

WESTERN UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY
Undergraduate Course Outline 2022-23

PHILOSOP 4410F-001 9xxx
Problems in Philosophy of Mind: Concepts

Fall Term 2022
Tuesdays 8:30-11:30

Instructor: Chris Viger
Office Hours: Tu, W 12-1pm
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PREREQUISITE CHECKING

Philosophy 2400F/G

“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

Concepts are considered to be the essential elements or building blocks of thought. In this course, we will read primary sources articulating various theories of concepts from philosophy, psychology, and neuroscience. We will review the strengths and weaknesses of views that concepts are definitions, prototypes, exemplars, stereotypes, or words in a language of thought. We also study various constraints that have been suggested for any theory of concepts, such as that they must compose or whether they are holistic or atomistic and critically assess those constraints. We conclude by considering how the human brain is structured to facilitate the acquisition of concepts.

TEXTS

No required text. Readings available online or through OWL.

Useful resource: Margolis, E. and Laurence, S. (Eds.) (1999). *Concepts: Core Readings*. Cambridge, MA: Bradford, MIT Press.

OBJECTIVES

1. Develop critical reading and writing skills necessary for graduate work in philosophy.
2. Develop oral presentation skills of original source material in contemporary philosophy of mind.
3. Develop writing skills for succinctly summarizing difficult material.
4. Learn specific philosophical, psychological, and neuro-scientific theories about the nature of concepts, including definitions, prototypes, stereotypes, exemplars, symbols in a language of thought, and the spoke and hub model.
5. Develop essay writing skills to the standard expected of graduate work in philosophy.

METHOD OF EVALUATION

1. Abstracts (5 x 100 words)	10%
2. Presentation (15 minutes)	10%
3. Position Summaries (2 x 500 words)	20%
4. Essay Outline	10%
5. Final Essay (2500-3500 words)	50%

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.

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

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.