Upper-division Writing Requirement Review Form (12/1/08)

I. General Education Review – Upper-division Writing Requirement

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dept/Program Subject</th>
<th>PHILOSOPHY</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course(s) Title</td>
<td>Senior Seminar</td>
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<tr>
<td>Description of the requirement if it is not a single course</td>
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II. Endorsement/Approvals

Complete the form and obtain signatures before submitting to Faculty Senate Office.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Please type / print name</th>
<th>Signature</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Instructor</td>
<td>Christopher Preston</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Phone / Email</td>
<td>243-2937</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:Christopher.Preston@umontana.edu">Christopher.Preston@umontana.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Program Chair</td>
<td>David Sherman</td>
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III. Overview of the Course Purpose/Description

The Senior Seminar provides a capstone experience for graduating majors in philosophy using texts in an area of the instructor’s choice. It offers an opportunity to use knowledge and skills learned throughout the degree to discuss the texts in a seminar-type of environment. It involves the writing and revision of a substantial term paper.

IV. Learning Outcomes: Explain how each of the following learning outcomes will be achieved.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Student learning outcomes</th>
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<tr>
<td>Identify and pursue more sophisticated questions for academic inquiry</td>
<td>Students are required to hand in questions prompted by the reading at every class and then to frame and develop their own question for the term paper.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Find, evaluate, analyze, and synthesize information effectively from diverse sources (see <a href="http://www.lib.umt.edu/informationliteracy/">http://www.lib.umt.edu/informationliteracy/</a>)</td>
<td>In addition to the primary text used in the class, a number of supplementary readings from different authors are assigned. Some of these sources are historical and some contemporary. Students are also required to identify additional literature relevant to class topics to include in their term paper.</td>
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<td>Manage multiple perspectives as appropriate</td>
<td>Some of the reading articulates a “received view.” Different supplemental reading will be examined which supports and challenges the received view. Students are required to consider the strengths and weaknesses of the challenge to the received view in light of traditional considerations relevant to the topic.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recognize the purposes and needs of discipline-specific audiences and adopt the academic voice necessary for the chosen discipline</td>
<td>The term paper requires serious philosophical analysis and research of some complex ideas. This term paper would be suitable for use as a writing sample for graduate school.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Use multiple drafts, revision, and editing in conducting inquiry and preparing written work</strong></td>
<td>The term paper requires presentation of an outline in front of the class on which students will receive feedback from their peers and from the instructor. There is also a requirement to submit a draft of the final paper two weeks before the final deadline for feedback from the instructor.</td>
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<td><strong>Follow the conventions of citation, documentation, and formal presentation appropriate to that discipline</strong></td>
<td>Students will be instructed to use Chicago or MLA style in their term papers.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Develop competence in information technology and digital literacy</strong></td>
<td>Standard philosophical research techniques are expected in this class, including use of databases such as the Philosopher’s Index. The term paper will require a bibliography that refers to the relevant literature in the field.</td>
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### V. Writing Course Requirements Check list

| **Is enrollment capped at 25 students? If not, list maximum course enrollment. Explain how outcomes will be adequately met for this number of students. Justify the request for variance.** | ☑ Yes ☐ No |
| **Are outcomes listed in the course syllabus? If not, how will students be informed of course expectations?** | ☑ Yes ☐ No |
| **Are detailed requirements for all written assignments including criteria for evaluation in the course syllabus? If not how and when will students be informed of written assignments?** | ☑ Yes ☐ No  
The requirements are outlined in the syllabus. Requirements will also be discussed in class prior to the beginning of each assignment. |
| **Briefly explain how students are provided with tools and strategies for effective writing and editing in the major.** | Since this is a capstone experience in philosophy it is reasonable to assume that many of these tools and strategies have been learned throughout the degree. These tools and strategies are also made evident in the feedback to the paper outline and the draft version of the paper submitted 2 weeks before the final due date. An office visit is a requirement in this class. During this visit the instructor will give counsel on effective writing and editing in the major. |
| **Will written assignments include an opportunity for revision? If not, then explain how students will receive and use feedback to improve their writing ability.** | ☑ Yes ☐ No  
Both the presentation of the term paper outline and the draft version of the term paper provide opportunities for feedback. |
| **Are expectations for Information Literacy listed in the course syllabus? If not, how will students be informed of course expectations?** | ☑ Yes ☐ No |
**VI. Writing Assignments:** Please describe course assignments. Students should be required to individually compose at least 20 pages of writing for assessment. At least 50% of the course grade should be based on students’ performance on writing assignments. Clear expression, quality, and accuracy of content are considered an integral part of the grade on any writing assignment.

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<tr>
<th>Formal Graded Assignments</th>
<th>The philosophical autobiography (or other equivalent writing assignment) (10% of the grade) is 3 pages in length. The take home mid-term requires typed essay answers to assigned questions (20%) totaling 6 to 8 pages. The term paper (30%) is 12-15 pages and includes a 1 page outline submitted around half term and a draft submitted two weeks before due date.</th>
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<th>Informal Ungraded Assignments</th>
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**VII. Syllabus:** Paste syllabus below or attach and send digital copy with form. The syllabus should clearly describe how the above criteria are satisfied. For assistance on syllabus preparation see: http://teaching.berkeley.edu/bgd/syllabus.html

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**SENIOR SEMINAR**  
Phil 480

Professor: Christopher J. Preston  
Classroom: LA 234  
Class time: Tuesday and Thursday, 2.10 – 3.30 p.m.  
Office: LA 157  
Office hours: T. 3.30 – 5 p.m., W. 1.30 – 3.30 p.m., and by appt.  
Phone: 243-2937  
E-mail: Christopher.Preston@mso.umt.edu

**1. Course Introduction:**

*Philosophy in the Flesh* lays down a challenge to the way philosophy has been done in the western tradition. We will spend the semester doing a careful reading of this wide-ranging text and placing it alongside the figures and patterns of thought they criticize (including Aristotle, Descartes, Hume, and Kant). We will also read articles that pick up on some of the themes we encounter. For example, we will read articles about the embodied mind, situated knowledge, environmental ethics, and feminism. Be prepared for a whirlwind voyage through several different areas of philosophy including the philosophy of mind, epistemology, metaphysics, and ethics.

This class is designed to approximate the experience of a graduate seminar. I will tend not to lecture but to rely upon student presentations, questions, and discussion. The
assignments are designed to maximize student involvement and to enable you to explore (and enjoy!) the philosophical skills you have learned at UM.

2. Learning Outcomes

a) Students will learn to engage with a complex philosophical text and evaluate its relationship to the philosophical tradition

b) Students will be encouraged to direct regular questions towards the philosophical tradition and towards the primary text.

c) Students will learn to see connections between the central ideas in the primary text and a number of additional questions and concerns in philosophy.

d) Students will learn to frame their own term paper topic in relation to the work discussed during the semester. They will also learn how to refine their topic in response to feedback from their peers and the instructor.

e) Students will learn to synthesize ideas from diverse philosophical sources to articulate, sustain, and defend a position of their choice.

3. Reading Material (all required reading):

George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, Philosophy in the Flesh (Basic Books, 1999)

Articles on E-reserve (E-RES) [password – flesh]*

*Please note that the articles on E-RES are required reading as much as the text book. Be sure you know how to use E-RES

4. General Expectations:

I request that you come to class having carefully read the material assigned for that week prior to your arrival. As we talk about the reading, I will seek opinions on various topics and will call upon individuals to answer questions relevant to the reading and lecture. Please be prepared to discuss the positions articulated in the text and to bring your own questions and concerns to everyone’s attention. Please also treat everybody in the class with decency and respect at all times.

5. Reading Assignments (provisional):

Week 1 (Jan 26-30): INTRODUCTION: Introductions, Chaps 1 and 2.
Week 2 (Feb 2-6):  THE BASIC THESIS: Chaps 1-5.
***Philosophical autobiography (or similar writing assignment) due (Feb 3rd)***

Week 3 (Feb 9-13):  THE BASIC THESIS: Chaps 6-8.

Week 4 (Feb 16-20):  WHAT PLANET ARE JOHNSON AND LAKOFF FROM? Melchert on Kant (E-RES), Preston (E-RES).


Week 6 (Mar 2-6):  CAUSE: Chap 11 (218-221), Hume (E-RES), Chap 11 (223-234).


Week 8 (Mar 16-20):  THE CHINESE ROOM: Descartes and Locke (E-RES), Searle (E-RES), Chap 12 (260-266).
***Mid-term study questions available***

***Take-home mid-term due (March 26th)***

SPRING BREAK

Week 10 (April 6-10):  TERM PAPER OUTLINES ***Presentation of term-paper outlines***

Week 11 (April 13-17):  EMBODIED AND EMBEDDED MINDS: Hayles (E-RES), Rowlands (E-RES).

***Draft of Term Paper Due, April 23rd***

Week 13 (April 27-May 1):  MORALITY: Chap 20, Tong (E-RES).

Week 14 (May 4-8):  POST-MODERN, SITUATED KNOWLEDGE: Haraway (E-RES), Chap 25.
***Term Paper Due. Tuesday, May 12th at 3pm***

6. Course Requirements:
a) Attendance, participation, and scholarly attitude will account for 10% of your grade (10 points). I will be taking attendance at the start of every class and I shall be keeping track of your participation during the class. If you need to miss a class at some point in the semester, please let me know by e-mail ahead of time if possible. If you cannot let me know before class, please e-mail me as soon as you can afterwards.

b) Philosophical autobiography (10 points). On Tuesday, Feb 3rd everyone should turn in a 3-page (minimum) ethical autobiography (or other similar writing assignment). The autobiography should be a reflection on the philosophies (and philosophers) that have become central to your thinking. This paper should develop the introduction to yourself that you present in class during the first week. The autobiography will be graded in terms of the clarity of its connections to the material you have studied at UM, the grasp of that material, and the narrative unity it expresses.

c) Class questions (20 points). From week 2 to week 14 I will expect students to come to class with a prepared question on each of the readings assigned that week. (Usually 2 or 3 questions total). During class, I will be rotating through the group using these questions as starting points for discussion. You are required to hand in your question (typed) at the end of each class period. The question needs to show evidence that you have done the assigned reading and recognized its significance.

d) Office visit (5 points). Everyone should make at least one office visit before spring break. You can use this visit for help with the reading test, to seek guidance on the term paper, or for any other reason. I need to check in with you at least once before the break to see how things are going. During this meeting I can talk with you about the overall expectations for the class and about ways that you might develop and enhance your philosophical skills.

e) Mid-term (25 points). There will be an open book, take-home midterm due on March 26th. The mid-term will test your understanding of the reading and lecture. Mid-terms will be graded according to your understanding of the primary text and the clarity and completeness of your answers.

f) Final Assignment (30 points). You must submit a 12-15 page, double-spaced, term paper discussing any topic raised during the semester. 5 of the 30 points will be awarded for the quality of the outline and presentation submitted during week 10. This outline must include a statement of the central thesis of your paper, paragraphs on each of the major sections of your paper, and reference to some of the secondary sources you will be using in each section. A draft of the term paper will be due on Thursday, April 23rd. You will receive feedback on this paper from the instructor. The final paper will be due by 3pm on Tuesday, May 12th as an attachment to an e-mail. (Please submit in MS Word or Wordperfect format). The term paper requires a bibliography that includes at least 8 relevant articles or texts not assigned in this class. These supplementary articles can be identified through discussions with the instructor or through keyword searches of the Philosopher’s Index, Academic Search Premier, or Infotrac at the library. Please use Chicago or MLA style in your term papers.
The term paper will be graded in terms of the level of understanding you show of the primary material in the class, the breadth of reading you have done over secondary material, the clarity and completeness of the position you develop, and the ability you show to anticipate objections to your position.

7. **Additional remarks:**

If you have any physical or learning disability that may make it hard for you to complete the requirements of this class as specified, let me know right away and I will be happy to make appropriate accommodating arrangements.

I expect complete academic integrity at every point of the course. Any academic dishonesty will lead to an automatic F for your semester grade and a meeting with the appropriate academic authorities. There will be no exceptions to this zero tolerance policy on academic dishonesty.

I encourage you to use my office hours. I am paid to help you with this class! Five or ten minutes of discussion can sometimes really help to clarify things. Use e-mail to stay in touch.

Finally, I ask you to contribute to the best learning environment possible as we share time together this semester. Classes can really click when a constructive momentum accumulates. This only happens when everybody contributes their best intellectual effort, good humor, and generosity of spirit. Please contribute your part and I’ll be contributing mine.