

Philosophy 704: First-Year Seminar

Fall 2010, Th 1:30-3:20

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This seminar is for all and only Yale first-year philosophy Ph.D. students. We will look at some important works from twentieth century philosophy. The focus will be on the development of metaphysics and epistemology throughout this period, but we will also discuss some philosophy of language and science. The goal of the class is to become familiar with doing philosophy, both written and in discussion, by discussing some classic texts.

Readings

Books, available at Labyrinth:

Martinich and Sosa, eds., *Analytic Philosophy*

Kripke, *Naming and Necessity*

All other readings will be available on the classes server.

Requirements

Reading for each meeting. Readings are listed below next to the date on which they will be discussed. We expect that everyone will come to class prepared to participate in discussion. Readings listed as “optional” really are that: we will not expect you to have read them. Optional readings are for further thought.

Written work: three 5-page papers (double-spaced, 12-point font, one-inch margins). *The page limit will be strictly enforced.* The goal of the papers is to clearly discuss an issue raised in some of the readings. You should explicate an argument or idea in one or more of the readings, and then briefly respond to it. Due dates are as follows:

Paper 1 due October 7.

Paper 2 due November 11.

Paper 3 due December 9.

Due dates will be strictly enforced.

Presentations: two 15-minute presentations during the semester. *The time limit will be strictly enforced.* Your job in these presentations is not to come up with a deep and original insight. The goal is to present the issues and arguments clearly, to generate discussion. Time permitting, you may wish to evaluate the arguments you choose to discuss, or end by raising some questions for class discussion; but you do not have to do this. You will be required to have a hand-out, to be distributed by email to all in the class *the day before* your presentation.

Class format: each meeting (aside from those without presentations) will begin with a student presentation, to be followed by 20-25 minutes of discussion. Then we will take a short break, after which we will resume for further discussion led by George or Jill.

Schedule

This is a tentative schedule. Details are subject to change during the semester.

Class 1, September 2. Frege and Russell: sense, reference, and denotation (*George*)

Frege, "On Sense and Reference" (in Martinich and Sosa)

Russell, "On Denoting" (Martinich and Sosa)

Optional: Frege, "The Thought: A Logical Inquiry" (Martinich and Sosa)

Class 2, September 9. Moore (*George*)

Moore, "The Refutation of Idealism"

Moore, "A Defense of Common Sense"

Moore, "Proof of an External World"

Langford, "The Notion of Analysis in Moore's Philosophy" (Martinich and Sosa)

Moore, "Reply to Langford" (Martinich and Sosa)

Class 3, September 16. Russell and early Wittgenstein: logical atomism (*George*)

Russell, selections from *The Problems of Philosophy*

Wittgenstein, selections from *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (Martinich and Sosa)

Russell, selections from "Lectures on Logical Atomism"

Class 4, September 23. Logical positivism and empiricism I: Ayer (*Jill*)

Ayer, selections from *Language, Truth, and Logic* (chapters 1-4)

Optional: Hempel, "Problems and Changes in the Empiricist Criterion of Meaning"

Class 5, September 30. Logical positivism and empiricism II: laws and explanation (*Jill*)

Carnap, "The Value of Laws: Explanation and Prediction"

Hempel, "Laws and their Role in Scientific Explanation" (Martinich and

Sosa)
Hempel, “The Thesis of Structural Identity”

Paper 1 due in class October 7. Papers may be on any of the readings discussed through class 5.

Class 6, October 7. Carnap and Quine: ontological commitment (*Fill*)

Carnap, “Empiricism, Semantics, and Ontology” (Martinich and Sosa)
Quine, “On What There Is” (Martinich and Sosa)
Paper 1 due in class.

Class 7, October 14. Quine: extensionalism and the rejection of meaning and modality (*George*)

Quine, “Two Dogmas of Empiricism” (Martinich and Sosa)
Quine, *Word and Object*, chapters 1–2
Optional: Quine, “Epistemology Naturalized” (Martinich and Sosa)

Class 8, October 21. E. Nagel and Fodor: reduction (*Fill*)

E. Nagel, “Issues in the Logic of Reductive Explanations”
Fodor, “Special Sciences”
Optional: Sellars, “Philosophy and the Scientific Image of Man” (Martinich and Sosa)

Class 9, October 28. Realism and instrumentalism (*Fill*)

Maxwell, “The Ontological Status of Theoretical Entities”
Van Fraassen, selections from *The Scientific Image*, “Arguments Concerning Scientific Realism”

Class 10, November 4. Goodman: induction and confirmation (*Fill*)

Goodman, *Fact, Fiction, and Forecast*, ch. 3: “The New Riddle of Induction” (Martinich and Sosa)

Paper 2 due in class November 11. Papers may be on any of the readings discussed in class 6 through class 10.

Class 11, November 11. Ordinary language philosophy (*George*)

P. F. Strawson, “On Referring” (Martinich and Sosa)
Grice, “Logic and Conversation”

Wittgenstein, selections from *Philosophical Investigations*
Paper 2 due in class.

Class 12, November 18. Kripke and Putnam: scientific essentialism and critique of Frege-Russell semantics (*George*)

Kripke, *Naming and Necessity*, lectures 1 and 2

Putnam, "The Meaning of 'Meaning'"

Paper 2 due in class.

Class 13, Dec. 2. Lewis and Fine: possibility, necessity, and essence (*George*)

Lewis, selections from *On the Plurality of Worlds*

Fine, "Essence and Modality"

Paper 3 due by email by 5pm on December 9. Papers may be on any of the readings from class 11 through class 13.