

## PHIL 550 / PHIL 803: Metaphysics (core) *Metaphysics of Love*

W2 2023-24

*This course takes place on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səliłwatał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.*

This seminar for philosophy graduate students investigates the metaphysics of love. Core questions include:

1. *What is love?*
2. *Is love real?*
3. *Is love natural?*
4. *What do questions 2 and 3 mean?*

As a “core” seminar, the course aims to provide students with a background in contemporary analytic metaphysics that can serve as a preparation for further study. We will use the metaphysics of love as an example and draw connections with other areas of metaphysical enquiry to cover such topics as:

- Metametaphysics
- Social ontology and construction
- Anti-realism, including fictionalism
- Naturalism
- Metaphysics of gender
- Identity theories

Texts will be drawn primarily from the European/“Western” Anglophone tradition of philosophy, from Plato to contemporaries.

This seminar strongly emphasizes in-class discussion, especially student-led discussion, as a primary mode of learning. Students are expected to prepare thoroughly for each meeting, and to take turns leading class discussions.

### **Instructor**

Carrie Jenkins, [carrie.jenkins@ubc.ca](mailto:carrie.jenkins@ubc.ca), they/she

### **Email policy**

Please put "PHIL 550" in the subject line. I aim to reply to student emails within two working days (not including weekends and holidays) of receipt. Please note that emails sent outside of working hours (i.e. after 5pm or before 9am PST) aren't received until the next working day.

### **Office hours**

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10-11am, [Carrie's Zoom office](#)

If you can't make these times or prefer an in-person meeting, contact [Carrie](#) for an appointment

### **Canvas**

<https://canvas.ubc.ca/courses/132283>

### **Classes**

In person, Wednesdays 6-9pm

See Canvas for location information

### **Assessment**

- **Weekly short responses: 20%**
  - Length: about 500 words (prose).
  - Each short response should include BOTH a summary of some point(s) made in one (or more) of the week's readings AND some critical engagement with this point.
  - Due at the start of class.
  - Graded pass/fail (i.e. a pass = 100%).
- **Presentations and class leadership: 20%**
  - Each student will present and lead discussion twice during the semester (10% per presentation).
  - The first presentation will be about one or more of the week's readings.
  - The second presentation, in the last two weeks of class, will be a presentation of (the draft of) your term paper.
  - The guide length for a presentation itself is 20-30 minutes, but you are also encouraged to lead the class in discussion after the presentation (up to one hour in total).
- **Draft of final paper: 10%**
  - Drafts may be somewhat shorter or longer than final submissions, and need not be fully "tidied up."

- However, they must be close enough to completion for the thesis and arguments to be clear, and to enable substantive feedback to be provided by the class following the second presentation.
- **Due 11:59pm on March 26<sup>th</sup>**
- **Final paper: 40%**
  - Papers should be 4000-5000 words in length, including footnotes but excluding bibliography.
  - Key criteria for assessment are:
    - **Knowledge** and **understanding** of course topics and readings
    - **Clarity**, including (i) identifying a clear topic or question, and (ii) addressing it with a clear thesis and arguments
    - **Structure**
    - **Strength** of argumentation
    - **Responsiveness** to peer feedback.
  - Your essay should refer to ideas, authors, themes, and/or topics we have covered in the class.
  - You may bring in additional points of reference, but this is not required and should not distract from the goal of demonstrating your knowledge and understanding of the course content.
  - Any consistent and complete citation style is accepted.
  - Length may vary by +/- 10% without penalty.
  - Please include your word count in your submission.
  - **Due 11:59pm on April 16<sup>th</sup>**
- **Participation: 10%**
  - Participate regularly and thoughtfully in class activities to earn this part of your grade.

### **If you can't do the work on time**

I get it. I am happy to grant extensions where needed; just ask. However, work submitted late *without* an extension cannot be accepted, unless exceptional circumstances made it impossible to request an extension in advance of the deadline. This policy is in place to ensure that I can manage my overall teaching workload and fairly grade everyone's work.

### **Note on academic integrity**

Plagiarism, which is intellectual theft, occurs where an individual submits or presents the oral or written work of another person as his or her own. Scholarship quite properly rests upon examining and referring to the thoughts and writings of others. However, when another person's words (i.e. phrases, sentences, or paragraphs), ideas, or entire works are used, the author must be acknowledged in the text, in footnotes, in endnotes,

or in another accepted form of academic citation. Where direct quotations are made, they must be clearly delineated (for example, within quotation marks or separately indented). Failure to provide proper attribution is plagiarism because it represents someone else's work as one's own. Plagiarism should not occur in submitted drafts or final works. A student who seeks assistance from a tutor or other scholastic aids must ensure that the work submitted is the student's own. Students are responsible for ensuring that any work submitted does not constitute plagiarism. Students who are in any doubt as to what constitutes plagiarism should consult their instructor before handing in any assignments. A link about Academic misconduct is below:

<http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/Vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,54,111,959>

**Mandatory syllabus statement about UBC’s values and policies**

UBC provides resources to support student learning and to maintain healthy lifestyles but recognizes that sometimes crises arise and so there are additional resources to access including those for survivors of sexual violence. UBC values respect for the person and ideas of all members of the academic community. Harassment and discrimination are not tolerated nor is suppression of academic freedom. UBC provides appropriate accommodation for students with disabilities and for religious and cultural observances. UBC values academic honesty and students are expected to acknowledge the ideas generated by others and to uphold the highest academic standards in all of their actions. Details of the policies and how to access support are available [here](#).

**Note on atmosphere**

The topics of this course will comprise sensitive material for many people. While we may be examining and questioning beliefs, including some deeply-held ones, everyone in the course—instructor and students—has a shared responsibility to ensure that we do so with care and respect, ensuring that our environment is supportive and conducive to learning. No offensive jokes or comments, or other harmful behaviors with respect to race, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, or anything else, will be acceptable. The aim of our discussions is not to “win” arguments or to prove how smart we are, but to learn collaboratively with others.

**Schedule and Readings**

Jan 10 <sup>th</sup>	<p><b>Metametaphysics I: What Is Metaphysics?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• §§3&amp;4 of Peter van Inwagen, Meghan Sullivan, and Sara Bernstein, <a href="#">‘Metaphysics’</a></li> <li>• Amie Thomasson, <a href="#">‘Research Problems and Methods’</a></li> <li>• Aaron Griffith, <a href="#">‘Metaphysics and Social Justice’</a></li> </ul>
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Jan 17 <sup>th</sup>	<b>What Is Love? Ye Ancient Edition</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plato: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Symposium</a></li> <li><a href="#">Phaedrus</a></li> <li>Selections from <a href="#">Republic</a></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Jan 24 <sup>th</sup>	<b>What Is Love? Ye Contemporary Edition</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Robert Nozick, '<a href="#">Love's Bond</a>'</li> <li>Chapter 1 of bell hooks, <a href="#">All About Love: New Visions</a></li> <li>Carrie Jenkins, '<a href="#">What Is Love? An Incomplete Map of the Metaphysics</a>'</li> </ul>
Jan 31 <sup>st</sup>	<b>What's Gender Got To Do With It?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Simone De Beauvoir, 'The Woman in Love' from <a href="#">The Second Sex</a></li> <li>Tove Pettersen, '<a href="#">Love – According to Simone De Beauvoir</a>'</li> <li>Sally Haslanger and Ásta, '<a href="#">Feminist Metaphysics</a>'</li> </ul>
Feb 7 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Social Ontology and Construction</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sally Haslanger, '<a href="#">Social Construction: The “Debunking” Project</a>'</li> <li>Ron Mallon, '<a href="#">A Field Guide to Social Construction</a>'</li> <li>Rebecca Mason, '<a href="#">The Metaphysics of Social Kinds</a>'</li> </ul>
Feb 14 <sup>th</sup> Valentine's Day	<b>Identity Theories I</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Niko Kolodny, '<a href="#">Love as Valuing a Relationship</a>'</li> <li>Frankfurt, '<a href="#">Autonomy, Necessity, and Love</a>'</li> </ul>
Feb 21 <sup>st</sup>	<b>MIDTERM BREAK</b>
Feb 28 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Identity Theories II</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bennett Helm, '<a href="#">Love</a>'</li> <li>Amelie Rorty, '<a href="#">The Historicity of Psychological Attitudes: Love is Not Love Which Alters Not When it Alteration Finds</a>'</li> </ul>
Mar 6 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Anti-Realism</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Daniel Korman, '<a href="#">Debunking Arguments</a>'</li> <li>Frederick Kroon, '<a href="#">Fictionalism in Metaphysics</a>'</li> <li>John Shand, '<a href="#">Love As If</a>'</li> </ul>
Mar 13 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Naturalism</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>David Papineau, '<a href="#">Naturalism</a>'</li> <li>Selections from Helen Fisher, <a href="#">Why We Love: The Nature and Chemistry of Romantic Love</a></li> <li>Donatella Marazziti, Stefania Palermo, and Federico Mucci, '<a href="#">The Science of Love: State of the Art</a>'</li> <li>Carrie Jenkins, '<a href="#">Knowing Our Own Hearts: Self-Reporting and the Science of Love</a>'</li> </ul>
Mar 20 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Metametaphysics II: Methodology</b>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Daniel Nolan, <a href="#">‘Method in Analytic Metaphysics’</a></li><li>• Mari Mikkola, <a href="#">‘Feminist Metaphysics and Philosophical Methodology’</a></li></ul>
<b>Mar 27<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Draft presentations and peer feedback: GROUP 1</b>
<b>Apr 3<sup>rd</sup></b>	<b>Draft presentations and peer feedback: GROUP 2</b>