# Course Outline

# PHIL 1030-01 Sex, Love, and Friendship

# Professor John Hacker-Wright

# Winter 2023

# Lectures:

M/W 4:30 PM - 5:20 PM, THORN 1200

**Seminar Meetings**Please, check your registration and be sure to attend the seminar for which you registered:

Section 01-01: F 8:30 AM - 9:20 AM, MACN 201

Section 01-02: F 9:30 AM - 10:20 AM, MACN 201

Section 01-03: Th 9:30 AM - 10:20 AM, MACN 201

Section 01-04: Th 10:30 AM - 11:20 AM, MACN 201

Section 01-05: Th 11:30 AM - 12:20 PM, MACN 201

Section 01-06: Th 12:30 PM - 1:20 PM, MACN 201

Section 01-07: F 12:30 PM - 1:20 PM, MINS 128

Section 01-08: F 1:30 PM - 2:20 PM, MINS 128

Section 01-09: F 2:30 PM - 3:20 PM, MINS 128

Section 01-10: F 3:30 PM - 4:20 PM, MACS 301

Section 01-11: F 4:30 PM - 5:20 PM, MACS 301

**Seminar Leaders**

Sections 01, 02, 05, 06: [Leah Williams](lwilli17@uoguelph.ca)

Sections 03, 04, 09, 10: [Amy Ward](award09@uoguelph.ca)

Sections 07, 08, 11: [Matthew Craig](mcraig03@uoguelph.ca)

# A Letter to the Student:

Welcome to Philosophy 1030! I assume that this is your first course in philosophy. As you will soon see, philosophers ask deep, probing questions about fundamental issues concerning human life. Often, philosophers address lofty issues: what is ultimately real? What can we know? What is the meaning of life? This course addresses deeply personal issues that are a part of all our lives: love and sex. Philosophers address questions about these issues that have practical importance: What is love? When is sex a good thing? Is a life without these things worse than a life with them? You may think: of course a life without love and sex is missing something crucial! But then again, many of our most disturbing and painful experiences come from them too: grief over the death of a loved one, the anguish of betrayal.

When I took my first philosophy course, I must admit I didn’t really understand what was going on initially, but then things began to fall into place, and after a few more philosophy courses, I decided to make writing and teaching philosophy my life’s work. Drawing on the expertise of a team of dedicated philosophers who are assembled here to help you learn, and in talking about these issues until late in the night with your friends, you will soon find out about the exhilaration of philosophical insight.

Sincerely,

John Hacker-Wright

# Professor’s Contact Information and When to Contact the Professor

John Hacker-Wright, Ph.D.

Email: <jhackerw@uoguelph.ca>

Phone: (519)824-4120 x 56765 (not often checked)

Office: 330 Mackinnon

Office Hours:

The best way to reach me is by email, which I check regularly; you can also leave voice-mail on my phone, but I check that less regularly. If you send an email, expect a reply within 48 hours, and if you haven’t heard back by then, something’s probably gone wrong with the message and feel free to write again.

My main role here is to help you learn. So, you are always welcome to contact me to discuss philosophy.

Some other reasons you might want to contact me:

* Concerns about understanding an assignment
* Concerns about grading (how you will be evaluated, fairness of a grade, etc.)
* Concerns about distracting behaviour or disrespectful treatment from other members of the class
* Concerns about study habits and preparation for the exam.
* If you feel you may have grounds for academic consideration to hand in an assignment late.
* If you think there is something that I or your seminar leader could be doing better to help you learn.

Note that I am one part of your instructional team. I will work with your seminar leader to help you learn and succeed in this course; it is through your initiative in coming to us that we will be of most help to you.

# Course Information and Policies

# Course Description

This course introduces students to philosophy through issues of central importance to our lives: sex, love, and friendship. Our central topics in this offering will be love and sex, while friendship will come up along the way in our discussions of its role in loving relationships. With sex and love, philosophers take a specific approach, asking questions that are different from those asked by academics in different disciplines. Philosophers do not address questions of mechanism (e.g., what happens in the brain when someone is in love?) or technique (e.g., how can I please my lover?) but rather definitional questions (what is it?) and normative questions (how should we act with regard to it?). So, our course will be focused on the questions: What is love? What is sex? These are definitional questions. Are love/and sex (at least sometimes) good? Do they have an important role in a well-lived human life? Are they compatible with being a morally good person? These are normative questions.

In this class, we will bring our philosophical exploration to bear on a topic of current concern. This term our topic will consist of the ethics of OnlyFans and other ways in which individuals can engage in online forms sex work. Technology makes it easier than ever for anyone to offer photos, videos, and other services online. Is this a good thing? In conjunction with this topic we will look at issues of pornography and sex work. We will explore ethical issues of objectification and exploitation in these areas. Are these concerns grave enough to merit state intervention in the form of prohibition or regulation? On the level of individual morality is there reason to avoid being a consumer of pornography or the client of a sex worker? Or can these enrich our sexual lives?

# Learning Goals

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

1. Use key tools for sound justification and rational persuasion.

2. Recognize the main subfields of philosophy, including moral philosophy, social and political philosophy, metaphysics (the theory of reality), epistemology (the theory of knowledge), and the history of philosophy.

3. Understand, explain, and assess the significance of some basic concepts in philosophy, such as the appearance-reality distinction, the fact-value distinction, validity and soundness, free-will, knowledge, nature and community, and so on.

3. Present a philosophical position and engage with others in discussion of the merits of the position.

4. Argue competently for one’s own view and be able to identify and critically evaluate patterns of argumentative reasoning in the work of others.

5. Compose a piece of clear philosophical writing in which basic philosophical problems are supported by arguments.

# Required texts

There are no required texts for this course. All readings will be provided as handouts available via Courselink.

# Assignments and Evaluation

Your grade will have the following three components. See Schedule of Topics and Due Dates.

**Quizzes (25%)**

The quiz questions are multiple choice and should be straightforward to answer if you have read the handouts and come to class. You should complete the reading before taking the quiz and have the handouts on hand when you take the quiz. The questions are designed to help you to grapple with the course material in a deeper and more systematic manner, which you need to do in order to develop philosophical views in response to them. The quizzes will be taken on Courselink and are to be completed by the dates listed on the Schedule of Topics and Assignments. The two lowest grades will be dropped. These will contribute 25% to your grade.

**Philosophical Experiment: Could you Love a Machine? (15%)**

This will be a 1500-word reflection on your experience using an app, Replika, accessible for free through your phone, tablet, or computer. The app is designed to be an artificially intelligent friend or lover, though it will not let things get sexy unless you pay. I will ask you to interact with the free version app for at least a couple of hours and describe your experience with it. Then I will ask you to reflect on that experience from the perspective of our philosophical readings. The key question will be: could you form a love relationship or friendship with your AI?

**Experiential Learning Project: Op-Ed on The Ethics of OnlyFans (30%)**

One of your main projects for this semester will be writing an op-ed for publication in the Ontarion. You will employ knowledge of philosophical views and skills of philosophical reasoning to write an accessible, persuasive essay on the issue of whether OnlyFans and similar platforms are good for the people who use it, whether as customers or vendors. Completing this assignment successfully will require you to understand and critically evaluate philosophical arguments on this topic and to be able to successfully communicate them to an audience. You will be evaluated for your knowledge of course content as reflected in the op-ed as well as the cogency of your arguments and your ability to communicate them clearly. I will gather the top-five papers by grade to be published on-line in the Ontarion with a special introduction.

**Take Home Final Exam (30%)**

There will be a comprehensive take-home final exam at the end of the course. This will consist of a set of three essay questions answerable in around 2500 words total. The questions will test your mastery of the course material and require you to have thought critically about that content. You will have one week to write the exam after it is released.

# Late Policy

Please let your seminar leader know if you will not get your work handed in on time and arrange for the delivery of your work. Note that this is your responsibility. For the paper assignments (not for the exam), you will have a 24-hour grace period during which there will be no deduction. After the grace period, each 24-hour period will result in a 10% reduction on your final mark for that assignment, unless you can demonstrate grounds for academic consideration as defined in the Undergraduate Calendar.

For quizzes, you will generally not be allowed to hand them in late, but I will drop your two lowest marks for these sets of questions, including zeros.

The final exam must be handed in at the appointed time, unless you can demonstrate grounds for academic consideration as defined in the Undergraduate Calendar.

# Academic Misconduct

All work submitted must be your own: your own words and your own thoughts. When referring to or quoting the thoughts of others, you must acknowledge this fact, and ensure that we can find your source by including the name of the author, the work, and relevant publication information. Failure to do so will result in a charge of academic misconduct, which has serious consequences for your outcome in this course.

For further information on the University’s Academic Misconduct policies, click [here](http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-amisconduct.shtml).

# Standard Statements

## Email Communication

As per university regulations, all students are required to check their <uoguelph.ca> email 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.

Undergraduate Calendar - Academic Consideration and Appeals

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-ac.shtml>

Graduate Calendar - Grounds for Academic Consideration <https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/current/genreg/index.shtml>

## Drop Date

Courses that are one semester long must be dropped by the end of the last day of classes; two-semester courses must be dropped by the last day of classes in the second semester. The regulations and procedures for course registration are available in their respective Academic Calendars.

Undergraduate Calendar - Dropping Courses

[https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08drop.shtml](https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-drop.shtml)

Graduate Calendar - Registration Changes

[https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/current/genreg/genreg-regregchg.shtml](https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/current/genreg/genreg-reg-regchg.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.

## 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 make a booking at least 14 days in advance, and no later than November 1 (fall), March 1 (winter) or July 1 (summer). Similarly, new or changed accommodations for online quizzes, tests and exams must be approved at least a week ahead of time.

More information: [www.uoguelph.ca/sas](http://www.uoguelph.ca/sas)

## 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.

Undergraduate Calendar - Academic Misconduct

[https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08amisconduct.shtml](https://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 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](http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/index.cfm?index) are the source of information about the University of Guelph’s procedures, policies and regulations which apply to undergraduate, graduate and diploma programs.

## Disclaimer

Please note that the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic may necessitate a revision of the format of course offerings, changes in classroom protocols, and academic schedules.

Any such changes will be announced via Courselink and/or class email.

This includes on-campus scheduling during the semester, mid-terms and final examination schedules. All University-wide decisions will be posted on the COVID-19 website [(https://news.uoguelph.ca/2019-novel-coronavirus-information/)](https://news.uoguelph.ca/2019-novel-coronavirus-information/) and circulated by email.

## Illness

Medical notes will not normally be required for singular instances of academic consideration, although students may be required to provide supporting documentation for multiple missed assessments or when involving a large part of a course (e.g., final exam or major assignment).

## COVID-19 Safety Protocols

For information on current safety protocols, follow these links:

* [https://news.uoguelph.ca/return-to-campuses/how-u-of-g-is-preparing-for-yoursafe-return/](https://news.uoguelph.ca/return-to-campuses/how-u-of-g-is-preparing-for-your-safe-return/)
* <https://news.uoguelph.ca/return-to-campuses/spaces/#ClassroomSpaces>

Please note, that these guidelines may be updated as required in response to evolving

University, Public Health or government directives.

# Schedule of Readings and Assignments

# PHIL 1030, Winter 2023 Hacker-Wright

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Date | Topic/Reading | Assignments due |
| Week 1  Class 1  Jan 9 | **– Begin Unit I – Approaching Love Philosophically**  What is Philosophy?  By the end of this week, you should have a working definition of philosophy and understand how ‘love’ is taken up as a topic for philosophical discussion.  Read Handout on Courselink |  |
| Class 2  Jan 11 | Love and Philosophy  Read Handout on Courselink |  |
| Attend Your Tutorial Section | Meet your seminar leader and prepare for the first quiz! | Quiz 1 – Complete by Saturday, Jan 14 at 5:00pm |
| Week 2  Class 3  Jan 16 | Is Love Biological or Social?  In this week, you will learn about two competing and apparently incompatible theories of love: on one view, love is an innate biological response, leading us to focus our mating energy on one person. On another, embraced by social sciences, it is love socially constructed and historically and culturally variable.    Read Handout on Courselink | View Lecture 3 |
| Class 4  Jan 18 | Love as Social Construct | View Lecture 4  Paper 1 Assigned |
| Attend Your Tutorial Section | Watch: Helen Fisher TED Talk “The Brain in Love”  <https://www.ted.com/talks/helen_fisher_studies_the_brain_in_love?language=en>  Watch the above and attend your tutorial section. | Quiz 2 – Complete by Saturday, Jan 21 at 5:00pm |
| Week 3  Class 5  Jan 23 | This week we will learn about a theory of love which attempts to combine features of the biological account with the social constructionist view.  Read Handout on Courselink |  |
| Class 6  Jan 25 | Love’s Changing Role  Read Handout on Courselink |  |
| Attend Your Tutorial Section | Watch: ”History of Ideas – Love”  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fK2IJ43ppd0>  Watch the above and attend your discussion section. | Quiz 3 – Complete by Saturday, January 28 at 5:00 pm |
| Week 4  Class 7  Jan 30 | This week we will examine some normative claims about love – what needs to change with respect to our understanding of love to make it a notion that doesn’t exclude people or further patriarchy, the male-domination of society that has figured throughout human history to the present day?  What Needs to Change  Read Handout on Courselink |  |
| Class 8  Feb 1 | The Future of Love  Read Handout on Courselink |  |
| Attend Your Tutorial Section | Watch: “Beyond ‘the One’”  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ePrV6AfaHts>  Watch the above and attend your tutorial section. | Philosophical Experiment Paper Due by Saturday Feb 4 at 5:00pm |
| Week 5  Class 9  Feb 6 | **– Begin Unit II – Philosophizing about Sex**  Sex: What is It?  Kicking off our discussion of sex we need to think about how to define sex – what sorts of actions and desires are we talking about when we talk about sex and sexual desire?  Read “Are We Having Sex Now or What?” on Courselink |  |
| Class 10  Feb 8 | Sex: Is Masturbation Sex?  Read Handout on Courselink |  |
| Attend Your Tutorial Section | Attend your tutorial section. | Quiz 4 – Complete by Sat Feb 11, 5:00 pm |
| Week 6  Feb 13 | Objectification and Autonomy  This week we will talk about ethical issues related to sexual objectification. Is there something inherently wrong with sexual desire and sex acts insofar as they turn the object of our desire into an object of enjoyment for us rather than respecting them as an intrinsically valuable being, or is sexual desire compatible with respect for persons.  Read Handout on Courselink |  |
| Feb 15 | Objectification and Autonomy  Read Handout on Courselink | Op-Ed Project Assigned |
| Attend Your Tutorial Section |  | Quiz 5 – Complete by Sat Feb 18 5:00pm |
| Week 7  Feb 27 | Sex and the Law  What, if any, business does the government have in policing our sex lives? Some political philosophies say that governments should enforce community norms of proper sexual relations, whereas other philosophies suggest that government has no business doing so provided consenting adults are involved.  Read Handout on Courselink |  |
| Mar 1 | Sex and the Law  Read Handout on Courselink |  |
| Attend Your Tutorial Section | Watch: “The laws that sex workers really want”  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vc-n852sv3E>  Watch the above and attend your tutorial section. | Quiz 6 – Complete by Sat Mar 4 at 5:00pm |
| Week 9  Mar 6 | Debating Sex Work  What is the proper stance to take on sex work. It can be dangerous and exploitative, but so can other forms of work. Are there grounds for treating it differently from other forms of work or not?  Read Handout on Courselink |  |
| Mar 8 | Debating Sex Work  Read Handout on Courselink |  |
| Attend Your Tutorial Section | Meet with your seminar leader to discuss course content and prepare for the quiz. | Quiz 7 – Complete by Sat, Mar 11 at 5:00pm |
| Week 10  Mar 13 | Debating Pornography  This week and the next we discuss issues related to pornography and free speech. We will also discuss whether there can be feminist pornography.  Read Handout on Courselink |  |
| Mar 15 | Debating Pornography  Read Handout on Courselink |  |
| Attend Your Tutorial Section | Meet with your seminar leader to discuss course content and prepare for the quiz. | Quiz 8  Complete by Sat Mar 18 by 5:00pm |
| Week 11  Mar 20 | Debating Pornography  Read Handout on Courselink |  |
| Mar 22 | Debating Pornography  Read Handout on Courselink |  |
| Attend Your Tutorial Section | Meet with your seminar leader to discuss course content and prepare for the quiz. | Quiz 9  Complete by Sat Mar 25 at 5:00pm |
| Week 12  Mar 27 | Sex and Technology  Can sexual technologies enhance our lives, or do they make us worse? Do they promote connection with others or do they get in the way? We’ll discuss frameworks for addressing these questions and evaluate various examples of technologies.  Read Handout on Courselink |  |
| Mar 29 | Sex and Technology  Read Handout on Courselink |  |
| Attend Your Tutorial Section | Meet with your seminar leader to discuss course content and prepare for the quiz. | Review  Sex Bot Op-Ed Due Sat Apr 1 by 5:00pm |
| Apr 3 | The Ethics of Sexual Fantasies  Fantasies happen in our heads, in words, or maybe in visual depictions. But if they don’t happen in real life, they can’t be harmful, right? But then again, maybe they have indirect effects on how we approach sex and other people… |  |
| Apr 5 | The Ethics of Sexual Fantasies |  |
| Attend Your Tutorial Section | Meet with your seminar leader for final exam review |  |

**Take-home Final Exam Released April 8, 9:00am Due April 15 5:00pm**