

- Department of Philosophy, University of Guelph –

PHIL 2370
Introduction to Metaphysics

Winter Term 2013

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Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday, Friday 12:20-1:20
(or by appointment)

DESCRIPTION:

Brief course Synopsis: Metaphysics is the study of the nature or structure of reality. Some of the questions it tries to answer include: What sorts of things really exist? What features must something have in order for it to be a certain sort of thing (eg what makes something a mind)? What makes something continue to be the same thing even after it has undergone significant changes? It is necessary that things are the way that they are?

In this course we are going to focus on three more specific issues:

- Is there free will?
- Personal Identity—what makes you(today) one and the same person as you(five years ago)?
- To what extent does the structure of the world depend upon us imposing some structure upon it?

REQUIRED TEXT:

Textbook(s): *Metaphysics: Classic and Contemporary Readings* 2nd edition, ed. Ronald Hoy (Wadsworth, 2005)

Each student will likely need to bring his or her own textbook to the tests. During these tests you will not be allowed to share textbooks, use photocopies of the textbook, and no text books will be provided for students who (for whatever reason) do not have one. Make sure that you have the correct edition!

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

First Midterm:	10%
Second Midterm:	10%
Third Midterm:	15%
Final Paper:	35%
Final Exam:	30%

COURSE POLICIES

Late Assignments:

Late assignments will be penalized 5% per day that it is late, unless accompanied by appropriate *official* documentation (eg. medical documentation about your having a medical illness serious enough to prevent you from completing an assignment). Assignments handed in on the same day that they are due, but after the time that they are due are considered one day late. Computer problems do not constitute a legitimate reason for lateness. See “When You Cannot Meet a Course Requirement” in the College of Arts 8 Standard Statements (below).

Classroom Etiquette:

- Be respectful of the views of classmates that differ from your own.

- To minimize the extent to which your actions will distract me and your classmates:
 - Do not arrive to class late. It is very distracting for everyone.
 - During lecture you may only use electronic note-taking devices (such as computers or tablets) for taking notes. No watching movies, playing games, looking at pictures etc.
 - Pack away and turn off all smart phones before class begins. No texting or using social media during class.
 - Don't have private conversations during lectures (unless instructed otherwise).

- Students who are excessively disrespectful or distracting in lecture will be asked to leave.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE (Likely to change)

Personal Identity:

Week 1 (Starting Jan 7)

Introduction

Thomas Hobbes: "Of Identity and Diversity" 121-124

John Locke: "Of Identity and Diversity" 124-134

Week 2 (Starting Jan 14)

Thomas Reid: "Of Identity and Of Mr. Locke's Theory of Personal Identity" 135-140

John Perry: "The Third Night: The Bodily Theory of Personal Identity" 165-170

Week 3 (Starting Jan 21)

Midterm 1

Derek Parfit: "Personal Identity" 171-183

Week 4 (Starting Jan 28)

Thomas Nagel: "The Self as Private Object" 201-209

Free Will and Determinism

Week 5 (Starting Feb 4)

Midterm 2

David Hume: "On Liberty and Necessity" 381-390

Roderick M. Chisholm: "Human Freedom and the Self" 401-408

[Recommended Reading—G.E. Moore: "Free Will" 396-401]

Week 6 (Starting Feb 11)

Harry Frankfurt: "Alternate Possibilities and Moral Responsibility" 408-414

Robert Kane: "Responsibility, Luck, and Chance: Reflections on
Free Will and Indeterminism" 415-429

---WINTER BREAK (Starting Feb18-22)---

Week 7 (Starting Feb 25)

Daniel C. Dennett: "A Hearing for Libertarianism" 429-452

Week 8 (Starting Mar 4)

Robert Brandom: "Freedom and Constraint by Norms" 452-462

Knowing Reality

Week 9 (Starting Mar 11)

Midterm 3

David Hume: "An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding" 564-582

Week 10 (Starting Mar 18)

Wilfrid Sellars: "Philosophy and the Scientific Image of Man" 603-627

Week 11 (Starting Mar 25)

W.V.O. Quine: "Ontological Relativity" 627-644

Week 12 (Starting Apr 1)

Final Paper Due

Richard Rorty: "The World Well Lost" 645-654

Final Exam: March 19th (unless otherwise stated on official exam timetable)

8 Standard Statements of the College of Arts Winter 2013

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/c08/c08-ac.shtml>

Drop Date

The last date to drop one-semester **Winter 2013** courses, without academic penalty, is **Friday, March 8, 2013**. 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 which, 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>

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/>

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