

PHIL3800
Metaphysics 形上學

Course Outline

Time: Wed 13:30-15:15

Location: LSK302

Tutorial time to be arranged

Course overview

Metaphysics is a building block of the philosophy discipline—it has been labelled as the “First Philosophy”. The subject matter of metaphysics is concerned with fundamental entities and relations that are of great philosophical significance. This course aims to address some of the central issues in contemporary metaphysics as follows:

1. Ontology
2. Personal Identity
3. God
4. Free Will
5. Mental/Physical

Advisory to Majors: to be taken in year 2 or above.

Learning activities

1. Lecture: one 2-hour session every week.
2. Tutorial: one 2-hour session every two weeks.
3. Reading: around 20-30 pages of required reading every week.
4. Assignments: paper and exam.

Assessment scheme

Task nature	Weight
Tutorial (10% for one presentation, 20% for four discussions)	30%
Paper (2,500-3,500 words in English or 5,000-7,000 words in Chinese; free to choose any topic discussed in this course)	30%
Exam (November 29 th , in class)	40%

Late submission policy

The term paper is due on November 10th (Friday). Paper submitted late will be downgraded a subgrade per day (for example, an ‘A’ paper that is one day late receives an ‘A-’, two days late ‘B+’, three days late ‘B’, and so on). I will not accept any papers later than November 17th (Friday).

Required resources

Earl Conee & Theodore Sider, *Riddles of Existence: A Guided Tour of Metaphysics*, 2nd Edition, Oxford University Press, 2015.

John W. Carroll & Ned Markosian, *An Introduction to Metaphysics*, Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Other selected readings

Course schedule

Week	Topics	Required reading	Tutorials
1	Ontology	"Ch. 9: Properties", <i>An Introduction to Metaphysics</i>	
2	Personal Identity (1)	"Ch. 1: Personal Identity", <i>Riddles of Existence</i>	
3	Personal Identity (2)	Parfit, "The Unimportance of Personal Identity"	
4	God (1)	"Ch. 4: God", <i>Riddles of Existence</i>	
5	God (2)	Mackie, "Evil and Omnipotence"	
6	Free Will (1)	"Ch. 6: Free Will and Determinism", <i>Riddles of Existence</i>	Williams, "The Self and the Future" (the week of Oct. 9)
7	Free Will (2)	Frankfurt, "Alternate Possibilities and Moral Responsibility"	van Inwagen, "The Fine-Tuning Argument" (the week of Oct. 16)
8	Mental/Physical (1)	"Ch. 6: Mental States", <i>An Introduction to Metaphysics</i>	
9	Mental/Physical (2)	Papineau, "The Rise of Physicalism"	Frankfurt, "Freedom of the Will and the Concept of a Person" (the week of Oct. 30)
10	Mental/Physical (3)	Smart, "Sensations and Brain Processes"	
11	Mental/Physical (4)	Putnam, "The Nature of Mental States"	Levine, "Materialism and Qualia: The Explanatory Gap" (the week of Nov. 13)

12	Review		
13	Exam		Kim, "The Myth of Nonreductive Materialism" (the week of Nov. 27)

Details of course website

Reading materials, assignments, and lecture notes will be put in a Dropbox folder. The link to this folder is posted on Blackboard.

Contact details for teacher(s) or TA(s)

Teacher	
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TA	
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Academic honesty and plagiarism

Attention is drawn to University policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and to the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations. Details may be found at <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/>

With each assignment, students will be required to submit a signed **declaration** that they are aware of these policies, regulations, guidelines and procedures. For group projects, all students of the same group should be asked to sign the declaration.

For assignments in the form of a computer-generated document that is principally text-based and submitted via VeriGuide, the statement, in the form of a receipt, will be issued by the system upon students' uploading of the soft copy of the assignment. Assignments without the receipt will not be graded by teachers. Only the final version of the assignment should be submitted via VeriGuide.