

PHL240 H1F – Persons, Minds and Bodies
Summer 2023

Contact Information

Instructor: Alice Huang

Email: alicealice.huang@mail.utoronto.ca

TA:

Email:

Please email **the instructor** for all administrative matters including extension requests and other accommodation requests.

Please do NOT email about substantive questions on the course content. Instead, raise these questions or thoughts either in class or during office hours.

Course Meeting Information

- Time:
- Location:
- Office hours: TBA

Course Description

In this course, we tackle interesting questions concerning personal identity and the mind. Am I still me if I lose all my memories? Am I still the same person from three decades ago even if I am now made up of a completely different set of cells? Is there a physical boundary of my mind (for instance, my head) or does the Google calendar I rely on each day to function count as a part of my mind?

In between these larger themes of the course, we also address some issues about how we understand the mind of another and virtual reality. We will think about how we form theories about the experiences of others, and how virtual reality changes the way we understand the mind.

Learning Outcome and Format

Some key skills we will learn throughout the course include: how to write a well-structured philosophy paper, how to clearly explain and reconstruct arguments, how to analyze and evaluate an argument, how to articulate one's own views and engage in philosophical discussions.

The last hour of each Thursday session will be a writing session. We will talk about how to write philosophy papers and work on some examples to identify elements that make a paper good. You will also be able to use this time to ask any lingering questions and work on your weekly responses in

class before submitting. This is a great chance for you to revise your response given what you have learned in class about the course content or good writing practices and get quick feedback.

Evaluation

- Participation (10%)
- Weekly short responses (20%)
 - Each week, you will be asked to hand in a short (less than one page, most likely just a paragraph or two) response to one of two assigned questions about the readings. These are meant to be basic questions to make sure you stay on track and act as short writing practices, so the answers will basically be given in class.
 - Late work will not be accepted for these given the tight timeline and the fact that you will get some time in class to work on them. You will only be graded for the 4 best short responses, which means that you can miss 2 responses without penalty.
 - They will be due on Thursdays after class.
- Take-home midterm exam (30%)
 - In the take-home exam, there will be several short answer questions where you are asked to explain and reconstruct a problem or an argument, and one slightly longer question where you will analyze and evaluate an argument.
 - The due date is May 31st.
- Final paper (40%)
 - You will be given several essay topics to choose from. There will also be an option to come up with your own topic. However, you should email or meet with me about your idea first.
 - The due date is June 18th.

Week-by-week Breakdown of In-class Activities

All readings will be available on Quercus, under the tab LIBRARY READING LIST.

Session/Date	Topic	Readings and Assignments Due
Week 1	Introduction	- Guidelines on Writing a Philosophy Paper
	Personhood	- <i>Persons and Personal Identity</i> (2015) by Amy Kind, chapters 1, 2
Week 2	Personal Identity	- <i>Persons and Personal Identity</i> (2015) by Amy Kind, chapters 3, 4
		- <i>Persons and Personal Identity</i> (2015) by Amy Kind, chapters 5, 6
Week 3	Other Minds	- <i>What Does It All Mean?</i> (1987) by Thomas Nagel, chapters 1-4

		- <i>Simulating Minds: The Philosophy, Psychology and Neuroscience of Mindreading</i> (2006) by Alvin Goldman, chapter 1 (Skip 1.4)
		- <i>Simulating Minds: The Philosophy, Psychology and Neuroscience of Mindreading</i> (2006) by Alvin Goldman, chapters 2-3 (Skip 2.3, 3.6)
Week 4	The Extended Mind	- <i>The Extended Mind</i> (2010) by Richard Menary, chapters 2 - [Optional] watch the film <i>Memento</i> (2000)
		- <i>The Extended Mind</i> (2010) by Richard Menary, chapters 3, 4
Week 5	The Extended Mind	- <i>The Extended Mind</i> (2010) by Richard Menary, chapters 5, 15
	Virtual Reality	- <i>Reality+: Virtual Worlds and the Problems of Philosophy</i> (2022) by David Chalmers, introduction-chapter 2
Week 6	The Mind in Virtual Reality	- <i>Reality+: Virtual Worlds and the Problems of Philosophy</i> (2022) by David Chalmers, chapters 14, 15
		- <i>Reality+: Virtual Worlds and the Problems of Philosophy</i> (2022) by David Chalmers, chapter 16

Course/Departmental/Divisional policies

- You are expected to attend and participate in classes.
- Assignments should be submitted through Quercus, all deadlines are at 11:59 pm of the due date.
- Late penalty is 1/3 letter grade per day (e.g., A becomes A- after one day.) unless extensions are granted. Please ask for extension before the day of the deadline.
- We will try our best to accommodate extension requests. However, due to the tight schedule of the course and grading deadline, the later you submit your assignment, the less feedback we will be able to give.
- All regrade requests must be made within 24 hours - 2 weeks of the assignment return date, and the student must first communicate with the TA before making the request.

Respect for Classmates

The University of Toronto is committed to equity, human rights and respect for diversity. All members of the learning environment in this course should strive to create an atmosphere of mutual respect where all members of our community can express themselves, engage with each other, and

respect one another's differences. U of T does not condone discrimination or harassment against any persons or communities.

Academic Integrity

Students must adhere to the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters. You are responsible for ensuring that you do not act in such a way that would constitute cheating, misrepresentation, or unfairness, including but not limited to, using unauthorized aids and assistance, personating another person, and committing plagiarism. For more information see U of T Academic Integrity website.

Academic integrity includes understanding appropriate research and citation methods. If you are uncertain about this, please seek out additional information from the instructors or from other institutional resources including the following:

- This tip sheet provides clear and helpful information about appropriate academic citation: <http://guides.library.utoronto.ca/citing>
- This site offers a series of scenarios to help students understand how to prevent themselves from being subject to academic offence allegations <https://www.utm.utoronto.ca/academic-integrity/students/scenarios>
- Before handing in assignments students can also review this academic integrity checklist provided by the UofT Centre of Teaching Support & Innovation:
 - I have acknowledged the use of another's ideas with accurate citations.
 - If I used the words of another (e.g., author, instructor, information source), I have acknowledged this with quotation marks (or appropriate indentation) and proper citation.
 - When paraphrasing the work of others, I put the idea into my own words and did not just change a few words or rearrange the sentence structure.
 - I have checked my work against my notes to be sure I have correctly referenced all direct quotes or borrowed ideas.
 - My references include only the sources used to complete this assignment.
 - This is the first time I have submitted this assignment (in whole or in part) for credit.
 - Any proofreading by another was limited to indicating areas of concern which I then corrected myself.
 - This is the final version of my assignment and not a draft.
 - I have kept my work to myself and did not share answers/content with others, unless otherwise directed by my instructor.
 - I understand the consequences of violating the University's Academic Integrity policies as outlined in the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters.
- Please note that the use of generative AI (e.g., ChatGPT) for assignments is considered a violation of academic integrity in this course.