



Department of Philosophy

PHIL *2250

“Knowledge, Mind and Language”

Fall 2014

Tues, Thurs 2:30–3:50, Graham Hall (GRHM) 2310

COURSE OUTLINE

Please read this outline carefully and retain it for future reference.

Instructor: Andrew Bailey

Office: MacKinnon 357

Phone extension: 56389

E-mail: abailey@uoguelph.ca

Class web site: [CourseLink](#)

Office hours: Tuesday and Thursday 1:30–2:20, or by appointment.

Course prerequisites: 2.00 credits or a 1000-level philosophy course.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is an introduction to the nature and possibility of knowledge, in connection with the nature of mind and the role of language in shaping experience. We will look at our knowledge of the external world, language and thought, the metaphysics of mind, metaphysical freedom, and knowledge of minds.

Our primary objectives for the course are to:

- gain an initial understanding of some central philosophical debates;
- actively join those debates and generate some of our own ideas and responses; and to
- develop skills in reading and writing about complex and abstract ideas.

Ultimately, we hope to acquire a solid foundation for future work in philosophy and, perhaps more importantly, make a beginning in thinking in a structured, productive way about difficult and important topics.

REQUIRED TEXT:

- Andrew Brook and Robert J. Stainton, *Knowledge and Mind: A Philosophical Introduction* (MIT Press, 2000)

I may add additional short readings (which will be distributed through CourseLink and/or electronic reserve) to illuminate the main text and assist our discussions as we go on.

EVALUATION:

The evaluation for this course will consist in a mid-term exam (worth 20% of the final grade), a term paper (worth 40% of the grade) and a final exam (worth 40% of the grade). You do not need to pass all of the assignments in order to pass the course, but you do need to sit the final exam.

A: Mid-term Exam.

- This will be held on Thursday, **October 2nd**, in our regular classroom. During the exam you will have to answer three short-essay questions from a choice of six.
- The exam will not be open book, but you can bring a ‘cheat sheet.’ On both sides of a standard sheet of 8½"×11" paper you can write anything at all that you think might help you, and you can refer to that sheet (but nothing else) during the exam.

B: Term Paper.

- This term paper is due in-class on the last day of lectures, Thursday **November 27th**.
- I will give you a choice of topics for this paper. You may write on a different topic, of your choice, *but only in consultation with me*: that is, you should come to see me with a topic in mind—or preferably sketched out on paper—and get my approval for it. Papers written on an unapproved subject will be considered ‘off-topic’ and graded accordingly.
- Your essay should be between 2,500 and 4,000 words in length, or (if you prefer) eight to fourteen double-spaced pages. However this is only a guideline: the real moral is that papers much shorter than this are likely to be inadequate, papers much longer need to be carefully checked for lack of concision. In grading the essays, I will take into consideration your ability to use correctly and effectively the language appropriate to the assignment: in particular, you should strive to write grammatically, accurately, clearly, precisely and concisely. More detailed evaluation criteria and advice will be provided with the essay topics.
- Please note that essays cannot be submitted or returned via the department administrative office or through the campus mail system. Papers can be submitted by e-mail only in an emergency.
- I invite students to show me drafts of their essays: I try and will comment on, and discuss with you, successive drafts until one week before the paper deadline (i.e. November 20th). Assistance with writing essays is also available from the Learning Commons (Library, 1st floor) and from Writing Services (<http://www.lib.uoguelph.ca/get-assistance/writing>).

B: Final Exam.

- This will be held on Monday, **December 1st**, in a top-secret location to be announced (hopefully our regular classroom). During the exam you will have to answer four short-essay questions from a choice of eight.

- The exam will not be open book, but you can bring a ‘cheat sheet.’ On both sides of a standard sheet of 8½"×11" paper you can write anything at all that you think might help you, and you can refer to that sheet (but nothing else) during the exam.

The essays and exam will be graded according to standards described in [Section VIII](#) of the Undergraduate Calendar. Procedures for grade reassessment and information on Academic Consideration can be found in the same section.

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 in writing, with your name, ID number, 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/c08/c08-ac.shtml>

LATE PENALTIES:

Unless other arrangements are made, in writing, with the course instructor, late assignments will be penalized by 5% for the first day they are late and then 2% for every subsequent day. (For example, a grade that otherwise would have been 77% will be 68% for an essay that is three days late.) To ‘stop the clock’ for a late assignment, email it to me as soon as it is completed; then hand in a hard copy at the next soonest opportunity.

DROP DATE:

The last date to drop one-semester Fall 2014 courses without academic penalty is Friday, October 31st, 2014. For regulations and procedures for Dropping Courses, see the Undergraduate Calendar:

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

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:

<http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c14/c14-strightsrespon.shtml>

ACCESSIBILITY

The University of Guelph is committed to creating a barrier-free environment. Providing services for students is a shared responsibility among students, faculty and administrators. This relationship is based on respect of individual rights, the dignity of the individual and the University community's shared commitment to an open and supportive learning environment. Students requiring service or accommodation, whether due to an identified, ongoing disability or a short-term disability should contact the Centre for Students with Disabilities (soon to be re-named Student Accessibility Services) as soon as possible. For more information, contact CSD at 519-824-4120 ext. 56208 or email csd@uoguelph.ca or refer to the CSD website (<http://www.uoguelph.ca/csd/>).

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:

<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. Material recorded with permission is restricted to use for that course unless further permission is granted.

RESOURCES

The Undergraduate Calendar is the source of information about the University of Guelph's procedures, policies and regulations that apply to undergraduate programs. It can be found at: <http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/>

If you find yourself in difficulty, contact the undergraduate advisor in your program, or the BA Counselling Office: <http://www.uoguelph.ca/baco/contact.shtml>

PROVISIONAL CLASS SCHEDULE, PHIL*2250, FALL 2014

TUESDAY	THURSDAY
	Sept. 4 th : Introductory Stuff
Sept. 9 th : Introduction to Philosophy etc. Chapter 1	Sept. 11 th : Knowing the External World Chapter 2
Sept. 16 th : Knowing the External World	Sept. 18 th : Knowledge of Language Chapter 3
Sept. 23 rd : Knowledge of Language	Sept. 25 th : Knowledge of Language
Sept 30 th : The Nature of Philosophy	Oct. 2nd: Mid(ish)-term Exam
Oct. 7 th : Metaphysics of Mind Chapter 4	Oct. 9 th : Metaphysics of Mind Chapter 5
Oct. 14 th : Study Break Day	Oct. 16 th : Metaphysics of Mind
Oct. 21 st : Metaphysics of Mind	Oct. 23 rd : Free Choice Chapter 6
Oct. 28 th : Free Choice	Oct. 30 th : Free Choice
Nov. 4 th : Free Choice	Nov. 6 th : Knowledge of Minds Chapter 7
Nov. 11 th : Knowledge of Minds	Nov. 13 th : Knowledge of Minds
Nov. 18 th : Knowledge of Minds	Nov. 20 th : Philosophy and Naturalism Chapter 8
Nov. 25 th : Philosophy and Naturalism	Nov. 27 th : Final Discussion ESSAY DUE

NOTE: Readings are to be done *by the class date indicated*.

Date of Final Exam: Monday, December 1st, 8:30–10:30AM.