

PHILOSOPHY 1301: MIND, WORLD AND KNOWLEDGE
CARLETON UNIVERSITY
PROFESSOR KEN FERGUSON

COURSE SYLLABUS

TERM: Fall Term, 2009/2010
TIME: Monday and Wednesday 10:05-11:25
LOCATION Tory Building, Lecture Hall 360
INSTRUCTOR: Ken Ferguson
OFFICE: Paterson Hall, 329B
OFFICE HOURS: Monday and Wednesday 11:30-12:30
PHONE: Office: (613) 520-2600, ext. 6307
EMAIL: ken_ferguson@carleton.ca

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The aim of this course is to introduce students to philosophical reflection and inquiry by exploring a number of traditional problems concerning the nature of knowledge, minds, persons, language and related issues. Among the issues to be considered are the following: What conditions must be satisfied, for example, if a person is to know something? How can we respond to skeptics who insist that genuine knowledge is impossible? What is consciousness? Is it something purely physical, a state of the brain, perhaps, or is it something over and above the physical world? What are persons? Is there an afterlife? Has the development of modern science undercut any rational basis for religious belief?

These and other issues have occupied the attention of reflective people for thousands of years. Although they must have answers, it proves extremely difficult to know what they are, for they do not seem to be directly amenable to the methods and procedures that we normally rely upon in forming beliefs in science or everyday life. This does not mean, however, that we may choose whichever answers we like; opinions are of no interest unless they can be supported by reasoned arguments. After looking at how some of the most prominent philosophical thinkers, both today and in the past, have tried to answer these questions, we will try to arrive some conclusions ourselves.

REQUIRED TEXT

A course pack of readings with the title, *Philosophy 1301: Mind, World and Knowledge*, has been prepared by the Instructor. This course pack can only be purchased at **Haven Books**, which is located at 43 Seneca Street, just off Campus. Their phone number is: (613) 730-9888.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Midterm: There will be a midterm exam which will be worth 30% of the final grade. It is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, October 21. It will be closed-book and will consist of some short answer questions followed by a longer essay question.

Term Paper: Students will be required to write a term paper worth 30% of the final grade. The paper will be about 6 – 8 pages in length (1500 – 2000 words) and will be due in our last class for the course, Monday, December 7. It will not be a research paper that requires a lot of library or Internet sources but instead will consist of a critical discussion of some topic or issue central to the course. A list of topics, along with instructions and guidelines for writing the paper, will be available early in the semester.

Final Examination: There will be a final exam, worth 40% of the final grade, scheduled during the examination period. It will have the following form: two weeks before the date of the exam a list of questions on topics central to the course will be distributed to students; the instructor will then select two of these questions for students to answer on the final.

WEB CT

Students must ensure that they have access to the Web CT for this course, as course notes as well as other information and material will be posted on it. (If you do not know how to access it, please contact the Instructor.)

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Although no official record of attendance will be taken, as it is not feasible in a class of this size, attendance in class is extremely important if students hope to do well. It is understood that students are responsible for any material they miss due to absence.

BRIEF LIST OF TOPICS TO BE COVERED

- The Scientific Revolution of the 17th Century
- Descartes' discussion skepticism in his *Meditations*
- Descartes' foundationalist theory of knowledge and alternatives to it
- The debate over innate ideas
- Locke's empiricist account of the origin of ideas
- The distinction between primary and secondary qualities
- Berkeley's critique of Locke on primary and secondary qualities
- Idealism versus realism
- Hume's puzzle about causation
- Relation between science and religion
- The nature of consciousness
- Theories and puzzles about personal identity
- The nature of (linguistic) meaning

OUTLINE OF TOPICS AND READINGS

(In addition to the readings below, all of which are in the course pack, there will be some required readings which are online, including selections from Bertrand Russell's *The Problems of Philosophy*.)

I. Descartes' *Meditations*

Reading 1: Simon Blackburn, *Think*, (Oxford, Oxford university Press, 1999), chapter 1: "Knowledge", pp. 15-48

Reading 2: René Descartes, *Meditations I, II, III, and VI*, from *Introduction to Philosophy: Classical and Contemporary Readings*, 3rd edition, edited by Louis Pojman, (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2004) pp. 42-50 and 65-72

II. "Solutions" to Cartesian Scepticism

Reading 3: G.E. Moore, "Proof of an External World," from *Epistemology: Contemporary Readings*, edited by Michael Huemer, (New York, Routledge, 2002) pp. 602-605

Reading 4: Christopher Grau, "Bad Dreams, Evil Demons, and the Experience Machine," from *Introduction to Philosophy: Classical and Contemporary Readings*, edited by John Perry, Michael Bratman, and J.M. Fischer, (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2007) pp.195-202

Reading 5: Bertrand Russell, *The Problems of Philosophy*, Chapter 2: "The Existence of Matter," (Mineola, New York, Dover Publications, 1999) pp. 9-16

III. Thought, Perception and Reality

Reading 6: John Chaffee, *The Philosopher's Way: A Text With Readings*, 2nd edition, (Upper Saddle River, N.J., Pearson/Prentice Hall, 2005) pp. 274-293

Reading 7: George Berkeley, *Three Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous*, "The First Dialogue" from *Philosophical Problems : An Annotated Anthology*, 2nd edition, edited by Lawrence Bonjour and Ann Baker, (Toronto, Pearson/Lonman, 2007) pp. 74-88

IV. David Hume's Puzzle about Causation

Reading 8: Manuel Velasquez, *Philosophy: A Text With Readings*, (Toronto, Wadsworth publishers, 2005) Chapter 5.7 : "Hume", pp. 419-425

Reading 9: David Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, (selections) taken from *Argument and Analysis: An Introduction to Philosophy*, edited by Martin Curd, (New York, NY, West Publishing Company, 1991) pp. 489-496

Reading 10: A.C. Ewing, "Cause," from *Argument and Analysis: An Introduction to Philosophy* ... pp. 496-505

V. Immanuel Kant's "Copernican Revolution" in Epistemology

Reading 10: Manuel Velasquez, *Philosophy: A Text With Readings* ... Chapter 6.6: "Kant", pp. 486-95

VI. Theories of Knowledge

Reading 11: Robert Audi, "The Structure of Knowledge," from *Argument and Analysis: An Introduction to Philosophy*, edited by Martin Curd, (New York, NY, West Publishing Company, 1991) ... pp. 453-460

Reading 12: Edmund Gettier, "Is Justified True Belief Knowledge?" from *Knowledge: Readings in Contemporary Epistemology*, edited by Sven Bernecker and Fred Dretske, (Oxford, Oxford University Press. 2000) pp. 13-15

Reading 13: Alvin Goldman, "Discrimination and Perceptual Knowledge" from *Knowledge: Readings in Contemporary Epistemology* ... pp. 86-93

Reading 14: Roderick Chisholm, "The Indispensability of Internal Justification" from *Knowledge: Readings in Contemporary Epistemology* ... pp. 118-127

VII. Science and Religion

Reading 15: Richard Dawkins, “Science Versus Religion”, from *Philosophy of Religion : An Anthology*, 5th edition, edited by Louis Pojman and Michael Rea, (Toronto, Thomson/Wadsworth, 2008) pp. 426-430

Reading 16: Stephen Jay Gould, “Nonoverlapping Magisteria”, from *Philosophy of Religion : An Anthology*, 5th edition ... pp.430-438

Reading 17: Manuel Velasquez, *Philosophy: A Text With Readings* ... pp. 403-415

VIII. Consciousness

Reading 18: Manuel Velasquez, *Philosophy: A Text With Readings* ... Chapter 2, "How Do Mind and Body Relate?" pp. 104-118

Reading 19: Keith Campbell, *A Brief Introduction to the Philosophy of Mind*, (Toronto, Broadview Press) Chapter 9, "Qualia", pp. 189-208s

Reading 20: David Chalmers, “Against Materialism”, from *Introduction to Philosophy*, 3rd edition, edited by Louis Pojman, (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2004) pp. 310-323

Reading 21: Susan Blackmore, *Consciousness: A Very Short Introduction*, (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2005) chapter 4: “A Grand Illusion”, pp. 50-65

IX. Personal Identity

Reading 22: Manuel Velasquez, *Philosophy: A Text With Readings* ... Chapter 2.4: “Is There an Enduring Self? ”, pp.119-131

Reading 23: Derek Parfit and Godfrey Vesey, “ Brain Transplants and Personal Identity: A Dialogue” from *Introduction to Philosophy: Classical and Contemporary Readings*, 3rd edition, edited by Louis Pojman ... pp. 341-346

Reading 24: Daniel Dennett, “The Self as a Narrative Centre of Gravity”, from *Philosophical Horizons: Introductory Readings*, edited by Stephen M. Cahn and Maureen Eckert (Toronto, Thomson/Wadsworth Publishers, 2006) pp. 125-131

X. The Nature of (Linguistic) Meaning

Reading 25: William Hughes and Jonathan Lavery, *Critical Thinking*, (Toronto, Broadview Press, 2004) pp. 33-39

Reading 26: William Lycan, *Philosophy of Language: A Contemporary Introduction*, (New York, Routledge, 2000) selections from Part II: “Theories of Meaning”, pp. 90-97, 102-7, 116-25

Reading 27: Alexander Miller, “Introduction [to Saul Kripke’s *Wittgenstein on Rules and Private Language*]”, from *Rule-Following and Meaning*, edited by Alexander Miller and Crispin Wright, (McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2002) pp. 1-15

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
- 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.
- 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, page 56 or <http://www.carleton.ca/cu0809uc/regulations/acadregsuniv14.html#14.3>)

Academic Accommodation:

For Students with Disabilities: 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 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 every term to have a Letter of Accommodation sent to the Instructor by their Coordinator. In addition, students are expected to confirm their need for accommodation with the Instructor no later than two weeks before the first assignment is due or the first in-class test/midterm. If you require accommodations only for formally scheduled exam(s) in this course, you must request accommodations by the last official day to withdraw from classes in each term.

For Religious Observance: Students requesting academic accommodation on the basis of religious observance should make a formal, written request to their instructors for alternate dates and/or means of satisfying academic requirements. Such requests should be made during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist, but no later than two weeks before the compulsory academic event. Accommodation is to

be worked out directly and on an individual basis between the student and the instructor(s) involved. Instructors will make accommodations in a way that avoids academic disadvantage to the student. Students or instructors who have questions or want to confirm accommodation eligibility of a religious event or practice may refer to the Equity Services website www.carleton.ca/equity/holy_days/ for a list of holy days and Carleton's Academic Accommodation policies.

For Pregnancy: Pregnant students requiring academic accommodations are encouraged to contact an Equity Advisor in Equity Services to complete a *letter of accommodation*. The student must then make an appointment to discuss her needs with the instructor at least two weeks prior to the first academic event in which it is anticipated the accommodation will be required.

Important Dates:

Sept. 10	Classes start (after Orientation events).
Sept. 23	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. 9	University Day – no classes.
Oct. 12	Thanksgiving Day – university closed.
Nov. 16	Last day to withdraw from Fall term courses (academic purposes only).
Nov. 23	Last day for tests or examinations in courses below 4000 level before the Final Examination period.
Dec. 8	Last day of classes, Fall term. Last day for handing in term assignments, subject to any earlier course deadline.
Dec. 9-22	Final examinations for Fall courses, mid-terms for Fall/Winter courses.
Jan. 4	Winter term classes begin.
Jan. 15	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. 15-19	Winter Break, classes suspended.
Mar. 12	Last day to withdraw from Fall/Winter and Winter term courses (academic purposes only).
Mar. 24	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.
Apr. 7	Winter term ends; last day for handing in term assignments, subject to any earlier course deadline.
Apr. 8-24	Final Examinations.

Addresses:

Department of Philosophy:	3A46 Paterson Hall www.carleton.ca/philosophy 520-2110
Registrar's Office:	300 Tory www.carleton.ca/registrar 520-3500
Student Academic Success Centre:	302 Tory www.carleton.ca/sasc 520-7850
Paul Menton Centre:	500 University Centre www.carleton.ca/pmc 520-6608
Writing Tutorial Service:	4 th Floor, Library www.carleton.ca/wts 520-6632
MacOdrum Library	www.library.carleton.ca 520-2735