

University of Guelph
Department of Philosophy
PHIL 4820-01 Philosophy Research Presentation
Winter 2018

Instructor: Karyn Freedman

Email: karynf@uoguelph.ca

Phone: 824-4120 x 53232

Office: 354 MacKinnon

Office Hours: Mondays & Wednesday, 2:30 – 3:30, or by appointment

Classroom: Philosophy Seminar Room

Lecture: M/W 10:00-11:20

Course Prerequisites

14.00 credits including 1.00 credits in Philosophy at the 3000-level

Restriction(s): Restricted to students in Philosophy major.

Course Description

The focus of this course is on mastering the oral presentation of a philosophical argument, as well as engaging in respectful, intellectually honest discussion with one's audience. Over the course of the semester students will develop and present a philosophical argument, working independently, in class and one-on-one with the instructor. By the end of the semester students will be ready to present their work at an end-of-semester conference. Students are expected to have a topic for their presentation at the beginning of the course.

Method of Presentation

We will meet twice a week during the winter term in the Philosophy Seminar Room. The details of our schedule can be found below.

Course Objectives

The main objective of this course is to develop the philosophical skills that are required to present and defend orally a philosophical claim. These skills are of great value for philosophers, and also outside of academic contexts.

Texts

There is no textbook for this course.

Learning Outcomes (objectives)

- **Advanced literacy:** the ability to simplify and clarify the central assumptions and arguments informing a wide range of viewpoints, even when couched in specialized or complex vocabulary.
- **Intellectual independence:** the ability to identify and question the often implicit presuppositions that inform various viewpoints, and the confidence to propose novel and creative solutions.

Learning Outcomes (skills)

- **Prepare** a sustained piece of philosophical writing in which a topic is articulated clearly and a stance on that topic is supported by appropriate and well thought-through reasons.
- **Deliver** an oral presentation on a philosophical topic that is clear, accurate and well-reasoned.
- **Organize and present** a philosophical theory and engage with others in the development of a defense and critique of the theory.
- **Argue** successfully for one's own view and be able to identify and critically evaluate patterns of argumentative reasoning in the work of others.

Method of Evaluation

| | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| Pitch | 10% |
| Responses to two others' Pitches | 2 x 5% = 10% |
| First Run Presentation | 15% |
| Responses to two others' First Runs | 2 x 5% = 10% |
| Speakers Series Talk & Critical Response | 5% (pass/fail) |
| Second Run Presentation | 15% |
| Prep Meetings x 2 | 2 x 2.5% = 5% (pass/fail) |
| Conference Presentation | 25% |
| Contribution to Q & A sessions at Conference | 5% (pass/fail) |
| Total: | 100% |

Class Schedule

Week 1 (January 8 & 10): Introductory Class

Students will come to the first class with their presentation topics. The goal of this course is to help you develop a 20-minute presentation which is accessible to non-specialists and has a clearly established philosophical interest. During our first class, we'll discuss the mechanics of the course, which will be to develop a philosophical presentation of one's research. We will also discuss what makes a good presentation good. We will also schedule:

- Initial one-on-one meeting with professor (to be scheduled for January 10);
- Pitches, each with two respondents;

- First runs, each with two respondents;
- Second runs, each with two respondents.

Week 2 (January 15 & 17): The Pitch

Students will present a short (5-10-minute) pitch of their idea for their research presentation, which will involve:

- An explanation of the debate to which it contributes
- A preliminary statement of the thesis

Each pitch will receive a brief response by two designated students. Responses are meant to be helpful in guiding students to improve their presentations in terms of philosophical interest and clarity. *It is very important that these responses are not overly generous; critical feedback is essential in helping refine presentation skills.*

Week 3 (January 22 & 24): Philosophers Talking & Prep Meeting #1

In our Monday class, we'll discuss some videos of philosophers giving presentations (I'll send you links to various talks during week 2). Instead of our Wednesday class, we'll have scheduled one-on-one meetings to discuss the feedback you received on your pitches, and in particular how you can use this to help with your presentations. For prep meetings (#1 & #2), you will be required to bring in 5 questions related to your presentation. The goal of these meetings is to direct you to further develop a plan for presenting (and, if necessary, further researching) your topic.

Week 4 (January 29 & 31): Preparation for First Run

No scheduled class meetings; students will work on their own time on their topics, preparing for a first run of their presentation. I will be scheduling one-on-one meetings for those students who want or require some extra help.

Week 5 (February 5 & 7): First Run

Students will give a first run of their 20-minute presentation. The two designated respondents will:

- Listen to it, not having seen a written version beforehand (so they can judge its success as an oral presentation);
- Take notes, including a structured summary of the presentation;
- Make brief comments (1-2 minutes) in class;
- Write a 1-page comment on the First Run, suggesting areas for improvement (e.g. explanation of the philosophical interest, situating the argument in relation to some debate, improving the argument, consideration of possible objections).

Week 6 (February 12 & 14): Critical Feedback on First Run & Speakers Series

On Monday's class we will discuss, as a group, the feedback on your First Runs, both with an eye to improve your presentations and also to help us determine the distinguishing marks of *good critical feedback*. Instead of Wednesday's class, students will be encouraged to attend the Philosophy Department speaker series presentation on **Friday, February 16, by Kate Norlock, and provide a critical (written) response to it, which is worth 5%**. (Note, if students can't attend this talk because of a scheduling conflict, there are 2 other opportunities to earn this 5%: James Beebe's talk on February 2nd, or Patricia Sheridan's talk on March 9. If students can't attend *any* of these talks because of scheduling conflicts, I will provide them with another opportunity to earn the 5%.)

Week 7 (February 26 & 28): Prep meetings #2

In Monday's class, we'll discuss the presentation by Kate Norlock, and students will present their critical feedback on it. Instead of Wednesday's class, we'll have our second scheduled one-on-one prep meetings to discuss the feedback you received on your first run presentation, and how you can use this to help with improving your work. Again, for this prep meeting, you will be required to bring in 5 questions related to your presentation.

Week 8 (March 5 & 7): Preparation for Second Run

No scheduled class meetings; students will work on their own time on their topics, preparing for a second run of their presentation. I will be scheduling one-on-one meetings for those students who want or require some extra help. **I will also be encouraging you to attend the Philosophy Department speaker series presentation, by Patricia Sheridan, on March 9.**

Week 9 (March 12 & 14): Second Run

Students will give a second run of their 20-minute-long presentation. For the second run we will not have designated respondents, but instead all students will offer oral feedback on the presentation.

Week 10 (March 19 & 21):

On Monday, we will attend Karen Houle's PHIL 2070, and on Wednesday we will have a guest visit by Patricia Sheridan (hopefully you will have all attended her talk on March 9), to talk about various aspects of giving a presentation.

Week 11 (March 26 & 28):

We will have regularly scheduled class, during which students will finish preparations on their presentations.

Week 12 (April 2 & 4): Conference

This week we will host a conference, at which time each student will give their 20-minute presentation and will handle questions from the audience. While all Philosophy Majors (and faculty and graduate students) will be invited to attend the conference, only those students enrolled in course will be required to attend.

College of Arts Standard Statements

E-mail Communication

As per university regulations, all students are required to check their <mail.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.](#)

Drop Date

Courses that are one semester long must be dropped by the end of the fortieth class day (**Friday, 9 March 2018**); two-semester courses must be dropped by the last day of the add period in the second semester. The regulations and procedures for [Dropping Courses](#) are available in the Undergraduate Calendar.

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.

Student Rights and Responsibilities

Each student at the University of Guelph has rights which carry commensurate responsibilities that involve, broadly, being a civil and respectful member of the University community. [The Rights and Responsibilities are detailed in the Undergraduate Calendar](#)

Academic Misconduct

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and it is the responsibility of 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. University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of

study; faculty, staff and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that discourages misconduct. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection.

Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor.

[The Academic Misconduct Policy is detailed in the Undergraduate Calendar.](#)

Recording of Materials

Presentations which are made in relation to course work—including lectures—cannot be recorded or copied without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a classmate or guest lecturer. Material recorded with permission is restricted to use for that course unless further permission is granted.

Resources

The [Academic Calendars](#) are the source of information about the University of Guelph's procedures, policies and regulations which apply to undergraduate, graduate and diploma programs.

Accessibility

The University promotes the full participation of students who experience disabilities in their academic programs. To that end, the provision of academic accommodation is a shared responsibility between the University and the student.

When accommodations are needed, the student is required to first register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS). Documentation to substantiate the existence of a disability is required, however, interim accommodations may be possible while that process is underway.

Accommodations are available for both permanent and temporary disabilities. It should be noted that common illnesses such as a cold or the flu do not constitute a disability.

Use of the SAS Exam Centre requires students to book their exams at least 7 days in advance, and not later than the 40th Class Day. [For more information see the SAS web site.](#)