

THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY
Phil 3601G: Metaphysics
(formerly Phil 325F)
Winter 2012

INSTRUCTOR: Andrew Botterell

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OFFICE HOURS: TBA

CLASS TIMES & LOCATION: M 2:30 – 3:30 p.m. W 2:30 – 4:30 p.m. Talbot College 342

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Broadly speaking, metaphysics is the study of what there is. This course will focus on some metaphysical questions that have to do with modality, i.e., with necessity and possibility. We will begin with a discussion of the nature of modality, and investigate the notion of a possible world. We will then turn to discussions of essentialism, personal identity, freewill and determinism, and determinism and responsibility.

REQUIRED TEXTS

- Saul Kripke, *Naming and Necessity* (HUP)
- Gary Watson, *Free Will* 2nd. ed. (OUP)
- UWO coursepack
- Online readings

REQUIREMENTS

- a midterm exam worth 30%
- a 12-15 page paper worth 50%
- class participation, problem sets, and homework, worth 20%

PAPER SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

- Late papers will be penalized 2% per day late to a maximum of 20%. No late papers will be accepted after the last day of classes without approval from your Academic Counsellor.

AUDIT: Students wishing to audit the course should consult with the instructor prior to or during the first week of classes.

DEPARTMENT POLICIES: Those Department of Philosophy Policies governing the conduct, standards, and expectations for student participation in Philosophy courses is available in the Undergraduate section of the Department of Philosophy website at:

<http://uwo.ca/philosophy/undergraduate/policies.html>

It is the responsibility of students to read and understand the policies set out by the Senate and by the Department of Philosophy. Ignorance of these policies cannot be used as grounds for appeal.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF READINGS & ASSIGNMENTS

NB: These readings are not introductions to philosophy; rather, they are examples of it. Consequently, some are quite difficult, and all require your undivided attention. If you have trouble understanding what an author is saying, please don't hesitate to ask.

Week of	Topic	Readings
Jan. 9	Modality	Kripke, <i>Naming and Necessity</i> , Lecture I
Jan. 16	Modality	Kripke, <i>Naming and Necessity</i> , Lecture II
Jan. 23	Possible Worlds: What Are They?	Stalnaker, "Possible Worlds" Lewis, excerpts from <i>On the Plurality of Worlds</i> Bricker, "Concrete Possible Worlds"
Jan. 30	Possible Worlds: How are They?	Kaplan, "Transworld Heir Lines" Plantinga, "Transworld Identity or Worldbound Individuals?" Lycan, "The Trouble with Possible Worlds"
Feb. 6	Identity & Essentialism	Black, "The Identity of Indiscernibles" <i>Naming and Necessity</i> , Lecture III
Feb. 13	Contingent Identity	Yablo, "Identity, Essence, and Indiscernability" Gibbard, "Contingent Identity"
Feb. 20	READING WEEK: NO CLASS	
Feb. 27	The Puzzle of Change through Time	Lewis, excerpts from <i>On the Plurality of Worlds</i> Haslanger, "Persistence, Change, and Explanation"
Mar. 5	Personal Identity	Locke, "Of Identity and Diversity" Parfit, excerpts from <i>Reasons and Persons</i> Brison, "Outliving Oneself"
Mar. 12	Personal Identity	Olson, "Was I Ever a Fetus?" Lewis, "Survival and Identity"
Mar. 19	Identity, Race, and Sex	Overall, "Sex-Gender Transitions and Life-Changing Aspirations" Haslanger, "Sex and Gender: (What) Are They? (What) Do We Want Them to Be?" Mills, "But What Are You <i>Really</i> ?"
Mar. 26	Freewill and Determinism	Van Inwagen, "An Argument for Incompatibilism" Lewis, "Are We Free to Break the Laws?"
April 2	Freewill and Determinism	Chisholm, "Human Freedom and the Self" Randolph Clarke, "Toward a Credible Agent-causal Account of Free Will" Frankfurt, "Freedom of the Will and the Concept of a Person"
April 9	Freewill and Responsibility	Frankfurt, "Alternate Possibilities and Moral Responsibility" David Widerker, "Libertarianism and Frankfurt's Attack on the Principle of Alternate Possibilities"