

PHIL 6000-301 Proseminar for Philosophy Doctoral Students (Draft)

INSTRUCTOR: Jennifer M. Morton (jmmorton@sas.upenn.edu)
DATE/TIME: Wednesday 9am-11:30am (Check Schedule)
LOCATION: McNeill 582
OFFICE HOURS: Cohen 462 by appointment <https://calendly.com/jmmorton>

COURSE OBJECTIVES (What this course will aim to enable you to do):

- (1) to introduce you to philosophy as a profession
- (2) to expose you to different approaches to philosophy and spark new research interests
- (3) to allow you to practice critical professional skills such as reading philosophy as a professional philosopher, participating in discussion, presenting your work, providing constructive feedback on other people's work, and writing a graduate-level seminar paper
- (4) to develop habits that will help you as a philosopher, departmental citizen, and professional academic
- (5) to give you a core of philosophical ideas to discuss with your cohort

COURSE TEXTS: John McDowell's *Mind and World*, Nancy Cartwright's *The Dappled World*, and Sally Haslanger's *Resisting Reality*. You should be able to access all of these books through Penn Libraries digitally, but I recommend buying your own paper copies of the books if you can.

REQUIREMENTS

25% Reading Responses (250-350 words weekly)

30% Three 7-9-page papers (one on each book) Due: Sep. 24th, Oct. 22nd, and Nov. 19th

20% Leading & Participating in Discussion

25% Revised & Extended Final Paper (15-18 pages) Due: Dec. 15th

READING RESPONSES: A weekly email you send to me the evening before class (by 10pm) with your thoughts, questions, and/or discussion prompts for our seminar. The reading responses should be about a page (250-350 words). Please just write them into the body of the e-mail.

PAPERS: At the end of each section, you will turn in a 7–9-page paper (2100-2800 words) that focuses on one argument in the book we just finished reading. Your paper should engage directly and critically with the assigned text. It should develop a clear philosophical argument or analysis (not just a summary or exposition). You may bring in one or two secondary sources, but these are not required. Papers should be polished: well-structured, clearly written, and free of major errors.

FINAL PAPER: At the end of the semester, you'll select your strongest short paper and revise and expand it into a 15-20 page research paper (4,500–6,000 words). This final paper should:

- Incorporate my feedback on the original version.
- Deepen the argument and analysis.
- Situate your position within relevant philosophical literature (now including outside sources).
- Demonstrate improvement in clarity, rigor, and scholarly engagement.

PARTICIPATION: How well (or badly) this course goes will depend on every person in this class taking ownership of the course. This means that I expect all of you to contribute to the discussion in some way. Talking in seminar is only one way to participate in the discussion, others include e-mailing me with questions you'd like to see discussed before class, listening to others respectfully, helping a classmate make a point, continuing the discussion with your fellow students outside of class, and coming to my office when the class discussion sparks an idea that you want to discuss. In class discussion, I expect you to do a lot of *listening* as well as *participating* in a way that is *responsive* to your peers. Be mindful of the class dynamics and aim to include your peers in the discussion, rather than talking just to me.

POLICIES

GRADING: This is a graduate-level course. A grade of A is reserved for truly excellent graduate-level work in philosophy. If you have questions or concerns about grading, please do come by my office for a chat.

HONOR CODE: All students are expected to follow the guidelines of Penn's Code of Academic Integrity. In particular, students are expected to refrain from "lying, cheating, or stealing" in an academic context (but it's also probably good to avoid doing these things in general). If you are unsure about which actions violate that honor code, please consult <https://catalog.upenn.edu/pennbook/code-of-academic-integrity>. Plagiarism of any kind will not be tolerated. Always cite any resource that you use (including friends with whom you have worked if cooperation is permitted on an assignment). Do not reuse papers written for other classes. The internet has made it easier than ever before to catch this sort of thing, so (moral reasons aside) it is not a particularly wise idea.

AI ASSISTED WRITING: This is a graduate philosophy seminar whose purpose is to teach the writing and research skills you will need to be a philosopher, a thinker, and a researcher. Using AI tools like Grammarly, Word Spell/Grammar check, etc. is fine. However, it would disrupt the pedagogical purpose of this class, to use AI tools to *generate* text. Do not do it. Note, furthermore, that it is against the honor code policy to use AI tools to generate text without citing it.

BASIC NEEDS SUPPORT: It is important to me that you have the resources you need to be able to focus on learning in this course – this includes both the necessary academic materials as well as taking care of your day-to-day needs. Students experiencing difficulty affording the course materials should reach out to the Penn First Plus office (pennfirstplus@upenn.edu). Students who are struggling to afford sufficient food to eat every day and/or lack a safe and suitable space to live should contact Student Intervention Services (vpul-sisteam@pobox.upenn.edu). Students may also wish to contact their Financial Aid Counselor or Academic Advisor about these concerns. You are welcome to notify me if any of these challenges are affecting your success in this course, as long as you are comfortable doing so – I can help you access the resources Penn has available for you.

ACADEMIC SUPPORT: The Weingarten Center offers a variety of resources to support all Penn students in reaching their academic goals. All services are free and confidential. To contact the Weingarten Center, call 215-573-9235. The office is located in Stouffer Commons at 3702 Spruce Street, Suite 300.

DISABILITY SERVICES: The University of Pennsylvania provides reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities who have self-identified and received approval from Disability Services. Students can contact Disability Services and make appointments to discuss and/or request accommodations by calling 215-573-9235.

Date	Time	Reading	Writing
8/27	10am-12pm	Professionalization Workshop #1: Surviving the Academy Jennifer Morton, "Flourishing in the Academy: Complicity and Compromise"	
9/3	9-11:30am	John McDowell <u>Mind and World</u> (Introduction, Lectures I and II)	Reading Response
9/10	9-11:30am	John McDowell <u>Mind and World</u> (Lectures III & IV)	Reading Response
9/17	9-11:30am	John McDowell <u>Mind and World</u> (Lectures V & VI)	Reading Response
9/24	9-11:30am	Writing Workshop #1 Professionalization Workshop #2: The Job of Philosophy [Guest Dan Singer]	Paper #1
10/1	10am-12pm	Nancy Cartwright <u>The Dappled World</u> (Intro, Ch 1 & 2)	Reading Response
10/8	9-11:30am	Nancy Cartwright <u>The Dappled World</u> (Ch. 3 & 4)	Reading Response
10/15	9-11:30am	Nancy Cartwright <u>The Dappled World</u> (Ch. 5, 6, & 7)	Reading Response
10/22	9-11:30am	Writing Workshop #2 Professionalization Workshop #3: Giving a Good Talk [Guest Sukaina Hirji]	Paper #2
10/29	9-11:30am	Sally Haslanger <u>Resisting Reality</u>	Reading Response
11/5	10am-12pm	Sally Haslanger <u>Resisting Reality</u>	Reading Response
11/12	9-11:30am	Sally Haslanger <u>Resisting Reality</u>	Reading Response
11/19	9-11:30am	Professionalization Workshop #4: Making Professional Connections [Guest Daniele Lorenzini] Writing Workshop #3	Paper #3
11/26	No Class [Thur-Fri schedule]		
12/3	9-11:30am	Writing Workshop #4 Professionalization Workshop #5: Publishing [Guest Daniel Wodak]	
12/15	Revised & Extended Paper Due		