

FACULTY OF PHILOSOPHY  
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD



# PHILOSOPHY LECTURES PROSPECTUS: GRADUATE CLASSES

TRINITY TERM 2020

*Graduate classes in Trinity Term 2020 are being delivered by Microsoft Teams, unless otherwise indicated. Graduate students will receive, by the start of week 1, invitations on Microsoft Teams for all the classes available to them.*

**NOTES:**

- Every effort is made to ensure that the information contained in this Prospectus is accurate at the start of term, but sometimes errors persist. If you think you have found a mistake, please contact James Knight ([james.knight@philosophy.ox.ac.uk](mailto:james.knight@philosophy.ox.ac.uk)).
- Times given here are UK times. Students attending remotely in other timezones should adjust their times accordingly.

## Graduate Classes

Graduate classes are, except where otherwise indicated, intended for the Faculty's BPhil and MSt students. Under the initial arrangements for the Covid pandemic, blanket access is granted for the classes below to *all* the Philosophy graduate student cohorts (BPhils, MSts in both the specialist MSt programmes, and DPhils) unless marked in the heading, by "*Restricted access*", when details will be given. *Unless otherwise indicated, classes will run on Microsoft Teams.*

Other people may attend, and are welcome, subject to the permission of the class-giver(s) and compatibility of software. The Faculty does not have the resources to help outside parties with the IT necessary to do this.

Online classes present particular difficulties: delays in transmission can cause conversation to become fragmented, and without visual cues in the room it can be hard to know whether one is about to interrupt. Students attending classes should be patient and considerate of others, and abide by any house rules given by the class-giver.

Graduate students will need to check whether it is possible to count towards their attendance requirement any class of less than eight weeks' duration. Course handbooks or the Faculty's graduate office should be consulted for guidance.

### **BPhil Pro-Seminar: History of Philosophy**

*Restricted access* - available to particular groups of BPhil students

The BPhil Pro-Seminar is compulsory for 1<sup>st</sup> year BPhil students and available only to them. The year group will be divided into smaller groups, each of which will have four weeks studying ancient philosophy, and four weeks studying early modern philosophy. Class-givers will contact the members of their groups, specifying readings, and arranging the online classes.

### **Stoic Ethics**

Prof Simon Shogry – Th. 11 – 1

[Join Stoic Ethics: meeting 1 \(Microsoft Teams Meeting\)](#)

**Please click the link above to join our first seminar. Those who are planning to attend should also email me.**

#### Seminar Description:

This seminar is designed to introduce students to the ethical theory of the ancient Stoics and to current controversies in its interpretation.

No prior study of Stoicism or ancient philosophy is required. Philosophy graduate students at all levels and areas of interest welcome.

The first four weeks will focus on the basic principles of the Stoic system: its eudaimonism and axiology, as well as its account of the *telos* or ethical goal. In the second half of the course, we will turn our attention to more advanced topics and subjects of ongoing scholarly disagreement. To this end, we will examine the early Stoic account of the emotions (*pathê*), friendship (*philia*), and sexual love (*erôs*), and then move on to the ethical theory of the dissident Stoic Posidonius, who seems to have disagreed with his predecessors on the structure of the human soul, and so on how it should be educated and what its excellent condition or virtue consists in.

While I will take the lead in presenting the background material each week, this seminar is designed to help you develop your own philosophical and textual skills. Active participation in each session is therefore essential, and there will be opportunities for students to lead discussion and make a presentation.

**Kant**

Dr Robert Watt – W. 9 - 11

Please refer to the Canvas site for information on this class.

## Wittgenstein

*Restricted access* - see first para

Prof Bill Child – M. 2 – 4

The class is intended in the first instance for Philosophy BPhil and MSt students. Others may also be admitted if numbers are manageable. Please e-mail me ([bill.child@univ.ox.ac.uk](mailto:bill.child@univ.ox.ac.uk)) in advance if you would like to participate in these classes. If you are a Philosophy BPhil or MSt student, you are entitled to participate: but it will help me to know likely numbers in advance and I will probably need to know your name and contact details in order to be able to invite you to take part online. If you are not a BPhil or MSt student, I will get back to you before the first class to let you know if there will be space for you to attend.

The class will deal with the development of Wittgenstein's treatment of a series of issues concerning subjectivity and the self that feature prominently in his work from the *Tractatus* and *Notebooks 1914-16* to *Philosophical Investigations*. They will be focus on two main themes: solipsism, and the first person. And they will explore two strands in Wittgenstein's work on each of those themes. (i) In his treatment of solipsism: (a) his discussion of solipsism as a general metaphysical view (e.g. 'the world is my world' (*Tractatus*) or 'the problem discussed by realists, idealists, and solipsists' (*Blue Book*); and (b) his discussion of solipsism as a view in the philosophy of mind in particular (e.g. 'Only I feel real pain, only I really see (or hear)' or 'Only my own experiences are real'). (ii) In Wittgenstein's treatment of the first person: (c) his discussion of the meaning or function of the first-person pronoun, 'I'; and (d) his discussion of the first-person point of view, or subjectivity, more generally.

The classes will operate online. At the time of writing, the precise arrangements are still being developed. I will post further information on the Philosophy Faculty WebLearn site in due course.

There will be a small amount of compulsory reading each week: mostly from Wittgenstein's texts. Participants will be expected to have done this reading before the class, and will be invited to e-mail, before each class, with one or two questions for elaboration/explanation/discussion. The lists below set out the anticipated topic and essential readings for each class. (A longer version on WebLearn includes, in addition, a select list of optional supplementary readings.) I would be happy to discuss possible further readings with anyone who wants to make a more detailed study of any of these topics.

Week 1 Solipsism in the *Tractatus*: 'The world is my world'

Essential reading:

L. Wittgenstein *Notebooks 1914-16* – 23.5.15; 1.8.16 to 12.8.16; 2.9.16; 12.10.16-17.10.16

L. Wittgenstein *Tractatus* 5.541-5.5421, 5.6-5.641

Peter Sullivan 'The "Truth" in Solipsism and Wittgenstein's Rejection of the A Priori', *European Journal of Philosophy*, 4:2, 1996, pp. 195-219.

Week 2: Philosophical Remarks I: 'only the present experience has reality'

Essential reading:

L. Wittgenstein *Philosophical Remarks* part V, pp. 80-87; part VII, pp. 97-104

David Stern, *Wittgenstein on Mind and Language*, Oxford: OUP, 1995, ch. 5.

Week 3 Philosophical Remarks II: 'I', the self, and immediate experience

Essential reading:

L. Wittgenstein *Philosophical Remarks* part VI, pp. 88-96.

*Wittgenstein and the Vienna Circle: Conversations recorded by Friedrich Waismann*, ed. B. McGuinness, Oxford: Blackwell, 1979, pp. 49-50

Week 4 Wittgenstein's Lectures, Feb-March 1933: '2 kinds of use of "I"'

Essential reading:

L. Wittgenstein *Wittgenstein Lectures, Cambridge 1930-1933, From the Notes of G. E. Moore*

eds D. Stern, B. Rogers and G. Citron, Cambridge: CUP, 2016, pp. 266-304

Week 5 The Blue Book I: Solipsism and the Philosophy of Mind

Essential reading:

L. Wittgenstein *The Blue and Brown Books* pp. 44-74

Week 6 The Blue Book II: The use of 'I' as subject and the use of 'I' as object

Essential reading:

L. Wittgenstein *The Blue and Brown Books* pp. 44-74

Week 7 'Notes for Lectures on Private Experience and Sense Data'

Essential reading:

L. Wittgenstein 'Notes for Lectures on Private Experience and Sense Data' in *Wittgenstein: Philosophical Occasions*.

Week 8 'I', the Self, Subjectivity, and Solipsism in Philosophical Investigations

Essential reading:

L. Wittgenstein *Philosophical Investigations* §§398-412

### The Practical Self

Prof Anil Gomes and Prof Matthew Parrott – F. 2 – 4

A recurring theme in modern philosophy has been the idea that there is some connection between being self-conscious and being related to an objective world. This seminar will explore versions of this idea as they arise in early modern and contemporary philosophy. Does self-consciousness require that one believe or know of an objective world? Does it require that we experience an objective world? Or is the connection less straightforward? We shall consider these questions through the lens of Lichtenberg's enigmatic response to Descartes: 'One should say *it is thinking*, just as one says, *it is lightning*. To say *cogito* is already too much as soon as one translates it as *I am thinking*. To assume the I, to postulate it, is a practical requirement'.

There is no required reading for the first seminar but those who want to get some background to the issues could read P.F. Strawson, *The Bounds of Sense*, pp.97-112 or Bernard Williams, *Descartes*, pp.79-85.

### Metaphysics

Prof Ofra Magidor – W. 2 – 4

In this seminar we will discuss a range of contemporary articles on the issues of identity, composition, and constitution. A provisional plan is as follows (but note that this might change as we go along):

**Week 1:** Ofra Magidor, 'Arguments by Leibniz's Law in metaphysics'

**Week 2:** John Hawthorne, 'Identity'

**Week 3:** Karen Bennet, 'Composition colocation and metaontology'

**Week 4:** Holly Kanteen, 'Why compositional nihilism dissolved puzzles'

**Week 5:** Dan Korman, 'Arbitrariness' (chapter 9 of his *Objects, Nothing out of the Ordinary*)

**Week 6:** Ross Cameron, 'Composition as identity doesn't settle the special composition question'

**Week 7:** Lee Walters, 'Are the statue and the clay mutual parts?'

**Week 8:** Nick Jones, 'Multiple constitution'

Copies of all the readings will be distributed to students. Students are strongly encouraged to read the papers before each meeting (though this is not a strict condition on attending). The provisional plan would be to start each week with a presentation of the paper, followed by discussion.

## Epistemology

Prof Timothy Williamson – T. 2 – 4

The class will be based on papers available on Professor Williamson's webpage, under 'Papers for downloading'. The bibliographies of those papers contain much further reading.

Week 1	Norms of belief and norms of cognitive systems I Reading: 'Epistemic ambivalence'
Week 2	Norms of belief and norms of cognitive systems II Reading: 'Epistemic ambivalence'
Week 3	Evidence and dispositions Reading: 'E = K, but what about R?'
Week 4	Outright belief and probability I Reading: 'Knowledge, credence, and the strength of belief'
Week 5	Outright belief and probability II Reading: 'Knowledge, credence, and the strength of belief'
Week 6	Modelling KK failure Reading: 'The KK principle and rotational symmetry'
Week 7	The distinction between the a priori and the a posteriori Reading: 'How deep is the distinction between the a priori and the a posteriori?' and 'Reply to Boghossian on the distinction between the a priori and the a posteriori'
Week 8	Intuition, understanding and the a priori Reading: 'Reply to Boghossian on intuition, understanding, and the a priori' and 'Boghossian on intuition, understanding, and the a priori once again'



### **Philosophy of Mathematics**

*This class will be taught on Zoom – see details below.*

Prof Joel David Hamkins and Dr Wesley Wrigley – T. 11 – 1

The seminar will be co-taught by Professor Hamkins and Dr. Wrigley. All sessions will be held online using the Zoom meeting platform. Updated information about how to access the seminar and the readings will be posted at:

<http://jdh.hamkins.org/philosophy-of-mathematics-graduate-oxford-tt20/>

The Zoom meetings will not be recorded or posted online and will only be available to live participants.

The broad theme for the seminar will be incompleteness, including the incompleteness of our mathematical theories, as exhibited in Gödel's incompleteness theorems, and also the incompleteness of our mathematical domains, as exhibited in mathematical potentialism.

The first four sessions, in weeks 1-4, will be led by Dr. Wrigley and concentrate on his current research on the incompleteness of mathematics and the philosophy of Kurt Gödel. Weeks 5-8 will be led by Professor Hamkins, who will concentrate on topics in potentialism.

Discussion will be based on the following readings:

Week 1 (28th April) Kurt Gödel "Some basic theorems on the foundations of mathematics and their implications (\*1951)", in: Feferman, S. et al. (eds) Kurt Gödel: Collected Works Volume III, pp.304-323. OUP (1995). And Wrigley "Gödel's Disjunctive Argument" (to be circulated in advance.)

Week 2 (5th May) Donald Martin, "Gödel's Conceptual Realism", Bulletin of Symbolic Logic 11:2 (2005), 207- 224 <https://www.istor.org/stable/1556750>. And Wrigley "Conceptual Platonism" (to be circulated in advance.)

Week 3 (12th May) Kurt Gödel "What is Cantor's Continuum Problem? (\*1964)", in: Feferman, S. et al. (eds) Kurt Gödel: Collected Works Volume II, pp.254-270. OUP (1990). And Wrigley "Intuition and Reflection Principles" (to be circulated in advance.)

Week 4 (19th May) Bertrand Russell "The Regressive Method of Discovering the Premises of Mathematics (1907)", in: Moore, G. (ed) The Collected Papers of Bertrand Russell, Volume 5, pp.571-580. Routledge (2014). And Wrigley "Quasi-Scientific Methods of Justification in Set Theory" (to be circulated in advance.)

Week 5 (26th May) Øystein Linnebo & Stewart Shapiro, "Actual and potential infinity", Noûs 53:1 (2019), 160-191, <https://doi.org/10.1111/nous.12208>. And Øystein Linnebo. "Putnam on Mathematics as Modal Logic," In: Hellman G., Cook R. (eds) Hilary Putnam on Logic and Mathematics. Outstanding Contributions to Logic, vol 9. Springer, Cham (2018). [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-96274-0\\_14](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-96274-0_14)

Week 6 (2nd June) The topic this week is: tools for analyzing the modal logic of a potentialist system. This seminar will be based around the slides for my talk "Potentialism and implicit actualism in the foundations of mathematics," given for the Jowett Society in Oxford last year.

The slides are available at: <http://jdh.hamkins.org/potentialism-and-implicit-actualism-in-the-foundations-of-mathematics-jowett-society-oxford-february-2019>. Interested readers may also wish to consult the more extensive slides for the three-lecture workshop I gave on potentialism at the Hejnice Winter School in 2018; the slides are available at <http://jdh.hamkins.org/set-theoretic-potentialism-ws2018>. My intent is to concentrate on the nature and significance of control statements, such as buttons, switches, ratchets and railyards, for determining the modal logic of a potentialist system.

Week 7 (9th June) Joel David Hamkins and Øystein Linnebo. “The modal logic of set-theoretic potentialism and the potentialist maximality principles”. Review of Symbolic Logic (2019). <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1755020318000242>. arXiv:1708.01644. <http://wp.me/p5M0LV-1zC>. This week, we shall see how the control statements allow us to analyze precisely the modal logic of various conceptions of set-theoretic potentialism.

Week 8 (16th June) Joel David Hamkins, “Arithmetic potentialism and the universal algorithm,” arxiv: 1801.04599, available at <http://jdh.hamkins.org/arithmic-potentialism-and-the-universal-algorithm>. Please feel free to skip over the more technical parts of this paper. In the seminar discussion, we shall concentrate on the basic idea of arithmetic potentialism, including a full account of the universal algorithm and the significance of it for potentialism, as well as remarks of the final section of the paper.

### **Feminist Philosophy**

*Restricted access* - email class-giver specifying course in order to request access

Prof Mari Mikkola – T. 3 – 5

Everyday and feminist philosophical debates concerning pornography are fraught with many difficult questions. These include: What is pornography? What does pornography do (if anything at all)? Is the consumption of pornography a harmless private matter, or does pornography violate women’s civil rights? What, if anything, should legally be done about pornography? Can there be feminist pornography? Answering these questions is complicated by confusion over the conceptual and political commitments of different anti- and pro-pornography positions, and whether these positions are even in tension with one another: different people comprehend the concept of *pornography* differently and easily end up talking past one another. This seminar looks at contemporary philosophical debates that deal with pornography from a feminist perspective. We will discuss various philosophical positions on pornography that are found in ethics, aesthetics, feminist philosophy, political philosophy, epistemology, and social ontology. Topics include: whether pornography subordinates and silences women; free speech versus hate speech debates; whether pornography produces a distinct kind of knowledge; whether it objectifies women and if so, in what sense; how should we think about the aesthetics of pornography; what difference do non-heteronormative, ‘female-friendly’ and/ or queer pornography make to our philosophical treatment of the issue. We will be mainly focusing on two recent texts: papers collected in *Beyond Speech: Pornography and Analytic Feminist Philosophy*, ed. Mari Mikkola (NY: OUP, 2017) and *Pornography: A Philosophical Introduction* by Mari Mikkola (NY: OUP, 2019).

Those taking part in the seminar must read the following background texts before the start of term:

- Langton, Rae. 1993. "Speech Acts and Unspeakable Acts." *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 22: 293-330.
- Mikkola, M. *Pornography: A Philosophical Introduction* (NY: OUP, 2019), chapter 1.

Readings to be discussed during week 1 are as follows (full syllabus to be distributed at the start of TT20):

- Antony, Louise. 2017. "Be What I Say: Authority Versus Power in Pornography." In *Beyond Speech: Pornography and Analytic Feminist Philosophy*, ed. Mari Mikkola, 59-90. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Mikkola, M. *Pornography: A Philosophical Introduction* (NY: OUP, 2019), chapter 2

### **Philosophy of Cognitive Science**

Prof Philipp Koralus – W. 11 – 1

The seminar will be a graduate-level introduction to the philosophy of cognitive science. We will read both philosophical and scientific literature. Some of the likely topics covered will be the conceptual foundations of treating mind/brains as information processing devices, moral judgment, reasoning, cognitive architecture, and attention. We will also consider how some of these topics bear on artificial intelligence.

### **Recent Kantian Ethics**

Dr Jeremy Fix and Dr Edward Lamb – Th. 2 – 4

### **Democratic Public Discourse**

*This course will run on Zoom - contact the class-giver to give your details (email address and what Philosophy course you are on)*

Dr Maxime Lepoutre – Th. 9 – 11

Public discourse is a central part of democratic life. Accordingly, over the past three decades, political philosophers have placed inclusive deliberation at the heart of the democratic ideal. In the struggle against injustice, they suggest, people should bring forward their concerns, share their experiences, denounce abhorrent conventions, and demand justifications of others. Yet actual public discourse typically falls well short of the deliberative ideal. Many are excluded, formally or informally, from public debate. And those who are included frequently deceive, vilify, or rage at each other. Is the deliberative ideal therefore too distant from the actual world? What should we do in response to the 'non-ideal' features of actual public discourse?

To address these questions, this class will examine democratic public discourse, its theoretical value, and the ethical challenges it faces in non-ideal conditions. Topics will include: What is the significance of deliberation in the democratic ideal? Can inclusive deliberation produce knowledge? Is deliberation compatible with large-scale democracy? What place does scientific expertise have in democratic discourse? And what should we do about the existence of anger, hypocrisy, and hate in public discourse?

A full syllabus can be found [here](#).

### **Class outline**

**Week 1.** The Deliberative Ideal

**Week 2.** The Epistemic Value of Deliberation

**Week 3.** The Scale of Deliberation

**Week 4.** Communicating Science in Democracy

**Week 5.** Public Hypocrisy

**Week 6.** Anger in Public Discourse

**Week 7.** Hate Speech

**Week 8.** Countering Hate Speech with More Speech

### **Legal Philosophy**

Dr Kevin Tobia (*weeks 1 to 7*) – F. 2 – 4

### **Greek reading class**

Prof Terence Irwin – Th. 2 – 4

This class is intended for people who have learned elementary Greek, and would like to improve their reading of philosophical texts. It is not a 'reading group' of the sort that reads and discusses an individual text in detail.

We will try to read two series of passages: (1) Passages for unseen translation. You should try to translate them, giving yourself a definite time limit, and without any aids (dictionaries, grammars, translations etc). Then you can check your translation. Even if this is a difficult exercise at first, it is a good way to improve one's skills in translation. (2) Passages for prepared translation. You should try to translate them, using aids other than translations, and then check them.

Each week I will provide a translation of the relevant passages, and comment on passages that raise special difficulties (of grammar, syntax, text, translation, interpretation). I will not be trying to give a complete account of their philosophical significance, but simply to address the main questions that might arise for someone who is trying to translate the texts.

All the texts will be (as far as I can tell) philosophically interesting. The degree of difficulty in the Greek will vary. As far as possible, I will try to begin with the easier texts. Plato is helpful on this point, since the dialogues that are usually thought to be earlier are also somewhat easier Greek.

Most of the texts will be chosen from Plato and Aristotle, but I will also include some post-Aristotelian texts. My current thoughts about the prepared texts are these:

Plato, *Gorgias*

Plato, *Republic*

Plato, *Theaetetus*

Plato, *Laws*

Aristotle, *Ethics*

Aristotle, *Metaphysics*

Plutarch, *De Stoicorum Repugnantiis, Adversus Colotem*

Epictetus, *Discourses*

Simplicius, *On the Categories*

There are more than eight texts here. I would be pleased to add or subtract if participants in the class express preferences (either among the texts I have listed, or about other texts).

I haven't offered a class exactly like this before, and hence the plans are tentative. A further complication arises from the necessity of remote instruction. At the moment, I'm unsure how much of the class can or should be conducted *viva voce*. Initially, I'll try to arrange it so that it can all be put in writing. People can send me questions or comments through Canvas or email. In due course I'll try to see how we can use Teams for more spontaneous discussion.

Please look at Canvas later in Week 0 for further details. If you have questions, please write.