

PHI 3800 Metaphysics
2018-2019 T2
(Tentative Course Outlines)

Course Description:

This course is intended to examine some of the central problems in metaphysics from a contemporary, analytic perspective. It is assumed that each student already possesses a basic understanding of logic and analytic skills, though this course also aims to develop such skills through rigorous examination of the arguments and views discussed.

Topics:

- I. Introduction
- II. Existence and Universals
- III. The Mental and The Physical
- IV. Personal Identity
- V. Freedom of the Will
- VI. Causality
- VII. Conceptual Schemes, Relativism and Realism

Some important points to note:

- *Cuforum* will be used for important announcements and distributing notes and other course materials. Please self-register immediately at *Cuforum* if your name has not been added automatically.
- Tutorials are *mandatory*. Full details on tutorial rules and learning activities will be explained in the first tutorial (in the 3rd week).
- Though no attendance will be taken, you are expected to attend all class lectures. You're also required to read at least the minimum number of suggested readings for each topic.

**** Term-End Test****

- Purposes: To provide incentives for you to achieve a broader understanding of metaphysics. (Translation: to make you read more than what is needed for tutorials and writing the essay). My aim is not to make things tougher for you than necessary but to help you review what you have learnt and to think through them.
- Term-end Test: *Test questions* will cover the lectures (not just the notes), readings and tutorial materials. Study questions will be given before the test.
- Eligibility Rules for Make-up Test. Having chosen this course, there is no reason why you should find the time of the term-end test inconvenient (as it is set to be held during the *last lecture session*, i.e. on April 18). Unless you have a *compelling reason* for your absence, no make-up test will be arranged if you fail to show up for the test. Even if you have such a reason, you are still required to apply in writing with documentary

evidence to the Director of Registry Services for permission for absence in order to be eligible to apply for a make-up test. Such application will not be granted if made with unnecessary delay.

Tutorials:

Each student will do a presentation at least once and write (a short) synopsis of all tutorial reading assignments. There will be six tutorials, including a briefing session (in which a paper will be discussed but there will be no presentation). You are expected to attend each tutorial with a synopsis of the assigned reading (or a PowerPoint outline for presentation, if it's your turn to present), some suggested questions for discussion.

Assessment:

Grading will be based on the following: (the weights are subject to slight adjustment, each within 5%)

1. Tutorial performance: 30%
2. Term-end Test 30%. (To be held on April 18, usual class time.)
3. Term Essay 35%. (*Guidelines on Essay* will be given in due course.)

*Students may earn up to a bonus credit worth up to 5% of final grade by *active* participation in class discussion (but *not* by just being present in class).

Schedule: 'Tutorial' indicates the weeks in which a tutorial will take place.

Week	Dates of Class Sessions	Remarks
1	Jan 10	Lectures
2	17	Lectures
3	24	Lectures. Tutorial #1 (briefing session)
4	31	Lectures.
5	Feb 7	New Year vacation
6	14	Lectures. Tutorial #2
7	21	Lectures.
8	28	Lectures. Tutorial #3
9	Mar 7	Lectures.

10	14	Lectures. Tutorial #4
11	21	Lectures.
12	28	Lectures. Tutorial #5
13	April 4	Lectures.
14	11	Lectures. Tutorial #6
15	18	Term-End Test

Statement on Academic Honesty

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/>.

Selected Bibliography (available at Cuforum, Department course web-page)

Topic-specific lists of references and suggested reading will be given in lectures notes.

Most books in the bibliography are reserved in NA library. Mr. Shen will put copies of some of the suggested readings in the rack at the department (next to the elevator). Be considerate and return the material borrowed to the rack promptly.