



PHIL*4820 Philosophy Research Presentation

Winter 2019

Section(s): C01

Department of Philosophy

Credit Weight: 0.50

Version 1.00 - January 04, 2019

1 Course Details

1.1 Calendar Description

The focus of this course is mastering the oral presentation of a philosophical argument, and engaging in respectful, intellectually honest discussion with one's audience. Students will develop and present a philosophical claim which they will explain and defend during a question period after the presentation. Students are expected to have topic for their presentation at the beginning of the course.

Pre-Requisite(s): 14.00 credits including 1.00 credits in Philosophy at the 3000-level

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

1.2 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. It is also expected that once one has their topic, they will refine their presentations throughout the term, right up until their final presentations.

1.3 Timetable

Day: Mondays and Wednesdays

Location: MacNaughton 202

Time: 2:30-3:50

1.4 Final Exam

There is no final exam for this course.

2 Instructional Support

Instructor: Peter Eardley

Email: peardley@uoguelph.ca

Phone: 824-4120 x 53211

Office: 333 MacKinnon

Office Hours: Fridays 2:30-4 PM

3 Learning Resources

3.1 Texts

There are no assigned texts for this course. Students will choose their own primary and secondary sources as relevant to the topic of their presentation.

4 Learning Outcomes

4.1 Course Learning Outcomes

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

1. Achieve:

- **Advanced literacy:** the ability to simplify and clarify the central assumptions and arguments informing a range of viewpoints, even when couched in specialized or complex vocabulary.

2. Hone:

- **Analytical Skills:** the ability to identify and question the often implicit presuppositions that inform various viewpoints and arguments, and the confidence to propose novel and creative solutions.

3. Develop:

- **Communication skills:** the ability to argue orally. From its origins in antiquity, and particularly in Plato, philosophy has been a dialectical discipline in which ideas are exchanged and argued for verbally. By engaging in this process, one's ideas are refined with the eventual goal of achieving truth and even wisdom. This oral feature of philosophy is, in short, a crucial part of the philosophical method.

5 Teaching and Learning Activities

5.1 Seminar

Topic(s):

Class Schedule

Week 1 (January 7 & 9): 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 will discuss the mechanics of the course, which will be to develop an oral presentation of one's research. We will also discuss what makes for a good presentation. Students will also sign-up for:

- Proposals, each with a respondent;
- First run of presentation, each with a respondents;
- Second run of presentation
- "Philosopher's Talking" comment

Wednesday's class will be devoted to strategies for getting started with one's research. The discussion for this topic will be led by Dave Hudson, a librarian here at Guelph.

Week 2 (January 14 & 16): Proposals

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

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

Each proposal will receive a brief response by a designated student. Responses are meant to be helpful in guiding students to improve their presentations in terms of philosophical interest, clarity, analysis and soundness of argumentation. It is very important that these responses not be overly generous; critical feedback is essential in helping refine presentation skills. Having said that, criticism should be constructive and encouraging.

Week 3 (January 21 & 23): Philosophers Talking & Prep Meeting

In our Monday class, we will discuss some videos of philosophers and political theorists giving oral presentations that you will have watched prior to this class. These are:

1. Charles Taylor, "Secularism and Multiculturalism."
2. Martha Nussbaum, "What is anger and why should we care?"
3. Yuval Levin, "In search of solidarity in the age of Trump."

The foregoing lectures can be found on YouTube. Although you will be required to watch all three of these videos, you will each be responsible for focusing on one of them, for which you will sign-up and give a commentary on during the Monday class. More specifically, after watching the lecture for which you are responsible, you will write up a 300-word commentary on it, discussing the lecture both in terms of form and content, answering questions such as: What was the argument? Was the lecture clear? Was the pace of the lecture appropriate? Did you get a good sense of why the topic was significant? Etc. These 300-word commentaries will be submitted to me after the class.

Students will attend John Russon's talk on January 25th from 11-12:30 PM in lieu of this class meeting. This is part of Guelph's Department of Philosophy Speakers Series. Location of talk is TBA. After the talk, students will write up another 300-word critical response, similar to the one they did for the YouTube lecture.

Week 4 (January 28 & 30): Response to Departmental Talk and Preparation for First Run

During Monday's class, we will discuss your 300-word critical responses to John Russon's departmental lecture.

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

Week 5 (February 4 & 6): First Run

Students will give a first run of their 20-minute presentation. The 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, etc.).

Week 6 (February 11 & 13): First Run

At Monday's and Wednesday's class, we will continue with our first runs and responses.

***** READING WEEK (February 18-22) *****

Week 7 (February 25 & 27): Discussion of responses to first run and free class

On Monday, students will come to class prepared to present their 1-page critical responses to first run presentations. We will not meet on Wednesday since I will be travelling to Ottawa that day to chair a SSHRC Insight Grants committee. Needless to say, my hope is that you will use this free class to work on your presentations.

Week 8 (March 4 & 6): 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.

Week 9 (March 11 & 13): 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 each presentation. It is expected that this presentation should be significantly more refined than the first run.

Week 10 (March 18 & 20): Second Run

At Monday's and Wednesday's class, we will continue with our second runs and class feedback.

Week 11 (March 25 & 27): Conference

This week we will host a conference, at which time each student will give their 20-minute presentation (i.e., the final and most refined version of their topic) 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.

Week 12 (April 1 & 3): Conference

Conference presentations will continue.

6 Assessments

6.1 Assessment Details

Proposal (10%)

Response to Proposal (5%)

First-Run Presentation (15%)

Response to another student's first run (5%)

300-word Critical response to YouTube lecture on January 21 (pass/fail) (5%)

300-word critical response to Russon Talk on January 25 (pass/fail) (5%)

Second-Run Presentation (15%)

Conference Presentation (30%)

Contribution to Q & A sessions at Conference (10%)

7 University Statements

7.1 Email Communication

As per university regulations, all students are required to check their e-mail account regularly: e-mail is the official route of communication between the University and its students.

7.2 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. The grounds for Academic Consideration are detailed in the Undergraduate and Graduate Calendars.

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>

7.3 Drop Date

Courses that are one semester long must be dropped by the end of the fortieth class day; two-semester courses must be dropped by the last day of the add period in the second semester. The regulations and procedures for course registration are available in the Undergraduate and Graduate Calendars.

Undergraduate Calendar - Dropping Courses

<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-reg-regchg.shtml>

7.4 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.

7.5 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.

More information can be found on the SAS website
<https://www.uoguelph.ca/sas>

7.6 Academic Integrity

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 encourages academic integrity. 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/c08-amisconduct.shtml>

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

7.7 Recording of Materials

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

further permission is granted.

7.8 Resources

The Academic Calendars are the source of information about the University of Guelph's procedures, policies, and regulations that apply to undergraduate, graduate, and diploma programs.

Academic Calendars

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/academics/calendars>
