

**University of Guelph**  
**Department of Philosophy**

**PHIL: Intro – Major Texts, FALL 2013**

**Mondays and Wednesday**  
**8:30-9:20am**  
**MAC 149**

**Instructor:** Ian Patrick McHugh

**Contact Information:** [imchugh@uoguelph.ca](mailto:imchugh@uoguelph.ca)

**Office:** MACK (MacKinnon) #339

**Office Hours:** Wednesday, 4pm – 5pm, or by appointment

**Graduate Teachings Assistants (Tutorial Seminar Leaders):**

Shannon Buckley ([sbuckley@uoguelph.ca](mailto:sbuckley@uoguelph.ca)), MACK # 368, office hrs: M, 10-11am

Thom Campbell ([tcampb07@uoguelph.ca](mailto:tcampb07@uoguelph.ca)), MACK # 361, office hrs: M, 10-11am

Martin King ([mking04@uoguelph.ca](mailto:mking04@uoguelph.ca)), MACK # 362, office hrs: M, 3pm-4pm

Patrick di Salvo ([disalvop@uoguelph.ca](mailto:disalvop@uoguelph.ca)), MACK # 324, office hrs: F, 3:30-4:30pm

**Course Description:** Our course is an exploration of the work of three important figures from the history of philosophy, Rene Descartes, David Hume, and Friedrich Nietzsche. Our course's lectures, in-class discussion, and tutorial seminars shall focus on identifying and understanding key philosophical ideas and issues, and the various ways to approach and appreciate works of philosophy. We shall discuss the ways, methods, and practices of doing philosophy. Lurking within each of the course's texts is a particular way of doing philosophy that is intimately connected with the philosophical statement each philosopher is trying to make. By examining these ways of philosophizing we can come to a fuller appreciation and understanding of the text, and address perennial problems in philosophy itself. One of these problems is this: Is there only one true way of understanding the world (only one way of doing philosophy; only one method by which the truth can be expressed or explained), or whether the world and the truth are open to many ways by which we may express them philosophically.

**Texts:**

- 1) Rene Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy*, Oxford, 2008
- 2) David Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, Oxford, 2008
- 3) Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, Oxford, 2008

Texts can be found at the campus bookstore.

**Grade percentage breakdown:**

- 1) Short writings assignments = (max. points: 10 each) total worth 40%
- 2) Take-home midterm exam = (max. points: 10) worth 25%
- 3) Final exam = (max. points: 10) worth 35%

**Homework:** Homework consists in staying on track with the reading schedule and turning in the ten short writing assignments. If you are having difficulty keeping up with the readings or with the short writing assignments, talk either with your seminar leader or with the lecturer (We're here to help!). The reading schedule and short writing assignments can be found in the **Course Schedule**.

**Short Writing Assignments:** Each week (except for the first week and immediately after the midterm), you are to write a paragraph that (1) briefly summarizes an important idea related to our readings and (2) briefly answers a question that is related to the idea summarized. The lines are to be double-spaced and the paragraph must be no less than one half-page in length and no more than one full-page in length (if you feel you need to make your response longer, consult your tutorial seminar leader first). There are ten of these short writing assignments in total. The writing assignment topics are listed below in the Course Schedule. A detailed explanation of the topic shall be given to you by your tutorial seminar leader a week before they are due. These assignments are to be handed in to your tutorial seminar leader at the beginning of your tutorial seminar a week after they have been assigned. You will have the opportunity to drop three of your worst short writing assignments from the final grade.

**Take-home midterm Exam:** The take-home exam shall consist of three essay questions. The first two essays are worth 4 points and cover material we've dealt with in our lectures and readings. These two essays merely require you to provide accurate and intelligent explanations of the material we have covered. The last essay is worth 2 points and shall ask you to reflect on a particular problem (chosen by me, your instructor) from one of our readings and then provide your own philosophical response to that problem.

**Final Exam:** The final exam shall consist of five essay questions. The first three are worth 2 points each and cover material we've dealt with in our lectures and readings. These two essays merely require you to provide accurate and intelligent explanations of the material we have covered. The last two questions are also worth 2 points each, and shall ask you to reflect on particular problems (chosen by me, your instructor) from our readings and then provide your own philosophical response to those problems.

**Study groups:** The material we'll be reading for our course may turn out to be very difficult if you've never read philosophy before, and the short weekly assignments may be difficult if your educational background did not require much writing, and I know that your other academic obligations may make these requirements much more difficult to fulfill than I could ever have expected. This is why I encourage you to participate in reading or study groups that may allow you to not only gain a deeper insight into the material we're reading, but also get caught up if (for one reason or another) you could not make it to either a lecture or a tutorial seminar. You may even use the study group to find ways to summarize or respond to the philosophy texts in your short writing assignments. HOWEVER, do not construe this as an invitation to write your short assignments jointly with other students. The short writing assignments must be written in YOUR OWN WORDS, not the words agreed upon by two or more students.

**Late assignments:** You may turn in an assignment one week later than the assigned due date, but you will automatically have 1 point removed from your paper's grade. No assignment will be accepted that is later than one week. Remember, as the points accumulated over the semester a lower score is better than a 0 score for your assignments.

**Lateness due to illness or compassionate reasons:** If for medical or compassionate reasons you are forced to turn in your work later than assigned, please write to your tutorial seminar leaders or to me (your instructor). If you have a legitimate reason and are willing to supply proof if asked (say, a doctor's note), then no points will be deducted.

**Laptops, handheld devices, phones:** I will not permit any laptops, handheld devices, or phones to be used in my classroom. There is no way for me to tell whether you're actually taking notes on your laptop unless I stand behind you the entire time and I really can't be bothered with that! If I or one of the tutorial leaders (the GTAs) see you using a laptop, handheld device, or phone during the lecture you will be asked to immediately turn it off and put it away. Failure to do will result in dismissal from the classroom. Possible disciplinary action may result if the problem persists. If you require a laptop to take notes with due to a medical reason, please see me about it. That would be OK.

**Student's rights and health:** Remember, you have rights too! If you experience any violations of your rights as a student (or as a person) by a fellow student, by a GTA, by your instructor, or by someone else on campus, there are ways for you to find help, get justice, and to seek sympathetic aide. Here are some resources:

- Campus Police: <https://www.uoguelph.ca/police/>
- Emergency phone numbers: Dial x2000, 519-840-5000, or 911
- Student's Rights and Responsibilities:  
<http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/current/geninfo/geninfo-srr.shtml>
- Student Health Services:  
<https://www.uoguelph.ca/studenthealthservices/clinic>
- S.A.F.E. (Sexual Assault Free Environments)  
<https://www.uoguelph.ca/studenthealthservices/wellness-centre/education-awareness/safe>
- Campus judicial processes:  
<http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/current/geninfo/geninfo-srr-jp.shtml>
- Suicide prevention:  
<https://www.uoguelph.ca/studenthealthservices/node/1415>

## **STATEMENTS REGARDING UNIVERSITY REGULATIONS:**

**E-mail Communication:** As per university regulations, all students are required to check their <uoguelph.ca> e-mail account regularly: e-mail is the official route of communication between the university and its students.

**When You Cannot Meet a Course Requirement...:** When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or compassionate reasons, please advise the course instructor (or designated person, such as a teaching assistant) in writing, with your name, ID#, and e-mail contact. See the undergraduate calendar for information on regulations and procedures for Academic Consideration:

<http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/>

**Drop Date:** The last date to drop one-semester Fall 2013 courses, without academic penalty, is October 31<sup>st</sup> (a Thursday). For regulations and procedures for Dropping Courses, see the Undergraduate Calendar:

<http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/>

**Copies of out-of-class assignments:** Keep paper and/or other reliable back-up copies of all out-of-class assignments: you may be asked to resubmit work at any time.

**Academic Misconduct:** The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and enjoins all members of the University community – faculty, staff, and students – to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring. The Academic Misconduct Policy is detailed in the Undergraduate Calendar:

<http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-amisconduct.shtml>

**Recording of Materials:** Presentations which are made in relation to course work – including lectures – cannot be recorded in any electronic media without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a classmate or guest lecturer.

**Resources:** The Undergraduate Calendar is the source of information about the University of Guelph's procedures, policies and regulations which apply to undergraduate programs. It can be found at:

<http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/>