

COVID-19

As we start the 2021-22 academic year it is imperative that all students make themselves familiar with the Covid-19 university guidelines on returning to college.

For up-to-date information on UCC's response to Covid-19, including Remote Learning, Health Advice, and Returning to Campus, please read the following guidelines:

<https://www.ucc.ie/en/emt/covid19/>

For Covid-19 Student FAQ, please see here:

<https://www.ucc.ie/en/emt/covid19/student-faq/>

A few more points to keep in mind:

1. If you do not feel well, do not come to lecture.
2. You must wear a mask in lecture.
3. There will be recordings of all lectures on Canvas.

<p>Class Times:</p> <p>Monday, 3-4pm, Boole 3 Wednesday, 12-1, Boole 2 Thursday, 10-11, Boole 3</p>

Rotation Game Instructions.

[NB: Dr. Walmsley will also post this information in a video explainer in Canvas.]

It probably wasn't a philosopher who said it, but you may have heard the expression: "When life gives you lemons, make lemonade." The various ongoing restrictions imposed by the pandemic are the lemons, but in First-Year Philosophy, we're going to turn them into a bit of lemonade-flavoured philosophical fun. Let us explain...

In order to comply with the guidelines about room capacity, the First-Year Philosophy class will be (evenly and randomly) divided into three "Teams," and a rota system put in place so that, for each lecture, one team attends in person, and the other two teams watch a recording (which will be posted on Canvas). The teams (*initially* named "Monday", "Wednesday," and "Thursday" for convenience, and for obvious reasons: more on this below) will be selected at random, and you will attend in person on the day that shares your team's name.

To make it a bit of craic, we've organised a little (low-stakes, light-hearted, and fun) competition between the three teams. It's a competition that we think will also help you learn more in Philosophy this year, and therefore earn higher grades for the course. And it's a competition for which the prize (for the winning team) is that you get to do less work! What's not to like about that?

Here's how it will work. At the end of each lecture, the lecturer will ask you a **very simple** factual question about the content of that day's class: the sort of thing that can be answered in four or five words. You must simply jot down your answer on a special piece of paper the lecturer will distribute, together with your name, and leave it in the ballot box on the way out of the lecture room. Each correct answer earns one point for your team, and each week we will publish a running total and league table of the points earned by each team so far. There will be three "seasons" -- corresponding to the three tests, with the "game week" details for Semester 1 below -- and the winning team from each season gets to answer one fewer question on each test.¹ The point is that if you want to help your team win you have to show

¹ e.g., If most people taking the test are required to answer four questions, worth 25% each, the members of the winning team (if they wish) will only have to answer three of the questions, weighted at 33.3% each.

up to lectures and answer the question correctly. But the reward is that the winning team gets to do less work on the test! Hooray!²

Since this is intended as a team-building exercise, to help you meet new friends and get to know your class-mates, at the same time, we will set up group pages for each team on Canvas. You will have access to a team message-board, group files, announcements and so on, so that you can chat, share memes, make friends, encourage each other, discuss philosophy, and so on.

Using the Canvas group page, **your team must develop your own group decision-making process**, in order to accomplish the following tasks: (1) Choose a new team name,³ (2) Choose a team logo, or mascot, or avatar, (3) Choose a team song. You don't have to design your own logo or write your own song (although you may, if you wish); merely choosing them from amongst the artistic riches that humankind has already generated for you online will be sufficient. These three things must be clearly displayed in a pinned announcement on your group's message board (including an image for the logo and a link -- e.g., to YouTube -- for the song). **Your team's points will not count towards the competition until these tasks are completed** and you have notified Dr. Walmsley to check your team page to see what you've chosen. Your Team's points will be put on hold (or "in escrow") until such time as you have a Team name, logo and song. So don't delay; you've got to be in it to win it!

Here's why we are doing this: we know from experience that the best way to succeed in first-year philosophy is to come to class, get involved in discussion, and have fun. Under the current circumstances, you might be tempted just to watch your lectures online without changing out of your pyjamas, but then you'd be missing out on both the fun, and the things that we know will make you better philosophers! So the team competition is a way to make lemonade out of the lemons of pandemic-enforced cohort rotation, and have a bit of craic at the same time.

In short, here's a summary of what you must do:

- **Come to lectures** (so that you can earn points for your team), and **encourage your team-mates** to do likewise (so that you can win the competition and do less work!)
- **Bring a pen to every class** so that you can submit your answers to the questions (otherwise you won't be able to contribute to your team's points by submitting your answer).
- **Get involved** with your team on the Canvas group page, to choose a name, logo and song. Share ideas, discussions, encouragement, questions and so on.

One final thing: we also want to *test* whether this team competition actually works in the way we think it will, to help you learn more and get higher grades. So at the end of the year (or whenever the enforced cohort rotation ends) we will ask you to complete a very short questionnaire about your experiences of the team competition. (For completing this we'll reward you with free pizza.) We will need your permission to compare the grades you earned on official assignments with the team scores, with attendance levels, and with questionnaire answers, but **this comparison will be done entirely anonymously**. For this reason, at a later date, we will be seeking your explicit permission to use your

² In the event of an end-of-season tie in the total number of correct answers provided by a team, the team with the greatest total answers submitted over the course of the season will be the winner. In the event of a tie in the total number of answers submitted over the course of the season, the team with the highest attendance at any one lecture that season will be declared the winner. **Note: this means that you can still help your team win, even if you're not confident of the answers, or even if you need to leave early: even blank or incorrect answers still make a difference!**

³ Subject to approval by lecturers: we don't want anything obscene or offensive.

(anonymised) data in this analysis. You may withhold (or withdraw) consent to use your anonymised data at any stage. When your assignments are graded, **the person marking your work will not know** whether you've consented to let your data be used in the analysis. Therefore, please be assured that whether you give consent **cannot affect your grade for First-Year Philosophy in any way**. If you have any questions about this, or any other aspect of the Rotation Game, please feel free to contact Dr. Joel Walmsley at j.walmsley@ucc.ie

Rotation Game Weeks for First Semester

Season One (corresponding to Dr. Dockstader's section of the course):

<u>Date</u>	<u>Team Attending in Person</u>	<u>Game Week</u>
Monday 27th September	Team Monday	Game
Wednesday 29th September	Team Wednesday	Week
Thursday 30th September	Team Thursday	1
Monday 4th October	Team Monday	Game
Wednesday 6th October	Team Wednesday	Week
Thursday 7th October	Team Thursday	2
Monday 11th October	Team Monday	Game
Wednesday 13th October	Team Wednesday	Week
Thursday 14th October	Team Thursday	3
Monday 18th October	Team Monday	Game
Wednesday 20th October	Team Wednesday	Week
Thursday 21st October	Team Thursday	4
Monday 25th Oct (Bank Holiday)	No Class (Team Monday)*	Game
Wednesday 27th October	Team Wednesday	Week
Thursday 28th October	Team Thursday	5

*On (Bank Holiday) Monday 25th October, because there is no class, Team Monday will be assigned a score based on the average of their scores in Game Weeks 1-4.

1st Online test assignment will be released on Friday 29th October, after Season 1 final scores have been announced.

Season Two (corresponding to Dr. Mintz-Woo's section of the course):

<u>Date</u>	<u>Team Attending in Person</u>	<u>Game Week</u>
Monday 1st November	Team Monday	Game
Wednesday 3rd November	Team Wednesday	Week
Thursday 4th November	Team Thursday	1
Monday 8th November	Team Monday	Game
Wednesday 10th November	Team Wednesday	Week
Thursday 11th November	Team Thursday	2
Monday 15th November	Team Monday	Game
Wednesday 17th November	Team Wednesday	Week
Thursday 18th November	Team Thursday	3
Monday 22nd November	Team Monday	Game
Wednesday 24th November	Team Wednesday	Week
Thursday 21st 25th November	Team Thursday	4
Monday 29th November	Team Monday	Game
Wednesday 1st December	Team Wednesday	Week
Thursday 2nd December	No Class (Team Thursday)*	5

*On Thursday 2nd December, there will be no class; Team Thursday will be assigned a score based on their average scores in Game Weeks 1-4

2nd Online test assignment will be released on Thursday 2nd December, after Season 2 final scores have been announced.

With the above complications in mind, the planned schedule for this course is as follows:⁴

Introductory Class: Online asynchronous video made available on Canvas.

Monday 27th September: “Political Theory: A Genealogy of Liberty” (Dr. Jason Dockstader)

Monday 25th October Bank Holiday—No class

Friday, 29th October 1st Test: Conducted online via CANVAS

Monday 1st November “An Introduction to Climate Ethics”
(Dr. Kian Mintz-Woo)

Thursday 2nd December 2nd Test: Conducted online via CANVAS

—End of 1st Semester: Christmas Break—
—End of Module for students taking PH1005—

Monday 17th January— “What Sort of Thing is a Mind?”
Thursday 24th February (Dr. Joel Walmsley)

Monday 28th February— “Existentialism East and West”
Thursday 7th April⁵ (Dr. Adam Loughnane)

Thursday 7th April 3rd Test: Format to be confirmed nearer the time

—End of 2nd Semester—
—End of Module for students taking PH1001—

Section Descriptions:

This course is intended to give beginning students an idea of the variety of issues which are dealt with in philosophy. By addressing a number of different areas of the discipline, you will learn what some typical philosophical problems look like, how philosophers discuss these problems, and something of the range of different theories that have been developed in response to them

Section 1: “Political Theory: A Genealogy of Liberty” (Dr. Jason Dockstader)

This section of the module introduces students to political theory through a history of the main conceptions of political freedom or liberty found in the West. First, we will address the liberal tradition of understanding liberty as non-interference by focusing on the English political theorists Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, and John Stuart Mill. Next we will discuss more positive conceptions of liberty as virtue, autonomy, and self-determination as found in classical sources, like Plato and Aristotle, and more modern sources, like T.H. Green and Hannah Arendt. Finally, we look at the

⁴ Students taking PH1005 as part of the BSocSc degree are only required to participate in the first semester. Students taking PH1001 (e.g., as part of the BA degree) are required to participate in both semesters.

⁵ NB: Don’t forget that Thursday 17th March is St. Patrick’s Day, and so there will be no class on that date.

republican tradition of conceiving liberty as non-domination, focusing on figures like Niccolò Machiavelli and Mary Wollstonecraft.

There will also be a visual element to this section of the module, as we will look at key pieces of art that appear to represent the respective conceptions of liberty we will be analyzing. For example, we will spend some time looking at the frontispiece to Hobbes's *Leviathan*, Lorenzetti's frescoes, *The Allegory of Good and Bad Government*, and Delacroix's famous piece, *Liberty Leading the People*. Ultimately, we will try to answer the question, of the conceptions of liberty we have studied, which is closest to our conception? The readings will be supplied on Canvas.

Section 2: “An Introduction to Climate Ethics” (Dr. Kian Mintz-Woo)

The impacts of the greenhouse gas emissions we produce today will be felt around the world and over long periods of time. For these reasons, they make current injustices worse: those countries which are already poorer will face greater harms and many who did not produce the emissions will face their impacts. This situation presents moral and political philosophers with a variety of questions, such as how we should divide the burdens of addressing climate change. What principles should guide the costs and benefits of decreasing our emissions or addressing climate risks? How should we estimate the harms of these risks, especially difficult comparisons such as those which involve birth and death? We can also think about this at an individual level; what contribution can individuals make and should those contributions be in terms of changing our behaviour or in terms of social or political action?

Besides principles, we can also use the moral theories philosophy provides, such as deontology, utilitarianism and virtue ethics. These different theories draw attention to different aspects of the challenge that are morally relevant. At the end of this section, you should be able to describe the strengths and weaknesses of different theories and principles and see how they can be applied to the important challenge of climate change. The main readings will be provided via Canvas.

Section 3: “What Sort of Thing is a Mind?” (Dr. Joel Walmsley)

The mind is at once the most familiar and the most perplexing of all the phenomena in the universe. We all have one, and we all use it every day, yet the question of how it arises from the soggy lump of grey matter in our skulls seems utterly mysterious despite having been pondered for centuries. This section will introduce some fundamental issues in philosophy of mind, by considering the different ways that philosophers have addressed the question “What sort of thing is a mind?” Is it something ghostly, like a soul, as found in many religious traditions? Is it the same thing as the brain, the body or behaviour, as has been studied by the natural sciences? Perhaps it's not a thing at all, but rather a process, or an illusion, or something else? Could computers or animals have minds? What special problems arise when, as philosophers, we try to use our minds to examine ourselves?

Along the way, we will also pay careful and specific attention to some of the methods—the use of reasoning and argument, conceptual analysis, and “thought experiments”—that make philosophical approaches to these questions distinctive.

Section 4: “Existentialism East and West.” (Dr. Adam Loughnane)

A great deal of philosophy is concerned with sorting right from wrong (ethics), true from false (epistemology/logic), the real from the un-real (metaphysics/ontology). No doubt, these are indispensable philosophical pursuits, however, thinkers known as “existentialists” have come to focus on deeply meaningful human states that might not be best understood or lived according to the binary oppositions of the principal domains of philosophy. If we feel profound joy or suffering, our being “right” or “wrong” about the origin might not tell us what is most crucial about what we are

living through. An overpowering emotion being “real” or “un-real” might not be the most consequential in terms of cultivating skills to augment or diminish those feelings. The experience of suffering, nihilism, authenticity, the feeling of the absurd, emptiness, or existential nausea, as well as positive feelings such as exalted joy, contentment, ecstasy, serenity, and enlightenment, these extremes of human experience have been contemplated by philosophers in both Eastern and Western worlds beyond the categories and logic of epistemology, ethics, and metaphysics.

In this section, we explore Western philosophers such as Nietzsche, Kierkegaard, de Beauvoir, Sartre, Pascal and existential novelists such as Camus, Kafka, and Beckett and the depiction of their writings in cinema. We also study philosophers from the East Asian world, including Buddhist and Daoist philosophers who have not only theorized but have also developed sophisticated and profound practices to modify one’s existential states. The leading question throughout this section of the module will be “how can existential thought contribute in concrete ways to our everyday life and our philosophical well-being?”

Reading Material:

The lecturer for each section will post electronic copies of additional reading materials specific to their section on the Canvas site for the module; these can be downloaded and read or printed as necessary. Note: it is at the discretion of the lecturer as to any additional materials (e.g., lecture notes) will be made available: do not assume that will be the case.

In addition, the following more general books, podcasts and websites may be of some interest:

- Blackburn, S. (2001) *Think* (Oxford University Press) (Library: Q+2 100 BLAC)
- Honderich, T. (ed.), (1995) *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy* (Q+2 R 103 OXFO)
- Blackburn, S. (2008) *Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy* (available online via the UCC Library webpage).
- O’Hear, A. (1985) *What Philosophy Is* (Penguin)
- Baggini, J. (2006) *The Pig That Wants to Be Eaten* (Plume)
- Kukla, A. & Walmsley, J. (2006) *Mind: A Historical and Philosophical Introduction to the Major Theories* (Hackett) (Q+2 150 KUKL)
- Mumford, S. (2012) *Metaphysics: A Very Short Introduction*, (OUP)
- Mawson, T.J. (2005) *Belief in God: Introduction to Philosophy of Religion* (Clarendon Press)

- “Philosophy Bites” Podcast: <http://www.philosophybites.com/>
- “HiPhi Nation” Podcast: <https://hiphination.org/>
- Philosophy 24/7 Podcast: <http://philosophy247.org/>
- “The Partially Examined Life” Podcast: <http://partiallyexaminedlife.com/>
- “History of Philosophy Without Any Gaps” <http://historyofphilosophy.net/>
- BBC “In Our Time” Philosophy Podcast: <https://bbc.in/2vWk2Cs>
- “Wireless Philosophy” on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/WirelessPhilosophy>
- “What is Philosophy” CrashCourse: <https://bit.ly/2lUKUy5>
- Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy: <http://plato.stanford.edu/>

Assessment & Examinations:

Assessment for both PH1001 (First Arts Philosophy) and PH1005 (First Social Science Philosophy) is made up entirely of “Continuous Assessment,” consisting of (i) written tests and (ii) attendance

and participation at tutorials. **There is no summer examination for First Year Philosophy.** Assessment is structured as follows:

PH1001: (i) All three tests, worth a combined total of 75%. (i.e., 25% each)
(ii) Attendance and Participation at Tutorials, worth 25%

PH1005: (i) The first two tests (i.e., 1st semester only), worth a combined total of 75%
(ii) Attendance and Participation at Tutorials, worth 25%

Tests:

The assignment for the first test will be released via CANVAS on **Friday, 29th October 2021**; it will be a time-limited assignment, and will cover material from Dr. Dockstader's section. The second test will be released via CANVAS on **Thursday, 2nd December, 2021**, and will cover the material you studied with Dr. Mintz-Woo. Both lecturers will provide you with further details of the nature and format (and submission instructions) nearer the time.

The third **in-class** test (for PH1001 only) is currently scheduled for **Thursday 7th April, 2022**, and will cover all of the material you studied in the second semester (with Dr. Walmsley and Dr. Loughnane). It is currently envisioned that it will take place during the usual lecture period; but this may be revised, depending on the prevailing public health situation. Again, lecturers will say more about the nature and format of these tests at the appropriate times.

Please mark these dates in your calendar at the beginning of the academic year. If you are unwell, or face some other emergency at the time of a test, please notify the lecturer by email as soon as reasonably possible and, if necessary, provide appropriate documentation (e.g., a doctor's certificate; in such cases, the department will make ad-hoc arrangements for a make-up test. Students are expected to make email contact with the relevant lecturer immediately and to relevant documentation within two weeks of their absence.

Optional Essays:

In addition to the tests, lecturers will assign optional essay titles that help focus your study. It is strongly recommended that you do these essays, submit them to your tutor, and receive advice and feedback as preparation for the tests. Completing the essays will get you additional marks towards your "attendance and participation" grade.

Late registration:

If you transfer into philosophy after the start of term, it is your responsibility to contact the lecturer concerned, and Dr. Jason Dockstader, in order to help you catch up on what you have missed. If you transfer into philosophy before the end of the 4th week of the first semester, you will still be required to take the first test with the rest of the class. If you transfer into philosophy after that date, ad hoc arrangements may be facilitated as necessary.

Procedures for repeat examinations:

If you receive a failing mark for First Arts Philosophy overall (i.e., less than 40% in total), then you will be required to sit a 3-hour Supplemental ('Repeat' or 'Autumn') Examination in August 2022

For more details, please see the entries for PH1001 and PH1005 in the Book of Modules, here: <https://www.ucc.ie/admin/registrar/modules/>

Tutorials:

In addition to the three weekly lectures, students must sign up for a weekly tutorial. Each student is asked to register for a tutorial that is consistent with their schedule of lectures. Tutorials are in person. In order to sign up for a tutorial, you must go to the Canvas page for this module, click on 'People,' then click on 'Group,' then click 'Join' for the tutorial you prefer. You cannot change your tutorial once you sign-up unless there are extreme circumstances. In such a situation, you must contact Dr. Dockstader (j.dockstader@ucc.ie). Please keep in mind that tutorial groups are NOT cohort rotation teams. Note that participation in tutorials will be graded, and will count for 25% of a student's overall marks:

In the past, we have noticed a very high positive correlation between good attendance and participation, and good marks in the in-class test, so please make the most of the tutorials by being an active participant; do not expect to 'get by' on lectures and online material alone. Tutorials will start in the week beginning October 4th 2021.

Websites

Department of Philosophy: <https://www.ucc.ie/philosophy>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/PhilosophyDepartmentUcc>
Twitter: <https://twitter.com/uccphilosophy>
Canvas: <https://ucc.instructure.com>

Contacts

- **Prof. Don Ross** is the Head of Department in Philosophy, and may be contacted on 021-490-2354 or at don.ross931@gmail.com
- **Dr. Jason Dockstader** is the First Year Philosophy co-ordinator, and may be contacted about any practical queries, problems etc., that arise in connection with your study of Philosophy in first year. Email: j.dockstader@ucc.ie.
- **Marten Kaas** will be the senior tutor for First Year Philosophy, and may be contacted with any practical queries, problems etc., that arise in connection with your tutorials. E-mail: 118224709@umail.ucc.ie.
- **Colette Connolly** is the Departmental Administrator for Philosophy. She can be contacted on 021-490-2588 and at c.connolly@ucc.ie

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