

§1. Context

There are five main perspectives from which one may approach methodology in the history of philosophy: historiographical (and philological), epistemological, cognitive, metaphilosophical and metaphysical:

1. Hermeneutical perspective: What can historians of philosophy in the analytic tradition learn from historians in the post-Heideggerian, hermeneutical tradition (e.g. Gadamer) as regards the nature and method of philosophical history?
2. Epistemological Perspective: To the extent that contextualisation and narratives play an “explanatory” role and are understood to model a distinctive type of reasoning, they differ from other types of explanation and reasoning (inductive, nomologico-deductive, abductive, etc). What kind of explanation are contextualizations and narratives?
3. Cognitive Perspective: What kinds of recognitional capacities and cognitive processing strategies are mobilised in selecting and interpreting data for the purpose of historical explanation? What can we learn about our knowledge of known of cognitive biases when examining what we otherwise think of as interpretive limitations and heuristic biases?
4. Metaphilosophical Perspective: In addition to providing insight into past theories, contextualizations and narratives are often used to illustrate and even promote what are assumed to be distinctively philosophical “values”. How are the kinds of epistemic norms and values that drive the history of philosophy compare with those that are at play in non-historical branches of philosophy and the sciences, as well as with other historical disciplines altogether.
5. Metaphysical Perspective: Disciplines are subject to doctrinal, methodological and theoretical shifts: in any discipline, individual doctrines, methods and, indeed, entire theories can be and are usually improved, criticized, modified, overhauled and rejected over time. However, a discipline’s theoretical core may lose or gain elements without the discipline ceasing to exist. Part of what makes for the continued existence of a discipline is the relative stability of what can be seen as its “metaepistemological frame”, i.e. what participants can be understood to standardly believe to be its scope, method and place among other bodies of knowledge.

§2. Expectations

- A case study will be presented by the instructor to illustrate the metaphysical perspective: In what sense is logic today the same discipline it was in the 1700s?
- The bulk of the course will be dedicated to individual research supervision aimed at a mini-conference. Students will be asked to focus their work, by choosing a theme that fits within one of the perspectives introduced (1)-(4).
- The theme of the paper will be at their discretion.
- Students will submit a Research Proposal by 27 January
- Students will submit a Paper Outline by 3 February.
- From Weeks 4-8, students will be meeting individually with the instructor to discuss their progress.
- A preliminary draft of the paper will be due on 21 February.
- The full draft and complete bibliography of the term paper will be due on 5 March.
- Students will receive feedback on their full draft before their presentations.
- Presentations will be scheduled over the course of weeks 9-12.
- Each student will produce an oral commentary on one of the presentations (they will be able to prepare on the basis of the full draft of the presenter's paper)

§3. Meeting Schedule

13 Jan	Introduction and distribution of tasks
20 Jan	Metaphysics of Historical Development part 1
27 Jan	Metaphysics of Historical Development part 2
<i>Research Proposal due on 27 January</i>	
3 Feb	Individual Supervision
10 Feb	Individual Supervision
17 Feb	RECESS
<i>Paper Outline due on 21 February</i>	
24 Feb	Individual Supervision
3 Mar	Individual Supervision
10 Mar	Individual Supervision
<i>Full Draft of Paper due 15 March</i>	
17 Mar	Presentations
24 Mar	Presentations
31 Mar	Presentations
5 April	Presentations
<i>Final Draft of Paper due on the last day of exams</i>	

§4. Evaluation

Final Paper: 40% (Max 4000 Words, including notes). A preliminary draft will be due on 21 Feb, and the final draft on 5 March. The student will each time receive feedback they will need to address. Half of the grade will be ascribed on the basis of the student's effort to meaningfully address comments and suggestions.

Presentation: 30% (20-25 minutes). The presentation will be based on the term paper. An evaluation grid will be posted on Avenue..

Commentary: 30% (10-15minutes). The commentary will be delivered orally. Further instructions and an evaluation grid will be posted on Avenue.

§5. Policy on Missed Work, Extensions, and Late Penalties

In general there will be no tolerance for missed work or poor participation. Students who do not hand in an assignment before the deadline will need an officially documented reason and, in order to not be penalised, they will have to meet with the instructor to determine whether additional make-up work needs to be submitted.

§6. Other Policies and Statements

Academic Dishonesty

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, located at www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

- Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.
- Improper collaboration in group work.
- Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

Email correspondence policy

It is the policy of the Faculty of Humanities that all email communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from each student's own McMaster University email account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. Instructors will delete emails that do not originate from a McMaster email account.

Modification of course outlines

The University reserves the right to change dates and/or deadlines etc. for any or all courses in the case of an emergency situation or labour disruption or civil unrest/disobedience, etc. If a modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with an explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. Any significant changes should be made in consultation with the Department Chair.

McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF)

In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work. Please note these regulations have changed beginning Fall 2015. You can find information at mcmaster.ca/msaf/. If you have any questions about the MSAF, please contact your Associate Dean's office.

Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

Students who require academic accommodation must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. Academic accommodations must be arranged for each term of study. Student Accessibility Services can be contacted by phone 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or e-mail sas@mcmaster.ca. For further information, consult McMaster University's Policy for [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#).

Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous and Spiritual Observances

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religion and spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the Course Calendar or by their respective Faculty. In most cases, the student should contact his or her professor or academic advisor as soon as possible to arrange accommodations for classes, assignments, tests and examinations that might be affected by a religious holiday or spiritual observance.