

PHL341H1F: Freedom, Responsibility, and Human Action

Thursday 9-12, Teefy Hall (TF) 201

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Office hours: T10-12, JHB 433

Course Description

What does it mean to say that you did something *freely*, or that you did it of your *free will*? Does it mean, for example, that you wanted to do it? That you had a reason to do it? That you could have done something else instead? Would your action have not been free if you had been coerced or constrained to do it? What about if you had done it arbitrarily, or if you had been determined to do it? In this course, we will examine some traditional and not-so-traditional answers to these questions, and touch on related topics such as practical rationality, moral responsibility, and personhood along the way.

Required Text

The following textbook will be required for the course:

Watson, Gary, ed. <i>Free Will</i> . 2nd ed. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2003. (Abbreviated as “FW”)

NB: Additional readings will be posted on Quercus.

Schedule

Class	Reading
Sept. 6	Introduction (no reading)
Sept. 13	- Chisholm, “Human Freedom and the Self” (FW 26-37) - van Inwagen, “An Argument for Incompatibilism” (FW 38-57)
Sept. 20	- Frankfurt, “Alternate Possibilities and Moral Responsibility” (FW 167-176) - Widerker, “Libertarianism and Frankfurt’s Attack on the Principle of Alternative Possibilities” (FW 177-189)
Sept. 27	- Strawson, “Freedom and Resentment” (FW 72-93)
Class Cancelled (Oct. 4)	

Oct. 11	- O'Connor, "Agent Causation" (FW 257-284)
	- Clarke, "Toward a Credible Agent-Causal Account of Free Will" (FW 285-298)
Oct. 18	- Kane, "Responsibility, Luck, and Chance" (FW 299-321)
Oct. 25	- Fischer, "Frankfurt-Style Compatibilism" (FW 190-211)
	- Vihvelin, "Free Will Demystified: A Dispositional Account" (Quercus)
Nov. 1	- Clarke, "Dispositions, Abilities to Act, and Free Will" (Quercus)
	- Frankfurt, "Freedom of the Will and the Concept of a Person" (FW 322-336)
Reading Week (Nov. 5 to Nov. 9)	
Nov. 15	- Watson, "Free Agency" (FW 337-351)
	- Wolf, "Sanity and the Metaphysics of Responsibility" (FW 372-387)
Nov. 22	- Pereboom, "Determinism <i>al Dente</i> " (Quercus)
Nov. 29	- Strawson, "The Impossibility of Moral Responsibility" (FW 212-228)
	- Nagel, "Freedom" (FW 229-256)

Course Requirements

1. Attendance and Participation, **10%**
2. Weekly Reading Responses, **20%** (250-300 words, due **every Thursday** starting Sept. 13)
3. First Essay, **35%** (1500-2000 words, **due Oct. 11**)
4. Second Essay, **35%** (1500-2000 words, **due Nov. 22**)

Sessional Dates

Classes Begin	Thursday, Sept. 6, 2018
Drop Date	Monday, Nov. 5, 2018
First Term Reading Week	Monday, Nov. 5, 2018 - Friday, Nov. 9, 2018
Last Day of Classes	Wednesday, Dec. 5, 2018
Exam Period	Saturday, Dec. 8, 2018 - Friday, Dec. 21, 2018

Course Policies

Academic Integrity (retrieved from <http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/osai>). Academic integrity is fundamental to learning and scholarship at the University of Toronto. Participating honestly,

respectfully, responsibly, and fairly in this academic community ensures that the U of T degree that you earn will be valued as a true indication of your individual academic achievement, and will continue to receive the respect and recognition it deserves.

You are expected to know what constitutes AI; familiarize yourself with the University of Toronto's [*Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters*](#). It is the rule book for academic behaviour at the U of T. Potential offences include, but are not limited to, the following:

In papers and assignments:

- Using someone else's ideas or words without appropriate acknowledgement.
- Copying material word-for-word from a source (including lecture and study group notes) and not placing the words within quotation marks.
- Submitting your own work, in part or whole, in more than one course without the permission of the instructor.
- Making up sources or facts.
- Including references to sources that you did not use.
- Obtaining or providing unauthorized assistance on any assignment including:
 - working in groups on assignments that are supposed to be individual work;
 - having someone rewrite or add material to your work while "editing".
- Lending your work to a classmate who submits it as his/her own without your permission.

On tests and exams:

- Using or **possessing** any unauthorized aid, including a cell phone.
- Looking at someone else's answers
- Letting someone else look at your answers.
- Misrepresenting your identity.
- Submitting an altered test for re-grading.

Misrepresentation:

- Falsifying or altering any documentation required by the University, including doctor's notes.
- Falsifying institutional documents or grades.

The University of Toronto treats cases of academic misconduct very seriously. All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated following the procedures outlined in the *Code*. *The consequences for academic misconduct can be severe, including a failure in the course and a notation on your transcript*. If you have any questions about what is or is not permitted in this course, please do not hesitate to contact me. If you have questions about appropriate research and citation methods, seek out additional information from me, or from other available campus resources like the [U of T Writing Website](#). If you are experiencing personal challenges that are having an impact on your academic work, please speak to me or seek the advice of your college registrar. You may find other useful resources at <http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/osai/resources>.

Late Penalty. Unless accompanied by a medical note or letter from your registrar, late papers will be penalized 1/3 of a letter grade per day (including weekends and holidays), to a maximum of three days. Any work submitted after this point will receive a grade of 0.

Email. If you have a question about a formal matter pertaining to the course that is not answered by any course document, send me an email (using your official “utoronto.ca” email) and I will reply to it within 48 hours. However, if you have a philosophical question, please come see me during office hours.

Quercus Info. This course uses the University’s learning management system, Quercus, to post information about the course. This includes posting readings and other materials required to complete class activities and course assignments, as well as sharing important announcements and updates. The site is dynamic and new information and resources will be posted regularly as we move through the term, so please make it a habit to log in to the site on a regular, even daily, basis. To access the course website, go to the U of T Quercus log-in page at <https://q.utoronto.ca>. Once you have logged in to Quercus using your UTORid and password, you should see the link or “card” for PHL341H1F: Freedom, Responsibility, and Human Action. You may need to scroll through other cards to find this. Click on the PHL341H1F: Freedom, Responsibility, and Human Action link to open our course area, view the latest announcements and access your course resources. There are Quercus help guides for students that you can access by clicking on the “?” icon in the left side column. Please also note that any grades posted are for your information only, so you can view and track your progress through the course. No grades are considered official, including any posted in Quercus at any point in the term, until they have been formally approved and posted on ACORN at the end of the course. Please contact me as soon as possible if you think there is an error in any grade posted on Quercus.

Religious Accommodation. As a student at the University of Toronto, you are part of a diverse community that welcomes and includes students and faculty from a wide range of cultural and religious traditions. For my part, I will make every reasonable effort to avoid scheduling tests, examinations, or other compulsory activities on religious holy days not captured by statutory holidays. Further to University Policy, if you anticipate being absent from class or missing a major course activity (such as a test or in-class assignment) due to a religious observance, please let me know as early in the course as possible, and with sufficient notice (at least two to three weeks), so that we can work together to make alternate arrangements.

Students with Disabilities or Accommodation Requirements. Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. If you have an acute or ongoing disability issue or accommodation need, you should register with Accessibility Services (AS) at the beginning of the academic year by visiting <http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/as/new-registration>. Without registration, you will not be able to verify your situation with your instructors, and instructors will not be advised about your accommodation needs. AS will assess your situation, develop an accommodation plan with you, and support you in requesting accommodation for your course work. Remember that the process of accommodation is private: AS will not share details of your needs or condition with any instructor, and your instructors will not reveal that you are registered with AS.