IV we will read Plato's *Phaedo* and conclude with a broader discussion of metaphysics and the philosophy of science.

The final class will offer some concluding remarks which will attempt to clarify, on the basis of the semester's work, how to understand the nature and aim of philosophy.

Schedule of the Lectures:

Lecture topics may be adjusted pending our ability to adequately get through the material in class. But the initial plan is as follows:

#	Date	Topic
1	Sep 05	Introduction to the Class
Unit I – The Euthyphro		
2	Sep 07	The Trial of Socrates I – The Euthyphro
3	Sep 12	Philosophy as a Critique of Society

4	Sep 14	The Philosophical Critique of Theology	
5	Sep 19	Questioning the Nature of Ethics	
6	Sep 21	The Search for the Foundation of Ethics	
7	Sep 26	Test #1	
Unit II – The Apology			
8	Sep 28	The Trial of Socrates II – The Apology	
9	Oct 03	Pyrrhonist Skepticism and the Challenge to Knowledge	
10	Oct 05	Socratic Inquiry and the Pursuit of Knowledge	
11	Oct 10	Academic Skepticism and Fallibilism	
12	Oct 12	Methodological Skepticism and Foundationalism	
13	Oct 17	Test #2	
Unit III – The Crito			
14	Oct 19	The Trial of Socrates III – The Crito	
	Oct 24	No Class – Fall Break	
	Oct 26	No Class – Fall Break	
15	Oct 31	Pessimism and Optimism about Justice	
16	Nov 02	The Social Contract	
17	Nov 07	The Role of the State	
18	Nov 09	What is Enlightenment?	
19	Nov 14	Test #3	
Unit IV – The Phaedo			
20	Nov 16	The Trial of Socrates IV – The Phaedo	
21	Nov 21	What is Science? Hypothesis and Its Critics	
22	Nov 23	What is Nature? Mathematization and Empiricism	
23	Nov 28	What are We? The Mind-Body Problem	
24	Nov 30	Philosophy as the Aspiration toward What is Greatest in Us	
Concluding Remarks			
25	Dec 05	Concluding Remarks	
	Dec 07	No Class – Monday Schedule	

Assessment:

Students' performance in the course will be assessed by four tests, three held in class and one held during the final exam period. These four tests are equally weighted and non-cumulative, each covering the material from only one unit. The tests will consist of fill in the blank style questions aimed to test the student's familiarity with some of the basic terms and concepts introduced during the unit, and point form short answer style questions aimed to test the student's understanding of select arguments discussed during the unit.

25% - Noncumulative Test #1 on Unit I, held in class on Sep 26

25% - Noncumulative Test #2 on Unit II, held in class on Oct 17

25% - Noncumulative Test #3 on Unit III, held in class on Nov 14

25% - Noncumulative Test #4 on Unit IV, held during final exam period

Readings:

Readings will be provided online via the course webpage.

Since our course is structured around four of Plato's texts, students who would like to purchase a book for the class are encouraged to purchase a copy of Plato's writings containing these texts. Philosophy students or others interested in pursuing further studies in philosophy are particularly encouraged to do this, as they may have occasion to continue to consult Plato's writings.

The standard complete collection of Plato's writings in English translation is Cooper's (ed.) *Plato: Complete Works* (Hackett 1997).

Students looking for a more affordable selection of just the writings used in this course may purchase any of the following editions:

- Grube and Cooper (transl.) *The Trial and Death of Socrates* (Hackett 2000)
- Griffith (transl.) *Plato: Symposium and the Death of Socrates* (Woodsworth 1997)
- Rowe (ed.) *The Last Days of Socrates* (Penguin 2010)

Class Expectations:

To keep up with the class work, students are expected to attend the lectures and complete the readings in a timely fashion. To be awarded marks in the assessment, students are required to be present on the scheduled day to write each test, or to formally request rescheduling at the earliest reasonable notice only on the basis of a documented or comparably reasonable excuse for being unable to write the test on the scheduled day.

To facilitate engaging the class material and preparing for the test, brief summaries of the major points discussed in class will be provided on the course webpage. However, these will not serve as an adequate alternative to attending the lectures, and will include only the major points students are expected to remember, without the explanation of them provided during the scheduled lectures.

Department of Philosophy and Carleton University Policies (Fall/Winter 2018-19)

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 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

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

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

Important Dates:

Sept. 5	Classes start.
Sept. 18	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. 8	Statutory holiday. University closed.
Oct. 22-26	Fall Break – no classes.
Nov. 23	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. 7	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. 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. 7	Classes begin.
Jan. 18	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. 18	Statutory holiday. University closed.
Feb. 18-22	Winter Break – no classes.
Mar. 26	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. 9	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. 12-27	Final examinations for winter term and two-term courses. Examinations are normally held all seven days of the week.
Apr. 19-21	Statutory holiday. University closed. No examinations take place.
Apr. 27	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