

# Phil 591: Research Methods Seminar

## Syllabus

### Course Information:

Instructor: Dr. Audrey Yap (ayap@uvic.ca)  
Class Schedule: TWF 9:30-10:20 in CLE B315  
Office Hours: Th 9:30am–11:20am on Zoom (sign up required)

Course Website: Through Brightspace (<https://bright.uvic.ca/d21/home>)  
Textbook: All readings available on the course website.

### Course Description:

The course has two principal objectives: (1) to develop and hone research and teaching skills needed to complete a graduate degree in philosophy and (2) to explore developments and issues in philosophy related to the research interests of the faculty. Throughout the term, faculty will visit the class to lead discussions of issues that arise in their area of research and talk about their own research methodologies. We will discuss readings related to departmental colloquia, and in the last few weeks we will discuss articles and topics of your choice. The course will, therefore, cover a wide range of philosophical topics in diverse areas of philosophy. However, students can write their term paper on a topic that reflects their own philosophical research interests.

### Course Logistics:

**Communication:** Email is my preferred method of communication, especially for any official requests. If you ask me a question over email, you can expect a reply within about 1 working day. If you don't hear back from me after that time frame, feel free to try again in case your message went astray. When you do address me (over email or otherwise), please do so as either Dr. Yap or Audrey. Please don't use any of Mrs/Miss/Ms/Mr, for a variety of reasons. If you are ever nervous about sending me an email, or asking a question, feel free to include a picture of a puppy with your request. This will not affect whether or not I will be able to help you with your request, but will give you an excuse to look for pictures of puppies. Finally, my pronouns are she/her/hers. If you think I am unlikely to know the name you would prefer to be called, or the pronouns I ought to use for you through the entry that I will see for you through Brightspace, please don't hesitate to make me aware.

**Graded Items:** Work for the course consists of 1 term paper proposal, 1 term paper, 1 presentation of a draft of the term paper, 1 commentary on a paper draft, and regular engagement. The engagement grade will consist in 10 written reflections, submitted on Brightspace on the week's material. These will be approximately one double-spaced page, and can reflect on either the readings or the in-class discussion, due at the end of the week.

Term paper proposals will be approximately 1-2 pages, plus a bibliography of 3-5 items that the paper will engage with. Presentations and commentaries will take place on a date after the end of classes in a mini-conference style. Students will be assigned as commentators on each others' papers, and both presentations and commentaries will be evaluated.

Gradable Item	Description	Value
Engagement	Brief written reflections on course material and meetings.	1% x 10 weeks = 10%
Paper Proposal	1 page proposal + bibliography	= 5%
Draft Presentation	Conference-style presentation of the draft paper.	= 15%
Commentary	Commentary delivered on another student's paper.	= 10%
Term Paper		= 60%
		Total = 100%

**Office Hours:** My default platform for office hours will be Zoom, but if that does not work for you, please feel free to email me in advance to suggest an alternative. You will need to schedule an appointment beforehand using the following link: <https://calendly.com/ayap/office>. Appointments can be scheduled in 15 minute blocks, up to a week in advance.

**Academic Integrity:** You are encouraged to discuss all of the material with others in your class, and work through modules and practice questions together. However, please ensure that you are abiding by all of the University regulations and avoiding misconduct. More information on how to do this is provided on the University Calendar: <https://bit.ly/3RW1z3Q>.

**Extensions:** I know that sometimes things do not go as planned. You are welcome to two days' worth of extensions on weekly engagements or your paper proposal. This means you can take two extra days to complete a single assignment, or have one extra day on two different assignments. Please let me know before the due date if you are using an extension. You also do not need to tell me why you need the extension, but if you anticipate needing more than these two days during the semester, I highly encourage you to make an appointment with me to talk about how we can plan for you to keep up with the course schedule. However, the paper presentation and commentary must be given on the scheduled date, and you must provide your drafts and comments to your fellow students on time.

**Accessibility:**

If you notice any additional accessibility issues with respect to this class, please let me know and I will do my best to solve them. I would also encourage any students who might benefit from their services to register with the Centre for Accessible Learning (<https://>

[//www.uvic.ca/services/cal/](http://www.uvic.ca/services/cal/)).

## **Numerical and Letter Grades:**

Grades will be given as percentile marks. The percentile mark for the course will be converted to a letter grade in the following manner:

A+ = 90 - 100, A = 85 - 89, A- = 80 - 84, B+ = 77 - 79, B = 73 - 76, B- = 70 - 72, C+ = 65 - 69, C = 60 - 64, D = 50 - 59, F = 0 - 49. The A range means exceptional, outstanding and excellent performance. A grade in the B range means a very good, good and solid performance. A grade in the C+ or C range means satisfactory, or minimally satisfactory, performance. A grade of D indicates merely passable or marginal performance. An F indicates unsatisfactory performance.

## **Schedule of Topics:**

This schedule of topics is provisional, and will be adjusted throughout the term as speakers are confirmed.

- Sep 7: Introductions, course logistics
- Sep 9: General discussion of research in philosophy
- Sep 13: David Scott
- Sep 14: TA work and general strategies
- Sep 16:
- Sep 20:
- Sep 21:
- Sep 23:
- Sep 27: Katie Stockdale
- Sep 28:
- Sep 30: No class—National Day for Truth and Reconciliation
- Oct 4:
- Oct 5:
- Oct 7:
- Oct 11:

- Oct 12:
- Oct 14:
- Oct 18:
- Oct 19:
- Oct 21:
- Oct 25:
- Oct 26:
- Oct 28:
- Nov 1:
- Nov 2:
- Nov 4:
- Nov 8:
- Nov 9—11: Reading Break
- Nov 15:
- Nov 16:
- Nov 18:  
Term Paper Proposals due by Nov 18th
- Nov 22:
- Nov 23:
- Nov 25:
- Nov 29:
- Nov 30:
- Dec 2:  
Paper presentations the week of Dec 5th  
Term Papers due by Dec 16