

**WESTERN UNIVERSITY**  
**DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY**  
**Undergraduate Course Outline 2022-23**

**PHILOSOP 3555G**  
**Continental Philosophy**

Winter Term  
Tuesday 4:30-5:30, Thursday 3:30-5:30  
Classroom TBA

Instructor: **Helen Fielding**  
Office number TBA  
**hfieldin@uwo.ca**

**PREREQUISITE CHECKING**

◀ Third or Fourth year standing in a Philosophy module or permission of the Instructor.



“Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.”

**DESCRIPTION**

We will explore what it means to live in this modern world where the gap between appearance and reality seems to ever widen. As Hannah Arendt points out, “the ‘truths’ of the modern scientific world view” can be “demonstrated in mathematical formulas and proved technologically,” but they cannot be talked about in everyday expression. What does this mean for our lived existence on this earth as embodied perceivers? In this course we will consider Arendt’s phenomenological consideration of truth in a world split by this gap. We will begin with her writings on science, technology and the modern world and the implication of these ideas in the mechanisms of power and ideology that sever us from the world as experienced (as traced through post-war analysis). We will then turn to Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology of embodied perception and explore how ideologies become imposed, taken up in the ways we perceive, move and relate to others. To think perception through further we will consider how the gap between appearance and reality is analyzed in the decolonial work of Sylvia Wynter and her criticisms of the “Standard of Right Perception” that denies the world we live and perceive. Finally, we will consider the work of Indigenous philosophers Dolleen Tisawii’ashii Manning and Leanne Betasamosake Simpson for alternative understandings of what it means to perceive and engage with the world.

**TEXTS**

Readings will be provided digitally through Weldon library and through OWL.

**OBJECTIVES**

◀ This course will enable students to:

- gain familiarity with issues that are important within the continental tradition
- formulate meaningful questions
- read texts closely

- analyze some ways of thinking that shape contemporary global events.
- understand the ways in which we are shaped by forces that exceed individuals but belong to the thinking of our age, even as this understanding does not absolve us of responsibility or deprive us of agency.



## **METHOD OF EVALUATION**

« (List of assignments and examination breakdown/scheduling as applicable) »

Short Essay: 5 pages double-spaced	20%	Due Feb. 16, 2023
Long Essay: 7-8 pages double-spaced	30%	Due April 6, 2023
Participation: See below	15%	
Final Essay Exam:	35%	

Participation: During the Thursday Sessions, we will break the class into small groups. Everyone will sign up in the first week for two weeks for when they will be small group leaders. On your designated week, you will come to class with a question that you can of course modify during the discussion. You will have 20 minutes to discuss your question with 3 or 4 other classmates. After class you will post your question and a 200 word synopsis of your group’s conclusion to your question on the Owl Forum under the designated week. You must post your synopsis within 34 hours after the end of class, ie by the end of the Friday (11:55 pm). Questions should be open questions that invite discussion and not yes or no answers. Each of the two posted questions and synopses are worth 5%. Those participating in the small groups receive .5% for each class in which they participate over the 10 classes with readings. In week 11 students will workshop their final essay proposals. They will receive a .5% participation grade for that workshop. Everyone gets two free classes to use if they are sick, have some other conflict etc. You don’t have to ask for these two free classes. They will be calculated at the end but use them carefully since there are only two.

## **AUDIT**

Students wishing to audit the course should consult with the instructor prior to or during the first week of classes.

## **DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY POLICIES**

The Department of Philosophy policies that govern the conduct, standards, and expectations for student participation in Philosophy courses are available in the Undergraduate section of the Department of Philosophy website <http://uwo.ca/philosophy/undergraduate/policies.html>.

It is your responsibility to understand the policies set out by the Senate and the Department of Philosophy, and thus ignorance of these policies cannot be used as grounds of appeal.

## **ACCOMMODATION**

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the Office of the Dean of the student’s Faculty of registration,

together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested. The UWO Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness and further information regarding this policy can be found at

[http://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/accommodation\\_medical.pdf](http://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf).

### **EVALUATION OF ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE**

At least three days prior to the deadline for withdrawal from a course without academic penalty, students will receive an assessment of work accounting for at least 15% of their final grade. For 3000- or 4000-level courses in which such a graded assessment is impracticable, the instructor(s) must obtain an exemption from this policy from the Dean and this exemption must be noted on the corresponding course syllabus. In rare instances and at the Dean's discretion, other courses could receive a similar exemption, which also must be noted in the course syllabus.

### **COURSE ASSIGNMENT**

The last day of scheduled classes in any course will be the last day on which course assignments will be accepted for credit in a course. Instructors will be required to return assignments to students as promptly as possible with reasonable explanations of the instructor's assessment of the assignment.

### **ACADEMIC OFFENCES**

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site: [http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf)

### **PLAGIARISM CHECKING**

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com <http://www.turnitin.com>.

### **SUPPORT SERVICES**

Registrarial Services <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

Student Support Services <https://student.uwo.ca/psp/heprdweb/?cmd=login>

Services provided by the USC <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

Student Development Centre <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help. Immediate help in the event of a crisis can be had by phoning 519.661.3030 (during class hours) or 519.433.2023 after class hours and on weekends.

**THIS OUTLINE IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE, GIVEN SUFFICIENT PRIOR NOTICE**