

## **Philosophy 595: Pro-seminar; Fall 2017**

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As an entry point into graduate studies in philosophy at Rutgers, this course aims to accomplish three things. First, it will provide an introduction to some core topics in contemporary analytic philosophy, including language, mind, metaphysics, epistemology, and value. Second, it will provide you with a chance to practice presenting, discussing, and writing philosophy. Third, we will discuss – and implement – practical issues in professional development.

### **Course Requirements**

- Active reading, including weekly posting online (see below) and engaged participation in class (10% of total grade).
- 5 in-class presentations (20% of total grade).  
Presentation includes 2-3 questions for discussion with a readable 1 p. handout.
- One short paper (4-6 pp.; c.1000 words; 10% of total grade).  
Identify, explain and critically evaluate the primary argument for one claim from one reading.
- A final presentation (30 minutes presentation; 30 minutes discussion; 25% of total grade).  
A 'dry run' of your final paper; it should engage critically with and build in a productive way on one of the assigned readings, and use a handout or powerpoint.
- A final paper (15-25 pp.; c. 7500 words; 25% of total grade).  
Ideally, a paper with the shape and feel of a publishable article.

By 9 PM Tuesday, everyone not leading discussion on a given paper should post a question about that paper on the weekly forum. The presenter for that paper should incorporate these questions into their plan for discussion, by digesting, synthesizing and extending (*not* just restating!) them.

We will begin class with 40 minutes of discussion about professional development. After a brief break, either Andy or Liz will provide a quick overview of the general topic raised by the week's readings, followed by the presenter-led discussion. (We'll take another break about an hour later.)

One of our primary goals for the course is for you to develop a strong sense of philosophical professionalism and community. This means that we expect you to read actively in advance of each meeting, engage respectfully and reflectively with each others' questions and ideas in class, and solicit and provide feedback to one another informally outside of class.

One important aspect of professional conduct is crediting others for their ideas and assistance. You should familiarize yourself with and abide by RU's policy on academic and intellectual integrity: [academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-policy](http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-policy)  
Another important aspect of becoming a professional philosopher is learning how to balance your professional obligations with your responsibility to take care of yourself as a person. It is not always obvious or easy how to do this; some campus resources are CAPS ([rhscaps.rutgers.edu](http://rhscaps.rutgers.edu)) and Scarlet Listeners ([scarletlisteners.com](http://scarletlisteners.com)). If you need accommodations for the class because of a learning disability or another reason, please have the Office of Disability Services ([ods.rutgers.edu](http://ods.rutgers.edu)) get in touch with us.

## **Schedule and Readings**

As with all things in life, our schedule is provisional. All readings are available on the Sakai course website.

### **Sep 7 Introduction**

*Expectations and Strategies for Getting a PhD*

## **Language(s), Analysis, and Metaphysics**

### **Sep 14 (EC)**

*Cultivating Colleagues, Mentors, and Advisors*

Frege "On Sense and Reference", "Function and Concept" [Caley]

Russell: "On Denoting" [Zach]

### **Sep 21 (AE)**

*Participating in Seminars and Colloquia*

Carnap: "Empiricism, Semantics, and Ontology" [Danny]

Thomasson: "Answerable and Unanswerable Questions" [Savannah]

### **Sep 28 (EC)**

*Delivering Presentations*

Grice: "Logic and Conversation" [Caley]

Stalnaker: "Assertion" [Zach]

### **Oct 5 (EC)**

*How to Go to Conferences*

Lewis: "Scorekeeping in a Language Game" [Danny]

Roberts: "Context in Dynamic Interpretation" [Caley]

### **Oct 12 (AE)**

*Commenting at Conferences*

Lewis: "Languages and Language" [Dee]

Millikan: "Language Conventions Made Simple" [Caley]

### **Oct 19 (AE)**

*Chairing Sessions*

Russell: "The World of Universals" [Zach]

Lewis: "New Work for a Theory of Universals" [Savannah]

### **Oct 26 (AE)**

*Writing a Publishable Paper*

Thomson: "The Statue and the Clay" [Savannah]

Lewis: "Many But Almost One" [Dee]

## **Epistemology, Mind, and Value**

### **Nov 2 (EC)**

*How Philosophy Gets Published*

Moore: "A Defense of Common Sense" [Danny]

Neta: "S knows that p" [Zach]

**Nov 9 (AE)**

*Writing Referee Reports*

Gettier: "Is Justified True Belief Knowledge?" [Zach]

Zagzebski: "The Inescapability of Gettier Problems" [Danny]

**Nov 16 (EC)**

*Writing a Dissertation*

Fodor: "Why There Still Has to Be a Language of Thought" [Savannah]

Dennett: "True Believers" [Dee]

**Short paper due**

**Nov 23 NO CLASS: Thanksgiving**

**Nov 30 (AE)**

*Open topic/discussion*

Gendler: "On the Epistemic Costs of Implicit Bias" [Savannah]

Schwitzgebel: "Acting Contrary to Our Professed Beliefs" [Dee]

**Dec 7 (EC)**

*Open topic/discussion*

Thomson: "Killing, Letting Die, and the Trolley Problem" [Danny]

Annas: "Applying Virtue to Ethics" [Dee]

**Dec 14 Mini-Conference**

**Jan 16 Long paper due**