

WESTERN UNIVERSITY
Department of Philosophy
Undergraduate Course Outline 2026-27

PHILOSOP 2400F
Introduction to the Philosophy of Mind

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Information including instructor contact details and course location can be found on the course Owl BrightSpace: <https://westernu.brightspace.com/>

PREREQUISITE CHECKING

No prerequisites

COURSE DESCRIPTION

◀ This course is an introduction to the philosophy of mind. It covers a broad range of traditional questions in this field, such as:

- What is a mind or a mental state?
- Can mental states be explained in the same way as other things (such as the motion of physical bodies)?
- Do we really know what others feel or experience?
- What is the relationship between sensory experience and thought?
- What is a person and under what conditions does a person continue to exist?
- Does the determinism of physics imply that we have no free will?

Please note that this course has **an unusual format**. It is delivered fully online with recorded videos, but it **includes an in-person writing component** (detailed below). ▶

LEARNING OUTCOMES

◀ By the end of this course, you should be able to explain and evaluate the main philosophical arguments and positions discussed in this course both orally and in writing. You should acquire and/or improve upon general skills useful for critically engaging with philosophical ideas as well as other pursuits, including analyzing, and critically evaluating arguments, skills involved in effective oral and written communication, and fruitful engagement with peers. ▶

TEXT

Bayne, Tim (2022). *Philosophy of Mind: An Introduction*. Routledge.

The textbook should be purchased in ebook format from Google Play because you will need to access it through MATCHA (details below).

MATCHA LAB

In this course, we will make use of a MATCHA Writing Lab for all essay assignments. The MATCHA Writing Lab is a pilot project in the faculty of Arts and Humanities. It is a classroom reserved for you to research and write your essays in your own time under the supervision of a Teaching Assistant. When in the lab, you will be required to use the MATCHA software for all your essay work, including reading/research, note-taking, and editing (MATCHA has built-in tools for doing all these things).

To learn more about MATCHA, visit its website here: <https://matchawriter.com>
Make sure to read the Student Guide, which should be considered part of this outline:
<https://matchawriter.com/student-guide>

STATEMENT ON THE USE OF GENERATIVE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)

In this course, **the use of generative AI (including automatic translation tools, grammar checkers, text-generating AI assistants such as ChatGPT, Claude, and similar) is prohibited.** This course uses MATCHA to prevent the misuse of generative AI. Doing all work in MATCHA is required.

METHOD OF EVALUATION

The primary method of evaluation for this course is a series of essays of maximum 1000 words each. Each essay addresses a relatively narrow question about the course material. In total, you will have **four opportunities** to write essays. **Your course grade will be the average of your three best essays.**

Example

You have written four essays, for which you have obtained the following grades: 80%, 50%, 90%, 80%. We discard the 50% essay. The average of the remaining three is 83.3%. This would be your course grade before rounding.

In principle, you can have a grade of 100% by writing only three essays, but we recommend writing all four. Many students who have little practice writing essays find that they need some practice before their results correspond to their grade expectations.

The essay due dates will be spaced roughly equally throughout the term.

Anti-AI measures for essays (important!):

- In this course, **you are required to show the process by which you developed your essay, including reading the course materials, taking notes, and editing the essay.**
- You will provide this proof of work by doing all work, including reading, within

MATCHA, which will record the work you do. When you submit through MATCHA a complete record of your work will be included.

- Essays that are not submitted with MATCHA, or that are tampered MATCHA files, will not be accepted.
- Essays that are submitted with MATCHA but come with inadequate proof of work (for example, minimal reading) will automatically have a penalty of 30%.
- In addition, this course uses follow-up quizzes after each essay to ascertain authorship. Follow-up quizzes ask you questions about your essay that should be easy to answer if you have done all the work. They are graded pass/fail, with a fail resulting in an automatic penalty of 30% on the essay. Failing the quiz can also lead to a charge of academic offence depending on the balance of evidence.

This course implements flexible deadlines in lieu of minor academic considerations. By default, we grant a grace period of 3 days (that is, 72 hours) for all essay submissions. You do not need to say anything if your essay is handed in 3 days or less after the official deadline. If it is submitted later, however, you will be assessed a penalty of 2% per day, and we will not accept your essay if it is more than 2 weeks late unless you have a major academic consideration from your counsellor. If you only have an academic consideration for 3 days or less, we will not grant an extension since this is already granted as part of the grace period.

Please consult the **Policy on Academic Consideration – Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs**

https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep24.pdf

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.

AUDIT

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

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

https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration.pdf

The Student Medical Certificate is available at

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf

ACADEMIC CONSIDERATION

Students may request academic consideration in cases of extenuating circumstances – that is, personal circumstances beyond the student’s control that have a substantial but temporary impact on the student’s ability to meet essential academic requirements.

1. Requests for academic consideration are made to the Academic Advising office of Faculty in which the student is registered.
2. Requests for academic consideration include the following components:
 - a. Self-attestation signed by the student;
 - b. Indication of the course(s) and assessment(s) relevant to the request;
 - c. Supporting documentation as relevant

Requests without supporting documentation are limited to one per term per course.

Documentation for medical illness, when required, includes the completion of a [Western Student Medical Certificate \(SMC\)](#) or, where that is not possible, equivalent documentation, by a health care practitioner. Requests linked to examinations scheduled by the Office of the Registrar during official examination periods as well as practice laboratory and performance tests typically scheduled in the last week of term always require formal supporting documentation.

Policy on Academic Consideration – Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs

RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION

Western’s Policy on Accommodation for Religious Holidays can be found here:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_religious.pdf.

In the case of mid-term tests, notification is to be “given in writing to the instructor as early as possible, but not later than **one week** prior to the writing of the test”.

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.

SCHOLASTIC 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

Statement on the use of plagiarism-checking software

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>).

ACADEMIC ADVISING

Your Home Faculty's Academic Advising Office will support or refer whenever you have an issue that is affecting your studies, including information on adding/dropping courses, academic considerations for absences, appeals, exam conflicts, and many other academic related matters. Do not hesitate to reach out to them if you are struggling and unsure where to go for help. Contact info for all Faculties is here: https://registrar.uwo.ca/faculty_academic_counselling.html

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western (<https://uwo.ca/health/>) 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 (24/7 availability).

GENDER-BASED AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Western University [is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence](#) (GBSV) and providing compassionate support to anyone who is going through or has gone through these traumatic events. If you are experiencing or have experienced GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at the following website: https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html. To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact support@uwo.ca.