

Metaphysics (PHIL 3600)

Fall 2013

Dr. Jennifer Wang

The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.

Class Meetings

This class meets on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 12:30 to 1:45 in Peabody 115.

Office Hours

Office: Peabody 129

E-mail: jwang5@uga.edu

Hours: T 2:00-4:00pm, and by appointment

Course Description

Broadly construed, metaphysics concerns the most general questions one can ask about the world and our place in it: What sorts of entities are there? What are their features? Topics for this course include: ontology, modality, properties, gender and race, causation, and persistence.

Objectives

Students will be introduced to influential works in contemporary metaphysics. Objectives include developing the skills of (i) reading and assessing philosophical works, (ii) discussing philosophy, and (iii) writing argumentative papers.

Course Requirements

1. Short assignments: Throughout the semester, students will be asked to complete short assignments in the form of response papers, argument reconstructions, etc. on class readings and topics.
2. Short papers: There will be two short papers due during the semester.
3. Long paper: A longer paper will be due at the end of the semester.

Final Grade Distribution

20% Short assignments

30% Short papers

50% Long paper

Attendance Policy

1. Attendance in class meetings is required. Each student may miss three meetings without penalty, but after that, each meeting she misses will result in a 0.5% deduction from her final grade.
2. Since students are allowed three absences, there is no distinction between 'excused' and 'unexcused' absences. Students should plan accordingly. In extreme circumstances, a student with more than five absences may meet with Dr. Wang to discuss options.

Textbooks and Resources

1. *Metaphysics: An Anthology*, eds. Kim, Korman, and Sosa. 2nd Edition. Wiley-Blackwell.

2. Additional materials and online resources, including reference works and media, will be made available on the course website.

Course Website

The course website may be accessed through eLC-New (<https://uga.view.usg.edu/>).

Honor

As a University of Georgia student, you have agreed to abide by the University's academic honesty policy, "A Culture of Honesty," and the Student Honor Code. All academic work must meet the standards described in "A Culture of Honesty" found at: <https://ovpi.uga.edu/academic-honesty/academic-honesty-policy>. Lack of knowledge of the academic honesty policy is not a reasonable explanation for a violation. Questions related to course assignments and the academic honesty policy should be directed to the instructor.

Class Schedule

	Date	Reading	Assignments
T	13-Aug	First day	
R	15-Aug	Quine, 'On What There Is'	
T	20-Aug	Quine, 'On What There Is'	
R	22-Aug	Lewis and Lewis, 'Holes'	
T	27-Aug	Thomasson, 'If We Postulated Fictional Objects, What Would They Be?'	
R	29-Aug	Thomasson, 'If We Postulated Fictional Objects, What Would They Be?'	
T	3-Sep	Schaffer, 'On What Grounds What'	
R	5-Sep	Schaffer, 'On What Grounds What'	Short paper 1 assigned
T	10-Sep	Plantinga, 'Modalities: Basic Concepts and Distinctions'	
R	12-Sep	Plantinga, 'Modalities: Basic Concepts and Distinctions'	
T	17-Sep	Armstrong, 'Universals as Attributes'	
R	19-Sep	Armstrong, 'Universals as Attributes'	Short paper 1 due
T	24-Sep	Campbell, 'The Metaphysics of Abstract Particulars'	
R	26-Sep	Campbell, 'The Metaphysics of Abstract Particulars'	
T	1-Oct	Hawley and Bird, 'What are Natural Kinds?'	
R	3-Oct	Hawley and Bird, 'What are Natural Kinds?'	
T	8-Oct	Haslanger, 'Gender and Race'	
R	10-Oct	Witt, excerpt from <i>The Metaphysics of Gender</i>	
T	15-Oct	Witt, excerpt from <i>The Metaphysics of Gender</i>	Short paper 2 assigned
R	17-Oct	Mallon, 'Race: Normative, Not Metaphysical or Semantic'	
T	22-Oct	Russell, 'On the Notion of Cause'	
R	24-Oct	Russell, 'On the Notion of Cause'	Short paper 2 outline due
T	29-Oct	Lewis, 'Causation'	
R	31-Oct	Hall and Paul, 'Causation and Preemption'	Short paper 2 due
T	5-Nov	Hall and Paul, 'Causation and Preemption'	
R	7-Nov	Chisholm, 'Identity Through Time'	
T	12-Nov	Heller, 'Temporal Parts of Four-Dimensional Objects'	
R	14-Nov	Heller, 'Temporal Parts of Four-Dimensional Objects'	Long paper assigned
T	19-Nov	Lewis, 'The Problem of Temporary Intrinsics', Haslanger, 'Endurance and Temporary Intrinsics'	
R	21-Nov	Williams, 'The Self and the Future'	
T	26-Nov	Thanksgiving	
R	28-Nov	Thanksgiving	
T	3-Dec	Friday Class	
R	5-Dec	No class	
T	10-Dec	Final exam date	Long paper due