

Teaching Dossier

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1 Summary of Teaching Experience

1.1 University of Oxford

As a Tutorial Tutor (Groups of 1-3)

General Philosophy (1st Year Undergraduate)

Mill's *Utilitarianism* (1st Year Undergraduate)

Introduction to Logic (1st Year Undergraduate)

Aesthetics (Final Year Undergraduate)

Early Modern Philosophy (Final Year Undergraduate)

Ethics (Final Year Undergraduate)

Knowledge and Reality (Final Year Undergraduate)

Philosophy of Logic and Language (Final Year Undergraduate)

Philosophy of Religion (Final Year Undergraduate)

Metaethics (Final Year Undergraduate)

1.2 University of Sheffield

As a Module Convenor (full responsibility for course design and delivery)

Lying and Assertion (3rd Year Undergraduate/MA) (24 students)

As a Guest Lecturer

Knowledge Justification and Doubt (1st Year Undergraduate)

As a Graduate Tutorial Tutor (groups of 3-15) (including marking)

Knowledge, Justification and Doubt (1st Year Undergraduate)

Mind, Brain and Personal Identity (1st Year Undergraduate)

Elementary Logic (1st Year Undergraduate)

Philosophy of Religion (1st Year Undergraduate)

Self and Society (1st Year Undergraduate)

Matters of Life and Death (1st Year Undergraduate)

Philosophy of Art and Literature (1st Year Undergraduate)

As a Guest Tutorial Tutor

Metaphysics (2nd Year Undergraduate)

As a Research Supervisor (groups of around 8)

History of Philosophy (1st Year Undergraduate)

2 Teaching Statement

I thoroughly enjoy teaching students, both in large and small groups. My approach to teaching is one that is driven by own experiences, both as a student and as a tutor. In particular, I believe that the sense of achievement that comes with developing an understanding of a particularly difficult theory, or developing a new insight into a problem is one of the most rewarding and enjoyable aspects of a student learning experience. The feeling of mastering something difficult in philosophy is a valuable one for inspiring and motivating students. Equally, there is nothing more dispiriting for a student than feeling “locked out” of an area by struggling to get to grips with what might seem to be an impossibly technical problem or an incomprehensibly arcane use of language. My approach to teaching is straightforwardly driven by these two observations. I seek to maximise the former feeling in my students whilst avoiding the latter.

When teaching in small discussion groups of around 2-12, I typically structure discussions around a particular reading. I generally approach the classes with a set of study questions that are designed to help the students get an understanding of the main points and arguments of the reading as well as bringing out some points for discussion. The study questions have a dual role. The first is to provide a structure to the class discussion. The second is to provide the students with an aid to help them structure their revision. The idea is that, if students are able to think their way through answers to the questions, then this will give them an indication that they have understood the main issues from the readings. In my experience of teaching both in Sheffield and in Oxford, students typically find these sets of questions extremely helpful.

Obviously, there is also a distinctive value to students discussing things with one another. Collaboration is central to philosophical progress and I am keen for class discussions to proceed in this spirit. The idea is that, whilst I provide questions to structure the discussion and keep the discussion on topic, whilst helping students clear up specific difficulties, I aim to allow discussion to flow freely between students wherever possible. Balancing these two roles involves taking two distinct roles as a tutor. The first is that of a “traditional leader” who is prepared to help structure the debate at the beginning and the second is as a “neutral chair” who allows discussion to flow interfering only occasionally to keep things on track.

I find that this kind of approach is particularly effective with students of mixed abilities. Students often come to classes with different levels of understanding, whether this is due to different levels of ability or different levels of preparation. For this reason, I begin classes with “surface” level questions that are designed to get the basic contours of the reading in view. These are usually questions such as *what does Plato think the place of poetry is?* or *what is meant by “horrendous” evil?* Reflecting on these questions helps us get a common ground for the subsequent discussion in view. Those who are well-prepared benefit from the value in setting out a problem as crisply and clearly as possible. Looking at the contours of theories in different ways can yield different insights, even to experienced

philosophers. For those that need it, this provides them with an opportunity to get a foothold for the subsequent discussion.

After establishing this common ground, however, I seek to move beyond questions that secure surface learning, in the form of an initial familiarity with the material, to encourage students to develop their own critical perspectives on the issues. This typically involves moving from the kind of questions described above, to questions of the form *is Mill right to distinguish between higher and lower pleasures?* or *should externalists want to say that clairvoyance doesn't yield justified beliefs?* designed to develop “deep” learning. At this stage in the discussion, I take my role as a tutor to involve using my knowledge and experience to provide advice, encouragement and insights in order to help students develop and enhance their perspectives on the material.

In large group teaching, in the form of a lecture, I usually divide material into three (roughly) fifteen minute sections and have a break at the end of each, to facilitate questions and discussion of the section's material. This helps avoid losing students in the material, providing regular opportunities to check understanding and clear up misconceptions before they lead to greater misunderstandings. One of the risks in philosophy is that a small misinterpretation of someone's theory that goes unnoticed can lead to much greater misunderstandings, giving rise to counterarguments that miss their intended mark, and discovering these too late can be extremely demoralising for students.

One important feature of large group teaching is that there is a danger of students becoming passive and disengaged. The strategy of incorporating regular breaks helps counter this. But I also have other strategies for keeping students engaged. For example, when I taught my *Lying and Assertion* module, I used “lying puzzles” (often, though not always, variations on the “Knights and Knaves” logic puzzles) to keep students engaged. This helped change the pace and help keep students engaged by being ready to call out answers to puzzles that were familiar, though still challenging. These went down extremely well and my teaching on the course led to me receiving excellent student reviews as well as multiple nominations for the University-wide *Postgraduate Teacher of the Year* award. I ultimately finished as a runner up.

I have sought to improve my teaching wherever possible. At Sheffield, I undertook the *Sheffield Teaching Assistant* training programme. At Oxford I have enrolled in the *Teaching Fellowship Preparation* programme, leading to Fellowship status of the Higher Education Academy. Less formally, however, I have sought to acquire student evaluations whenever I have had classes with a significant number of students. In the Oxford tutorial system, when class sizes are small and a term's teaching might only involve a couple of students for a paper, I have sought to acquire feedback through the use of a “minute paper” at the end of each class. This involves having students write down at the end of each tutorial the thing that they feel most clear on and the thing they feel least clear on. This helps students reflect on their learning and helps me monitor which parts of the course have been most effective.

3 Faculty-Observed Teaching

3.1 From Miranda Fricker (lectures)

I attended Steve's lecture today 22/10/13 on Assertion and Other Speech Acts, as part of PHI 335/6630 Lying and Assertion.

Steve did a really good lecture. It was well organised, well paced, and entirely to time. I thought the students seemed thoroughly engaged and attentive all the way through, and that he explained the material well.

There were powerpoints (on MOLE) and a short photocopied handout too, which was excellent.

I particularly liked his use of a little exercise on the board about half way through, which got them to change gear and be ready to call out some answers. Great idea to change the pace like that.

He also made time for questions.

All in all, this was really well done – a confident, clear, and engaging lecture.

3.2 From Jimmy Lenman (seminars)

On 8th December 2011 I attended a seminar run by Stephen Wright on the module PHI125 Matters of Life and Death. The seminar focused on Thomson's defence of abortion. The students were divided up into small groups of two or three to work through a prepared set of questions on the topic. This took up about half the seminar. The remainder was devoted to discussion led by the tutor and informed by the group discussions that had preceded it. This was a lively seminar, well planned and well executed and conducted with exemplary professionalism. The students were clearly engaged and were thoroughly enjoying themselves. On the evidence of what I saw here Wright is doing an excellent job for the department.

On 25th February 2013 I attended a first year seminar led by Stephen Wright. The subject matter was the teleological argument with a reading from van Inwagen. Wright was very well-prepared. He was not however thrown at all by having to change his plans at the last minute. (He had planned to end the seminar by staging a debate but disappointing attendance meant there were too few students present to do this.) He began by having the students discuss the topic in small groups of two before moving to a classwide discussion. The students were clearly very engaged and were both enjoying and learning from the seminar, Wright's conduct of which was genial, lively and professional.

4 Student Evaluation Summary

4.1 Lying and Assertion 2013

This is a summary of the student evaluations of the *Lying and Assertion* course that I taught at the University of Sheffield in Autumn 2013:

Number of Forms Returned	15	
	Average (/5)	%4 or higher
Lecturing Overall	4.9	100
Subject Interesting	4.5	93
Lecturer Enthusiastic	4.7	100
Well Structured	4.3	93
Intellectually Stimulating	4.5	80
Clarity of Marking Criteria	4.3	80
Ability to Access Readings	4.0	80
Opportunities for Questions in Class	4.7	100
Module helped develop confidence	3.9	80
Amount of material demanding but not excessive*	4.5	
Difficulty of material demanding but not excessive**	4.3	

Please note that these questions are on a different scale:

*Too much (5), a lot (4), about right (3), little (2), too little (1)

**Too difficult (5), difficult (4), about right (3), fairly easy (2), too easy (1)

4.2 Aesthetics 2014

This is a summary of the student evaluations of the *Aesthetics* course that I taught at the University of Oxford in Autumn 2014:

Number of Forms Returned	4 (7 Students)		
	Average (/10)	%8 or higher	
Classes Engaging	9.00		100
Tutor Knowledgeable	8.50		50
Tutor Approachable	8.75		75
Effectiveness of Classes	9.25		100
Accompanying Materials	9.00		75
Readings Challenging	8.50		75
Comfortable Speaking in Class	9.75		100
Material Interesting	8.75		75
Engaging Format	8.50		75

4.3 General Philosophy 2015

This is a summary of the student evaluations of the *General Philosophy* course that I taught at the University of Oxford in Spring 2015:

Number of Forms Returned	8 (8 Students)		
	Average (/10)	%8 or higher	
Classes Engaging	8.375		88
Tutor Knowledgeable	9.125		100
Tutor Approachable	9.625		100
Effectiveness of Classes	8.625		100
Class Discussions	8.25		88
Readings Challenging	6.125		50
Comfortable Speaking in Class	8.75		88
Helpfulness of Handouts	8.375		75
Engaging Format	8.25		75

4.4 Knowledge and Reality 2015

This is a summary of the student evaluations of the *General Philosophy* course that I taught at the University of Oxford in Spring 2015:

Number of Forms Returned	6 (6 Students)	
	Average (/10)	%8 or higher
Classes Engaging	8.5	83
Tutor Knowledgeable	9.667	100
Tutor Approachable	8.833	67
Effectiveness of Classes	9	83
Class Discussions	9.333	100
Readings Challenging	7.667	67
Comfortable Speaking in Class	9.333	83
Helpfulness of Handouts	8.333	67
Engaging Format	8	67

5 Course Syllabus: *Lying and Assertion*

Course Outline

Stephen Wright

Lectures

Tuesday 11-12 room HI-LT9

Thursday 11-12 room MAPP-LT9

Seminars

Tuesday 2-3 room 9MS-G26

Thursday 3-4 room JB-SR 215

Office Hours

Tuesday 3-4 & Thursday 2-3 B20, 45 Victoria Street

5.1 Overview

The everyday significance of lying and assertion is straightforward enough. We generally think that, at least in the absence of any particularly unusual circumstances, one ought not to tell lies. This is something that seems to be pretty important to us. The central project in this course involves coming up with a theory of lying. A natural thought is that lying involves asserting something that you believe to be false. One might ask, however, exactly what is wrong with asserting something that you believe to be false. We can all agree that it is bad, at least ordinarily, but we might plausibly disagree on what it is that makes it bad. According to some people, lying is bad because there are certain rules or *norms* that govern assertion and lying involves breaking these rules. This will be our starting point for this course. We will begin by considering what, if any, rules govern assertion and (relatedly) whether or not these can explain what is wrong with lying.

From this, we will move on to consider exactly what it is to assert something. If we want to make sense of our ordinary thought that lying involves asserting something that you believe to be false, then we had better have at least some idea of what asserting that something is the case amounts to. In the second section of the course, we will look at competing theories of assertion and consider what is at stake between them and what might be said in favour of them individually.

Next, we will move onto consider theories that have explicitly taken up the problem of giving a philosophical characterisation of lying. At this point, we will consider objections that might be raised against the basic account of lying as asserting something that you believe to be false that we had at the beginning of the course. We will look at some of the most prominent considerations in the philosophical discussion of the nature of lying and we will also see how this has come to inform the contemporary debate.

Having considered what lying amounts to, we will move on to consider what is wrong with lying. Different ethical traditions give different accounts of exactly

what is wrong with lying, why lying is wrong and in what circumstances it is wrong to lie. We will be considering three main traditions: Act Utilitarianism, Rule Consequentialism and Kantian moral theory. We will look at whether and how far the issue of when lying is morally acceptable can give us some way of deciding between competing moral theories.

With this in hand, we will consider theories of meaning. It seems right to say that whether or not any assertion is a lie depends on exactly what the assertion means. This means that a complete theory of lying must have something to say about how it is that the things that we say come to have the meanings that they do. This part of the course will bring us into contact with some of the most influential writings and authors of twentieth century philosophy. Engagement with these works is essential not just for a theory of lying, but for an understanding of philosophy more generally.

5.2 Aims and Learning Outcomes

5.2.1 Aims

The course aims to equip students with the following:

- An understanding of the philosophical importance of lying and assertion, both in terms of the philosophy of language and in ethics.
- Familiarity with some of the central themes in the philosophy of language.
- An appreciation of the ethical significance of lying and deceiving.
- Familiarity with the work of some of the most influential figures in the philosophy of language since the beginning of the twentieth century.
- An ability to engage critically with a variety of different philosophical texts.

5.2.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course students will have:

- Engaged in philosophical reflection and discussion.
- Developed and expressed philosophical arguments both orally and in writing.
- Engaged with both primary and secondary literature pertaining to issues in the philosophy of language.
- Had the opportunity to respond to critical feedback.

5.3 Course Text

This course does not follow a single set text. All of the required and recommended readings for the module can be accessed online through MUSE either via the MOLE pages associated with this course, or via the StarPlus Library Catalogue and the e-offprints list associated with this course. Those wanting a flavour of the course in advance might consult the following:

Matthew Weiner (2007). Norms of Assertion. *Philosophy Compass* 2 (2) pp. 187-195.

Andreas Stokke (2013). Lying, Deceiving, and Misleading. *Philosophy Compass* 8 (4) pp. 348-359.

A.W. Moore (ed.) (1993). (Introduction to) *Meaning and Reference*. Oxford, Oxford University Press.

5.4 Module Structure

The teaching for this course will be delivered through 22 lectures and 10 seminars. The lectures will seek to introduce students to the major issues and enable them to fruitfully read the readings for the seminars. Having read the associated text, we will then discuss the text and the issues surrounding the theme of each seminar. This course presupposes no particular background in philosophy; the relevant background details will be introduced as we go along.

A quick note on the workload for the course is below. This has been taken from the 3rd year handbook, which is available [here](#). If you haven't already familiarised yourself with the contents of the handbook, then you should; it's really useful.

University policy is that every credit should carry with it 10 hours of work, distributed over the 15-week semester. So a 20-credit 2nd or 3rd year module [such as this one] should occupy 200 hours of work – to include reading, writing, attendance at lectures and seminars, as well as preparation for and sitting exams. This means that, on average, 13 hours a week should be devoted to each Philosophy module (three hours of which will be attendance at lectures/seminars).

As a rough guideline, in your 10 hours each week outside of classes you might hope to read somewhere between 3 and 8 chapters or articles more-or-less carefully, or to draft an essay or exam answer.

Note, however, that in philosophy 'work' can be construed quite broadly. For instance, discussion of the material in a module with friends over coffee should certainly be counted as 'work', and might actually be amongst the most beneficial parts of your course of study.

5.4.1 Module Overview

<i>Week</i>	<i>Lecture 1</i>	<i>Lecture 2</i>	<i>Seminar</i>
1	Williamson	The Knowledge Rule	–
2	The Justification Rule	The Truth Rule	–
3	Testimony	Commitment Theories	Williamson
4	Assertion and Telling	Anti-Assertion	The Truth Rule
5	What is Lying? (1)	What is Lying? (2)	Commitment
6	Why Lying is Wrong (1)	Why Lying is Wrong (2)	Fallis on Lying
7	<i>Reading Week</i>	<i>Reading Week</i>	<i>Reading Week</i>
8	Why Lying is Wrong (3)	Lying and Deception	Bald-faced Lies
9	Lying and Misleading?	Sense and Reference	Why Lying is Wrong
10	The Causal Theory	Grice's Theory	Misleading
11	Davidson on Meaning	Verificationism	Causal Theories
12	Implicature	Review	Davidson's Theory

5.4.2 Lectures

In the lectures I will provide an introduction to the relevant area. I will be looking to do this using one of the important papers from that area, which I've identified below as the required reading. In the lectures, I'll not be giving a blow-by-blow account of everything that the author says in the paper. For one thing, there isn't enough time to. Anything that I don't cover in the lectures you are more than welcome to bring up in the relevant seminars, indeed, that would be a good thing to do.

For each lecture, I'll also be distributing a set of study questions. I'll make these available on the MOLE pages before each lecture. These questions will give you something to help focus your thinking in lectures. Some of the questions will be comprehension-based and others will require more critical reflection. If you've got a good idea of a response to the questions on the list, then chances are you're getting the main points out of the lecture. There is another function to the questions on the sheet. Along the way, I'll be breaking up the lecture by leaving plenty of time for questions. If there's something that I've said that you don't understand, then this is an opportunity to raise this (though feel free to put your hand up with anything along the way). If you happen to take violent exception to anything that I've said, that might be best saved for a seminar. If there aren't any questions forthcoming, however, then *I* will ask *you* a question (from on the sheet) and I'll be expecting you to have some sort of an idea about what to say as an answer.

Like most lecturers and most modules, I'll be using slides during the lecture. These are mainly for my benefit—they help me remember what to say, but since they're a useful revision tool for you guys, I'll be putting them on MOLE after the lectures. Your handout for the lectures thus consists of the study questions and the slides. The hope is that these, especially the study questions, will be useful to you when the time comes to revise things. If you can answer the questions on the handout comfortably enough, then your revision is going well.

This means that there's quite a lot of handout material available to you. It is EXTREMELY important, however, that you realise that these are not intended as a substitute for the lectures and will not be effective as a substitute for the lectures. If you try and learn the course just from the handout materials, you will struggle. You'll need to find various other readings and try and figure them out for yourselves in order to prop up the handout materials. Far easier to just come to the lectures and have me explain the stuff to you...

Week 1

Lecture 1 – Introduction (Williamson's Knowledge Rule of Assertion)

This lecture introduces students to some of the central questions that will shape the discussions later in the course. It also introduces the first arguments we will be considering; Timothy Williamson's claim that knowledge is the rule of assertion. Williamson's arguments have been hugely influential, and this lecture will introduce these as well as familiarising students with the course admin.

Required Reading: Williamson (2000) Chapter 11.

Lecture 2 – Alternative Discussions of the Knowledge Rule

Moving on from Williamson's seminal discussion of the knowledge rule, this lecture considers some of the other aspects of the connection between knowing something and properly asserting it. The knowledge rule states that one must assert something only if one knows it to be true. This lecture begins by considering the question of whether or not knowing something is *sufficient* to allow you to properly assert it. With this in hand, it considers further exactly how knowledge and assertion are supposed to be intimately connected.

Required Reading: Brown (2010).

Recommended Reading: Brown (2008), Maitra (2011), DeRose (2009) Chapter 3.

Week 2

Lecture 3 – The Justification Rule

In this lecture we will consider a rival account to the knowledge rule, in the form of the justification rule. According to the justification rule, you must assert that p only if you have justification for p . In particular, we will focus on Jennifer Lackey's theory of assertion, which takes it that one must assert that p only if it is reasonable for one to believe that p . Like the knowledge rule, the justification rule is motivated by a distinctive set of cases. We will examine these and also consider how defenders of the justification rule might seek to accommodate the cases that are traditionally brought to bear in support of the knowledge rule.

Required Reading: Lackey (2008) Chapter 4.

Recommended Reading: Douven (2006), Kvanvig (2009), Kvanvig (2011).

Lecture 4 – The Truth Rule

One way of responding to Williamson's arguments for knowledge as the rule of assertion takes truth to be the rule of assertion. In this lecture we will consider the truth rule of assertion and some of the sophisticated lines of response to Williamson's arguments that appeal to Gricean conversational maxims. Lastly, we will consider a new problem that appears to threaten both the truth rule and the knowledge rule.

Required Reading: Weiner (2005).

Recommended Reading: Pelling (2011), Pelling (forthcoming), Whiting (forthcoming).

Week 3

Lecture 5 – Norms of Assertion and the Epistemology of Testimony

This lecture moves us beyond the question of what the rules of assertion might be, to the question of why they matter. Specifically, it considers a discussion of whether or not the rules of assertion might be brought to bear on the epistemology of testimony. If there is a rule stating that one must assert that p only if one knows that p , then one might think that this offers us a consideration in favour of believing what people say, for if they are following the rules of assertion, they will only be asserting what they know. This paper considers this topic.

Required Reading: Goldberg (2010).

Recommended Reading: Fricker (2006), Lackey (2008) Chapter 4.

Lecture 6 – Assertion as Commitment

One of the things that those who seek to identify constitutive rules of assertion hope to achieve is an account of what assertion is. According to such theories assertion is just the speech act that is governed by those particular constitutive rules. In this lecture we will turn to a different approach to the project of individuating what assertion is. This approach takes it that assertion is a speech act that involves undertaking a distinctive set of commitments.

Required Reading: MacFarlane (2011).

Recommended Reading: Brandom (1983), MacFarlane (2005), Pagin (2004).

Week 4

Lecture 7 – Assertion and Other Speech Acts

The project of individuating assertion involves showing what, if anything, is different between assertion and other types of speech acts. One such speech act is telling. In this lecture, we will consider what is distinctive about telling and how it relates to assertion. According to one type of theory, telling someone that p involves asserting to her that p with the intention that she believe that p because she believes you.

Required Reading: Faulkner (2007).

Recommended Reading: Hinchman (2005), Moran (2005), Owens (2006).

Lecture 8 – Anti-Assertion

Individuating assertion is tricky, whether we do it by seeking to identify a class of speech acts governed by distinctive constitutive rules, or by some other way. According to some views, we would be better served by doing away with the category of assertions altogether, since no particular account of assertion has any decisive arguments for it. On these views, assertion is essentially invented by philosophers for philosophers. This lecture investigates the prospects for doing away altogether with the notion of assertion.

Required Reading: Cappelen (2011).

Recommended Reading: TBC.

Week 5

Lecture 9 – What is Lying? (1)

This lecture begins our investigation into the question of what lying is. A view that seems, at first glance, natural holds that lying is a matter of asserting something that you believe to be false with a view to bringing the person you are addressing to believe what you say. In this lecture, we will look at an initial account of lying that fits into this type as well as considering some of the putative shortcomings of such a theory. These shortcomings are points that we will refer back to again and again in our discussion of what lying amounts to.

Required Reading: Chisholm and Feehan (1977).

Recommended Reading: Fallis (2009), Lackey (2013), Sorensen (2007).

Lecture 10 – What is Lying? (2)

Having got the various data points in view in the previous lecture and discussed some relatively straightforward accounts of lying, this lecture moves on to consider more sophisticated theories. We will focus on Andreas Stokke's recent discussion of lying, which seeks to rehabilitate the view that lying involves asserting something that you believe to be false. As well as this, we will also consider some other theories that have been developed with a view to giving adequate characterisations of lying.

Required Reading: Stokke (2013).

Recommended Reading: Carson (2010) Chapter 1, Adler (1997), Fallis (2010).

Week 6

Lecture 11 – Why Lying is Wrong (1)– Kant

This lecture moves us from the conceptual analysis of lying to the question of exactly what is wrong with lying. We will approach this question by considering lying from the perspectives offered by various different moral theories. The first of these, dealt with in this lecture will be Kant's moral philosophy. A common

thought is that Kant's moral theory holds that lying is always wrong under all circumstances. This lecture will examine whether or not this claim is correct and examine just how far Kant's theory is really committed to such a claim.

Required Reading: Carson (2010) Chapter 3.

Recommended Reading: Korsgaard (1986), Mahon (2009), Mahon (2006), Margolis (1963).

Lecture 12 – Why Lying is Wrong (2) – Act Utilitarianism

Utilitarianism would seem to offer a more permissive account of when and why lying is wrong. According to act utilitarianism, lying is wrong when (and only when) there is no alternative course of action that an individual can follow the consequences of which are better than the consequences of lying. This lecture examines a response made by Mill to the charge that an act utilitarian account of lying is problematic in that it is too permissive, according to which a consequence of utilitarianism is that there is a strong presumption against lying.

Required Reading: Carson (2010) Chapter 4.

Recommended Reading: Brandt (1997), Mill (1861).

Week 7

Reading Week – No Lectures or Seminars

Week 8

Lecture 13 – Why Lying is Wrong (3) – Rule Consequentialism

The third account of when and why lying is wrong comes from the framework of rule consequentialism. Act utilitarianism claims that if lying has only slightly better consequences than not, then lying is permissible. One might think that this is still too permissive. This lecture introduces two approaches to lying that endorse a rule consequentialist framework. According to these theories, lying is still wrong even if lying would have marginally better consequences than not.

Required Reading: Carson (2010) Chapter 5.

Recommended Reading: Hooker (2000) Chapter 6, Ross (1930) Chapter 2.

Lecture 14 – Lying and Deception

In this lecture we will return to conceptual analysis. Important for a study of lying and its significance is the distinction between lying and deception. Exactly where one should draw this line is important, not least because it has huge bearings on the distinctively moral question that we shall be turning to in the next lecture. This lecture introduces some of the central points concerning a philosophical theory of deception.

Required Reading: Mahon (2007).

Recommended Reading: Linsky (1963), Barnes (1997) Chapter 1, Fuller (1976).

Week 9

Lecture 15 – Is Lying Worse than Misleading?

This lecture takes on one of the course's most prominent themes; the question of whether or not it is worse to lie to someone than to merely mislead them. It seems natural to some to think that deceiving someone by *merely* misleading her rather than lying to her is somehow not as bad. Should our moral convictions about lying extend to all forms of deception? Why or why not? This lecture explores these questions and some in the neighbourhood. In doing so, it brings together the previous material on the definition of lying, the distinction between lying and deception and the question of in which circumstances it is wrong to lie.

Required Reading: Saul (2012) Chapter 4.

Recommended Reading: MacIntyre (1994), Strudler (2010), Strudler (2009).

Lecture 16 – Sense and Reference

This lecture begins the final section of the course, in which we will be looking at how it is that what we say comes to mean what it does. Any theory of lying that is going to be able to fully explain which statements are lies is going to have to be able to explain how it is that what we say comes to mean what it does. To begin with, we will consider Frege's distinction between *sense* and *reference*. Frege's distinction promises to explain how it is that my stating something can be correctly understood by you and everyone else as having a certain meaning. This lecture introduces and explores Frege's theory.

Required Reading: Frege (1892) *this is reprinted in* Moore (1993).

Recommended Reading: Donnellan (1966), Russell (1905), Strawson (1950).

Week 10

Lecture 17 – The Causal Theory of Meaning

According to another type of theory, what we say has the meaning it does because of the way that our coming to use certain words to mean certain things is causally connected to an initial "baptism." Thus I come to be talking about the same person when I say "Saul Kripke" as you do when you say "Saul Kripke" because both our uses of that name for that person are causally connected to an initial process by which that name came to be attached to that person. This lecture looks more closely at Kripke's theory of meaning and examines its motivations and shortcomings.

Required Reading: Kripke (1972) Lecture 2.

Recommended Reading: Evans (1973), Putnam (1973), Wiggins (1994).

Lecture 18 – Grice's Intentional Account

This lecture will introduce the central ideas behind Grice's theory of meaning. According to Grice, the correct way to analyse the meaning of a speaker's state-

ment is in terms of what the speaker means when she makes that statement. This, in turn, can be analysed in terms of the intentions the speaker has when she makes her statement. This lecture will further introduce Grice's theory as well as looking at some of the problems that remain unsolved by a Gricean approach.

Required Reading: Grice (1957).

Recommended Reading: Avramides (1997), Borg (2005), Grice (1989) Chapter 2, Millikan (1984) Chapter 9.

Week 11

Lecture 19 – Meaning and Verificationism

According to verificationist theories of meaning, a sentence has a meaning (at all) only if the truth of that sentence makes some difference to our possible experiences. If there was a sentence that could not be verified, then this would render that sentence meaningless. Verificationist theories thus associate meaning with certain *verification conditions*. This lecture sets out the principles behind verificationist theories of meaning and examines the considerations that have been raised against them.

Required Reading: Ayer (1946).

Recommended Reading: Dummett (1978), Grice and Strawson (1956), Quine (1953).

Lecture 20 – Davidson on Meaning

Davidson's approach to meaning identifies meaning with truth conditions, rather than verification conditions. According to Davidson's theory of meaning, the meaning of a sentence is given by the conditions under which that statement is (or would be) true. Davidson's theory purports to help understand long and compositional sentences, but it is a compositional theory. This lecture will explore Davidson's theory, including some of the most influential considerations that have been raised against it.

Required Reading: Soames (2003).

Recommended Reading: Davidson (1967), Dummett (1975) *this is reprinted in* Dummett (1996), Strawson (1971) Chapter 9.

Week 12

Lecture 21 – Implicature

In this lecture, we will look at implicature. The notion of implicative relations is particularly important for the questions concerning the distinction (both conceptual and moral) between lying and misleading. This lecture will identify and contrast various different ways of conveying meaning implicitly. It will also consider various philosophical accounts of these implicatures.

Required Reading: Grice (1989) Chapter 3.

Recommended Reading: Karttunen (1973), Searle (1969) Chapter 2, Wilson and Sperber (2002).

Lecture 22 – Review

There are no readings associated with this lecture.

5.4.3 Seminars

The seminars for this course are extremely important. They are there to give you a chance to discuss some of the issues that I raise in the lectures and help each other figure out what the central ideas are and what you think of them. Each week I'll provide some study questions that will help you get a grip on the reading and engage with it in the right way. Whilst these are there to help structure the discussion, they are by no means an exhaustive list of topics for discussion. They are there to help get things started, if need be but their main purpose is to help you structure your revision, when the time comes. Using the questions for revision purposes will help you make sure you've got the hang of things in as near to the right way as possible, in much the same way as the lecture questions that I'll be circulating will.

Each seminar has a reading attached to it, which you *must* do in advance of the seminar. Not doing this will mean that you get very little out of it. Don't worry if you don't understand everything in the tutorials; some of them are *very* hard and whilst I'll not be expecting you to come to the seminars understanding what they mean, I will be expecting you to have made a decent effort with understanding what's going on. Even if there are things you don't get, however, I will be expecting you to come along with something to say. It's a great thing to turn up having a clear view of the parts you don't get. Remember, it's also perfectly acceptable to get things wrong in seminars and make mistakes, that's how we learn things and get better at doing philosophy. That said, the more you put into seminars, the more you get out.

This is a general point about the course that it's worth you bearing in mind. The course carries a certain number of credits and should thus take a certain amount of time. This means that the more time you put in during the course, the less time you'll have to put in at the end of the course, when it comes to writing and revising. Getting stuck into seminars at the time will make your revision go a lot easier when the time comes. The module will take the right number of hours either way, so it really is up to you whether you choose to get the work in early, or have to get the work in at the last minute.

As you all know by now, the purpose of seminars is absolutely *not* for the tutor to deliver another lecture. The point of having a tutor there is to help facilitate the discussion, which you guys have to lead. Seminars give you a chance to express what you're thinking. If it were the case that I was going to deliver another lecture whilst you sit and listen, then we might as well get everyone together and I can talk at everyone at the same time—much like I do in lectures! The point of breaking into smaller groups is that they open up opportunities to discuss things that having a group the size of the lecture group doesn't lend itself to. So make sure you take advantage of this, seminars are where you'll get your best philosophical learning done.

Week 3 – Williamson’s Knowledge Rule

Reading: Brown (2008).

Week 4 – The Truth Rule

Reading: Weiner (2005).

Week 5 – Commitment Theories

Reading: MacFarlane (2005).

Week 6 – Bald-faced Lies

Reading: Sorensen (2007).

Week 7 – Reading Week

Reading Week – No Lectures or Seminars

Week 8 – Fallis on Lying

Reading: Fallis (2010).

Week 9 – Why Lying is Wrong

Reading: Carson (2010) Chapter 5.

Week 10 – Lying and Misleading

Reading: Saul (2012) Chapter 5.

Week 11 – Causal Theories of Meaning

Reading: Evans (1973).

Week 12 – Davidson’s Theory of Meaning

Reading: Davidson (1967).

5.5 Readings

For each seminar, I have set a required reading. This is something you really *must* do. The same applies to the required readings for the lectures. Over and above that, however, I have set some recommended further readings for the lectures (some of which are seminar readings) and nothing further for the seminars. The list for the recommended readings is, with the exception of the overlap between this list and the seminar readings, merely suggestive. In some cases you might not want to read everything on the list and that’s fine. In other cases, you might want

to read things that are not on the list and that's fine too. For whichever topics you write an essay on you will certainly want to extend your reading beyond the scope of the list that I've provided. When the time comes for this, since you are now advanced level students, I've given you the opportunity to go off and be proper research students by finding your own material; partly because what you will want to read will depend to some extent on the direction in which you plan to take your essay. Do be careful doing this—make sure what you're reading is good quality. Some good places to start your research are listed here:

The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy at <http://plato.stanford.edu> is an excellent resource. It gives you an overview of some of the topics that we'll be working on and also comes with a useful bibliography, all of which is of an appropriate quality for you to be using.

The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy at <http://www.iep.utm.edu/> is another excellent online philosophy encyclopedia. Like the Stanford Encyclopedia, its entries are reviewed before they are published and also have useful suggestions for further reading.

Philpapers at <http://www.philpapers.org> is an online collection of philosophy articles that can be searched by category. There are some excellent articles on here and the site is a useful way of finding things to read. This site requires some caution, though. Unlike the above two, anyone can add their papers, regardless of whether or not they have actually been published in journals, or are ever going to be! As a rule of thumb, if you can't see publication details for a paper on this site, then proceed with caution. This notwithstanding, it is an excellent and important source.

Google Scholar at <http://scholar.google.co.uk/> is a relatively recent research tool and one that's extremely useful. The best thing that you can use Google Scholar for is finding papers that are relevant to what you've been reading. If you run a search for a paper that you've just read, Google Scholar will help throw up any papers that have cited the paper you searched for. This is extremely useful for helping you figure out where to go next. As with PhilPapers, however, there's no quality filter, so if you are in any doubt about what you've found (as with any of the above resources) feel free to ask me first. Lastly, note that this *is* an acceptable use of Google's resources, where searching for philosophers or themes and then reading what you find absolutely is *not*.

5.6 Assessment

The module offers a choice of assessment. You can either write a long essay of between 4500 and 6000 words, or you can write a shorter coursework essay of between 3000 and 4000 words and take an exam. There are limitations on how many modules you can have assessed by long essay, though. For single honours students, it is no more than three and for dual honours students, it is no more than two. Project modules (where the only mode of assessment is a long essay) do count in these quotas, so if you do a project module, this counts as one of them. The last restriction on taking modules by long essay is that you cannot have more than two modules assessed by long essay in any one semester, regardless of

whether you are a single or dual honours student.

If you would like to write a long essay, you must have a plan approved by me by WEDNESDAY 20th NOVEMBER. Obviously, this will require me to have seen the plan in advance, so if you are planning on going for a long essay, you will need to send a plan some way before the deadline for submitting this plan. If need be, I can help and advise you on the plan and what you need to do to get it to a state in which I can sign it off. The penalties for not submitting an approved proposal in time are extremely severe – you lose 15 marks from whatever your final mark for the module is. So be aware that you should make contact with me well before the deadline for submitting a plan, if you would like to go for this mode of assessment. The deadline for final submission of a long essay is WEDNESDAY 29th JANUARY.

Equally, if you choose to go for a shorter-coursework-plus-exam mode of assessment, either because you want to or because you have to, there are some things you ought to be aware of as well. The examination questions *will* be pre-released at the end of the semester, before the exam. This will not, however, be the first time that you see the questions. Each lecture will feature an example of an examination question. I'll put this on the slides at the end. Eight of these questions will ultimately feature on the exam (and there will be nothing else on the exam). You will have to answer two of these eight questions. I'll make sure that they don't overlap in any significant sense (as well as not overlapping significantly with material from other courses that you might have taken/be taking) and you should therefore make sure that your answers don't use substantial amounts of the same material.

The deadline for the shorter coursework is TUESDAY 3rd DECEMBER.

Anyone writing an essay for this course (whether long or short) is entitled to an essay tutorial on the essay. This involves you sending me either a plan or a draft of the essay (I don't mind which) and then me giving you feedback on it/us discussing it. If you give me enough time beforehand (by sending the thing sufficiently far in advance) I can read the stuff you send beforehand and the tutorial will go much more smoothly. Be sensible about this, though. Chances are I'll be busy near deadlines with trying to see a lot of people, so you have a much better chance of getting the kind of feedback that might be helpful and a helpful meeting time if you send things appropriately in advance and are appropriately flexible when the time for essay tutorials comes around.

Whichever method of assessment you opt for, you will have to write at least one essay. Some useful advice for what you should do in writing essays is here and some equally useful advice for what you should *not* do is here (download on the right hand side).

5.7 Plagiarism

Here is the University's official statement on plagiarism (since I have declared this, it isn't plagiarism(!)):

It is plagiarism to present the written work of someone else, whether

an author, a lecturer, or another student, as your own. (You are, however, encouraged to discuss your work with your lecturer and fellow students.) All passages taken from other people's work, either word for word or with small changes, must be placed within quotation marks, with specific reference to author, title and page. No excuse can be accepted for any failure to do so, nor will inclusion of the source in a bibliography be considered an adequate acknowledgment.

The minimum penalty for plagiarism is ordinarily a mark of zero for the essay. Serious cases and repeat offences will be referred to the University Disciplinary Committee, which has the power to expel students from the University. Students in the past have lost their degrees because of plagiarism. Any case of plagiarism will be recorded in the student's permanent record.

The University subscribes to an electronic plagiarism detection service, which can check any piece of work against a vast database of web pages, essays available for purchase over the internet, and previously submitted student essays. This makes it fairly easy to detect plagiarism, as well as providing hard evidence to back up the claim that a student has cheated. It has resulted in numerous convictions in the past. So do not be tempted!

If you are in any doubt about what counts as fair and unfair use of other people's work, ask your tutor or lecturer for advice.

So basically, don't plagiarise! It's really bad, you can get into all kinds of trouble and people *do* get caught for it. It's really not worth your while.

5.8 Coursework Questions

These are the questions for the shorter coursework essays. Students wishing to undertake examination by long essay for this module are, however, very welcome to use these questions as a starting point.

- (1) Is there any such thing as assertion?
- (2) What are *lottery propositions*? When, if ever, can someone properly assert a lottery proposition?
- (3) 'Grice's theory of meaning provides an altogether more satisfactory account of how assertions acquire meaning than causal theories.' How far do you agree with this claim?
- (4) Is there a distinction between synthetic and analytic statements?
- (5) Can someone lie to someone else without intending to deceive her?
- (6) Does Kantian moral theory give an adequate account of when lying is morally wrong?

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6 Course Syllabus: *General Philosophy*

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6.1 Course Content

6.1.1 Course Overview

Week	Topic
1	Mind & Body
2	Personal Identity
3	Free Will
4	God and Evil
5	Scepticism
6	Knowledge
7	Induction
8	Writing Philosophy and Revision

There are two aims to the tuition for the *General Philosophy* paper. The first is to introduce you to some of the central issues that concern philosophers working in the analytic tradition in philosophy. The second is to give you an idea of how philosophers go about investigating those problems. This involves developing a feel for how philosophers develop theories, the kinds of problems that they are interested in and the type of argumentative moves that philosophers make in the course of evaluating their theories. The work done during the *General Philosophy* course will thus form a foundation for your future work in philosophy.

During the course, we will think about various topics in contemporary philosophy. These can be divided into two very broad camps. Our initial investigations will be focused on issues in *metaphysics*. We will start off by thinking about whether there is anything more to us than the physical bodies that we are individually connected with. From this point, we will move on to think what matters to our survival over time. Regardless of whether we think we are anything more than physical beings, we might think that some parts of us are more and less dispensable to our continued existence. It seems to us that, at least sometimes, we do things that are free. With our discussion of persistence in hand, we will think about what it means for us to act freely. Some people think that our being free involves our being able to do evil. Having considered what it means to be free, we will consider whether the existence of evil in the world provides us with evidence that there is no God.

Having thought about these issues, we will move on to thinking about some topics in *epistemology*. Our general inquiry will seek to investigate the question of what we can know and how we can know it. First, we will think about the

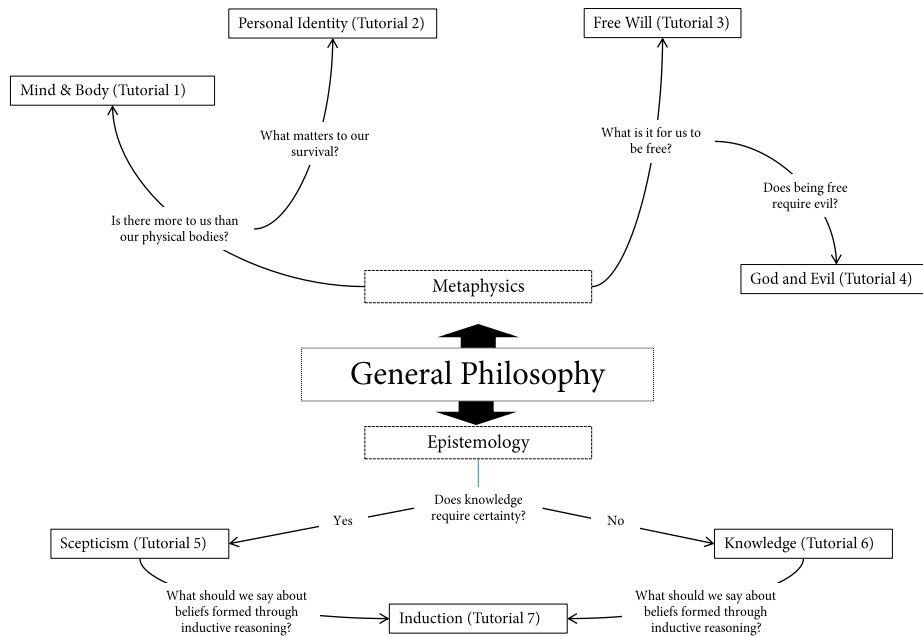
provocative thesis that nobody knows anything at all. Having understood the puzzling motivations for this idea, we will then go on to develop an account of what it is to know something, bearing in mind the various difficulties associated with attempts that philosophers have traditionally made at providing accounts of knowledge. Lastly, we will apply the observations that we have made about knowledge and our understanding of the problems associated with it to the issue of beliefs formed through inductive reasoning.

As you can tell from this, our approach to the course will be thematic. The *General Philosophy* paper is taught in one of two different ways (different tutors take different approaches). One approach involves teaching the course with a primary focus on Descartes and Hume. In thinking through the course in this way, students use the issues to form a general understanding of the broad theories developed by Descartes and Hume. The second way of approaching the course involves thinking about the themes as the most important point and using Descartes, Hume and other great philosophers to illustrate the issues that we will be discussing. In this course, we will be taking the second approach. We will look at writings by Descartes, Hume and other great philosophers, but we will do this with a primary focus on the issues that they are discussing. The reason that we will take this approach is because I think that it is easier to get a view of the issues first and then turn our attention historically. Approaching the issues through the eyes of historical writers is difficult, not least because of how they tend to write. Focusing on the issues first helps us bypass this difficulty.

If you are taking this paper as an 8 week course, we will be doing all of the above tutorials. If you are doing it as part of a 4 week course, we will be doing tutorials 1, 3, 5 and 6.

An idea of how all of this fits together is given below:

6.1.2 Concept Map



Obviously, there are more points of intersection between the different tutorials and there are more questions that connect the different issues than I've been able to map here. But these will come out more clearly as the course progresses. The map here gives you some idea of how interest in these topics gets going and how the course will progress.

6.2 Course Admin

6.2.1 Website

I'll post the materials for these tutorials on my website as we go along. They can be downloaded at:

www.stephenwrightphilosophy.com on the right-hand side of the page under the 'General Philosophy' link.

6.2.2 A Note on the Reading List

For each class, I have identified three types of reading. Readings that are required are exactly that – you must do them and should come to class prepared to discuss them. If you find some of them hard, though, I've identified some introductory readings to help you get a feel for what the required readings are

about. The introductory readings are there to help you with the required readings. In some cases, these take the form of podcasts or video discussions. They are *not* a substitute for the required readings. Finally, I've provided a list of some further readings. If you find a particular topic interesting and want to look into it further, then you should start your journey by looking at some of the further reasons. These are more advanced, more subtle and more taxing. But if you find the topic interesting, you'll find them rewarding.

† denotes required readings.

* denotes introductory readings.

denotes further readings.

Lastly, don't be shy about asking me if you find any of the readings hard to get hold of. If you can't find something, I'll either email you a PDF of it, or else replace it with something that you can find (or I can send you). The challenge is supposed to be in doing the readings and digesting them and writing essays. It isn't supposed to be in finding the readings.

6.2.3 Essays and Assessment

This course is assessed by a three-hour unseen examination, which you will take along with your other Finals examinations. There are, however, weekly essays that must be written before each tutorial. These will need to be around 2,000 words. If they are significantly shorter, you won't be able to do an adequate job of discussing the material that you've been looking at during the week. If they are significantly longer, they won't be as useful to you as preparation for when the examinations come around.

Essays need to be written and emailed to me (address above) at least 24 hours in advance of the tutorial. I'll read them and comment on them and get them back to you before the tutorial starts. This is another reason that they shouldn't be too long. If they're substantially over 2,000 words, then I won't have time to read them. During the tutorial, I won't get you to read out your essay, but you should have it with you, because the material that you've developed will be relevant to the questions that we'll be thinking about and you're warmly encouraged to use the content of your essays in discussion.

6.2.4 Tutorials

In tutorials, we'll be talking about four things:

- (1) The readings that you've been looking at.
- (2) The essay that you've written.
- (3) Anything that you're particularly keen to discuss.
- (4) A set of questions on the subject that I've prepared.

Different tutorials might give different weight to each of (1)-(4) and that's absolutely fine. In some tutorials we might discuss your essay less, or you might have

fewer questions occurring to you in other tutorials. If nothing obvious emerges, then we'll work through a set of pre-prepared questions that I'll have put together on the topic of the tutorial. I'll give you a copy of these at the end of the tutorial and at the end of the course, I'll make a copy of the course outline with all of the questions available. But I won't tell you what the questions will be in advance. The reason is that you will ultimately be assessed by an unseen examination and this will test your understanding and your ability to think on your feet. One of the best ways to prepare for this is to confront questions that you haven't previously seen and think your way through them, with some support, advice and guidance. That's what having an unseen question sheet in tutorials simulates. After the tutorials, you can use the questions to structure your own revision, if you wish. The questions won't be a comprehensive list of everything that might come up and they won't all be essay questions. Some will simply test your understanding. But working your way through them would be a good way to start your revision when the time comes.

6.2.5 Doing Philosophy

During your time doing philosophical work, you'll want to read things that aren't on the reading lists. And it's really important that what you read is good quality. It's very easy to waste a lot of time and energy in philosophy reading stuff that just isn't helpful. If you read stuff from poor sources, you're liable to wind up confused or misinformed. You want to be reading things that are written by people who have, at the very least, more philosophical experience than you. In the case of several sources, though, there's no filtering or checking to make sure that this is the case. Obviously, the reading lists provided by the faculty are a great place to look. But even they don't contain *everything*. With that in mind, here are some guidelines for you to get you started. As always, do get in touch and ask me if you find yourself in any doubt at all.

Some good places to start your reading are:

The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy at <http://plato.stanford.edu> is an excellent resource. It gives you an overview of some of the topics that we'll be working on and also comes with a useful bibliography, all of which is of an appropriate quality for you to be using.

The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy at <http://www.iep.utm.edu/> is another excellent online philosophy encyclopedia. Like the Stanford Encyclopedia, its entries are reviewed before they are published and also have useful suggestions for further reading.

Philpapers at <http://www.philpapers.org> is an online collection of philosophy articles that can be searched by category. There are some excellent articles on here and the site is a useful way of finding things to read. This site requires some caution, though. Unlike the above two, anyone can add their papers, regardless of whether or not they have actually been published in journals, or are ever going to be! As a rule of thumb, if you can't see publication details for a paper on this site, then proceed with caution. This notwithstanding, it is an excellent and important source.

Google Scholar at <http://scholar.google.co.uk/> is a relatively recent research tool and one that's extremely useful. The best thing that you can use Google Scholar for is finding papers that are relevant to what you've been reading. If you run a search for a paper that you've just read, Google Scholar will help throw up any papers that have cited the paper you searched for. This is extremely useful for helping you figure out where to go next. As with PhilPapers, however, there's no quality filter, so if you are in any doubt about what you've found (as with any of the above resources) feel free to ask me first. Lastly, note that this *is* an acceptable use of Google's resources, where searching for philosophers or themes and then reading what you find absolutely is *not*. Likewise, stay off looking for things on Wikipedia.

There is a skill to writing philosophy papers. It is invariably one that you will develop as the course goes along. But for a general idea of what makes for a good philosophy essay, you could usefully look at the following guide for students, by James Pryor: <http://www.jimpryor.net/teaching/guidelines/writing.html>.

Equally, there are certain things that really wind up philosophers when they're reading essays. There's a good list of some of these things, compiled by Jimmy Lenman on the right-hand side of this page:

<http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/philosophy/staff/profiles/lenman>.

Obviously, nobody expects you to have a flair for essay writing at this early stage. And we'll be looking to improve your essay-writing skills throughout the course, particularly in the final tutorial. But it would be good if we didn't have to go over all of these points then and were able to get stuck into some of the finer points of writing good philosophy essays.

6.2.6 Preliminary Reading

In preparing for this course, chances are that you probably won't have done extensive amounts in philosophy before, even if you've done a philosophy A-level or something similar. Since we'll be looking at some of the central problems of philosophy, a good place to start your background reading might be the following:

Bertrand Russell (1912) *The Problems of Philosophy*

I haven't included any publisher info for this book because there are so many different editions of it, but any of them will do for our purposes.

6.3 Tutorial 1 – Mind & Body

We will begin our work on the *General Philosophy* paper by thinking about the question of whether or not there is anything more to us than our physical selves. Obviously, each of us is intimately associated with a physical body in some way, but each of us also appears to have a mental life as well. In this tutorial, we will think about whether our mental lives should be thought of as separate from our physical selves and if so, in what sense they are separate. We will begin by looking at some of the arguments that Descartes brought to bear on the subject and his argumentative strategy. With this in hand, we will turn to consider modern day approaches to dualism.

- † Rene Descartes (1641). *Meditations on First Philosophy* Cambridge: Cambridge Texts in the History of Philosophy. Meditations 2 and 6.
- † Frank Jackson (1982). ‘Epiphenomenal Qualia’ *Philosophical Quarterly* 32:127-136.
- † Margaret D. Wilson (1976). ‘Descartes: The Epistemological Argument for Mind-Body Distinctness’ *Nous* 10:3-15.
- * John Heil (2004). *Philosophy of Mind: A Contemporary Introduction* London: Routledge. Chapters 2 and 3.
- * The *Philosophy TV* debate between David Papineau and Philip Goff. Available [here](#).
- # Frank Jackson (1986). ‘What Mary Didn’t Know’ *Journal of Philosophy* 83:291-295.
- # Louise Antony (2007). ‘Everybody Has Got It: A Defence of Non-Reductive Materialism’ in Brian McLaughlin and Jonathan Cohen (eds.), *Contemporary Debates in the Philosophy of Mind* London: Blackwell, pp. 143-149.
- # David Papineau (2001). ‘The Rise of Physicalism’ in Carl Gillett & Barry M. Loewer (eds.), *Physicalism and its Discontents*. Cambridge University Press pp. 3-36.

Question: What is the best argument to the conclusion that the mind is distinct from the body? Does it succeed?

6.4 Tutorial 2 – Personal Identity

Having thought about the question of whether there is more to us than the physical beings that we are closely associated with, we will turn our attention to consider what kind of thing we are and how we persist. It seems natural, at first sight, to think that there is an open question of whether we continue to exist through time by virtue of our mental lives continuing or our physical lives continuing. In this tutorial, we will be focused on thinking about what matters for our persistence over time. We will look at Locke's view that our persistence is a matter of a psychological connection with our past selves and compare this to some more recent views that place the significance elsewhere.

- † John Locke (1689). *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* Book II, Chapter XXVII.
- † Eric Olson (2003). 'An Argument for Animalism' in Raymond Martin and John Barresi (eds.), *Personal Identity* Malden: Blackwell Publishing pp. 318-334.
- † Sydney Shoemaker (1970). 'Persons and Their Pasts' *American Philosophical Quarterly* 7 (4):269-85.
- * The *Philosophy Bites* contribution on Personal Identity by Christopher Shields. Available [here](#).
- * John Perry (ed.), (1975). *Personal Identity* Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, pp. 3-32.
- # Eric Olson (1997). 'Was I Ever a Fetus?' *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 57 (1):95-110.
- # W.R. Carter (1999). 'Will I Be A Dead Person?' *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 59 (1):167-171.
- # Derek Parfit (1984). *Reasons and Persons* Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 245-280.

Question: What does it take for people to persist through time?

6.5 Tutorial 3 – Free Will

Human beings often contend that they are free, at least some of the time. In this tutorial we will organise our thinking around the question of what it means for human beings to be free. According to one set of views, human freedom cannot exist in a deterministic universe, but not in an indeterministic one. According to another set, human freedom can exist in both a deterministic universe and an indeterministic one. And according to a final set of views, human freedom cannot exist in either a deterministic universe or an indeterministic one. We will assess each of these positions and seek to figure out what it means to say that human beings are free and what this has to do with moral responsibility.

- † Galen Strawson (1994). ‘The Impossibility of Moral Responsibility’ *Philosophical Studies* 75:5-24.
- † Harry Frankfurt (1969). ‘Alternate Possibilities and Moral Responsibility’ *Journal of Philosophy* 66:829-39.
- † Peter van Inwagen (1975). ‘The Incompatibility of Free Will and Determinism’ *Philosophical Studies* 27:185-199.
- * Robert Kane (2005). *A Contemporary Introduction to Free Will* Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- * The *Philosophy Bites* contribution on Free Will by Daniel Dennett. Available [here](#).
- # Daniel Dennett (1984). *Elbow Room: The Varieties of Free Will Worth Wanting* Cambridge MA: MIT Press.
- # Peter van Inwagen (1986). *An Essay on Free Will* Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- # Kadri Vihvelin (2008). ‘Compatibilism, Incompatibilism, and Impossibilism’ in Theodore Sider, John Hawthorne & Dean W. Zimmerman (eds.), *Contemporary Debates in Metaphysics*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing 303-318.

Question: What does it mean to say that you ‘are able to do otherwise’ and what does this have to do with being free?

6.6 Tutorial 4 – God and Evil

Having thought about what it means to be free in the previous tutorial, we will turn our attention in this tutorial to thinking about an issue in which the idea of being free plays a significant role. We will be thinking about the relationship between God and evil. One line of argument for atheism appeals to the idea that evil exists in the world and this provides evidence for atheism. In this tutorial we will think about two related questions. The first concerns how far the existence of evil in the world really does indicate that God doesn't exist. The second is how far an appeal to free will can go towards providing a response to this argument.

† David Hume (1779). *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion* Indiana: Hackett, Parts X and XI.

† David Lewis (1993). 'Evil for Freedom's Sake?' *Philosophical Papers* 22 (3):149-172.

† William Rowe (1979). 'The Problem of Evil and Some Varieties of Atheism' *American Philosophical Quarterly* 37:405-419.

* Justin McBrayer's overview of the Problem of Evil, available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6>

* T.J. Mawson (2005). *Belief in God: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion* Oxford: Oxford University Press, Chapter 12.

Nelson Pike (1963). 'Hume on Evil' *Philosophical Review* 72:180-197.

J.L. Mackie (1955). 'Evil and Omnipotence' *Mind* 64 (254):200-212.

Richard Swinburne (2004). *The Existence of God* Oxford: Oxford University Press, Chapter 11

Question: In what sense, if any, does the existence of evil indicate against God's existence?

6.7 Tutorial 5 – Scepticism

In this tutorial, we will begin our thinking about epistemology. We will consider two lines of sceptical argument that indicate that we don't know anything much at all. We will think about the consequences of these arguments and examine various strategies for resisting them. One such strategy comes from Descartes. Another takes off from the point that Descartes' argument leaves things. In particular, we will think about the question of whether or not we can know something even if we don't have evidence that guarantees its truth. Put another way, we will examine the relationship between knowledge and certainty.

- † Rene Descartes (1641). *Meditations on First Philosophy* Cambridge: Cambridge Texts in the History of Philosophy. Meditation 1.
- † Michael Huemer (2001). *Skepticism and the Veil of Perception* Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield. Chapter 2.
- † G.E. Moore (1939). 'Proof of an External World' *Proceedings of the British Academy* 25:273-300.
- * Noah Lemos (2007). *An Introduction to the Theory of Knowledge* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Chapter 7.
- * Duncan Pritchard (2010). *What is this Thing Called Knowledge? 2nd Edition* London: Routledge. Chapter 13.
- # Paul Faulkner (2005). 'On Dreaming and Being Lied To' *Episteme* 2:149-159.
- # James Van Cleve (1979). Foundationalism, Epistemic Principles, and the Cartesian Circle. *Philosophical Review* 88:55 - 91.
- # Barry Stroud (1989). Understanding Human Knowledge in General in Marjorie Clay & Keith Lehrer (eds.), *Knowledge and Skepticism* Westview Press.

Question: Can I know that I'm not dreaming? How does this relate to the possibility of me knowing that I have two hands?

6.8 Tutorial 6 – Knowledge

Following on from our discussion of scepticism and the relationship between knowledge and certainty, we will think about what it means to say that someone knows something. If we want to allow that people can know things even if they are not certain of them, it seems as though we should give an account of knowledge that encapsulates this thought. The trouble is, however, once we start thinking of knowledge in terms of belief that isn't guaranteed to be true, it becomes difficult to see how we can distinguish between beliefs that amount to knowledge and beliefs that don't. In this tutorial, we will look at the philosophical problem of Gettier cases and think about how we might respond to this problem.

- † Edmund Gettier (1963). 'Is Justified True Belief Knowledge?' *Analysis* 23:121-123.
- † Linda Zagzebski (1994). 'The Inescapability of Gettier Problems' *Philosophical Quarterly* 44:65-73.
- † A.J. Ayer (1956). 'Knowing as Having the Right to be Sure' in *The Problem of Knowledge* London: MacMillan 22-24, 28-34, 41-44. Reprinted in Sven Bernecker and Fred Dretske (2000). *Knowledge: Readings in Contemporary Epistemology* Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- * Michael Williams (2001). *Problems of Knowledge: A Critical Introduction to Epistemology* Oxford: Oxford University Press. Chapter 4.
- * Jonathan Dancy (1986). *An Introduction to Contemporary Epistemology* Oxford: Basil Blackwell. Chapter 2.
- # Sturgeon (1993). 'The Gettier Problem' *Analysis* 53:156-164.
- # Ernest Sosa (1964). 'The Analysis of 'Knowledge That P'' *Analysis* 25:1-8.
- # Robert Shope (1983). *The Analysis of Knowing: A Decade of Research* Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

Question: What are the difficulties with understanding knowledge as justified true belief?

6.9 Tutorial 7 – Induction

In this tutorial, we will come to consider an application of our previous theorising about epistemology. It seems as though one way of forming knowledge or justified belief involves reasoning on the basis of previous observations. But an interesting question concerns which inferences of this type yield justified beliefs and which do not. We will look at the problem of induction, concerning how beliefs formed through inductive reasoning can be justified and we will consider Nelson Goodman's new riddle of induction, which challenges us to distinguish between inductive reasoning that yields justified belief and inductive reasoning that doesn't. We will examine these problems from the perspectives of the epistemological positions that we have examined in the previous two tutorials.

- † David Hume (1740). *A Treatise of Human Nature* Oxford: Clarendon Press. Book 1, Part 3, Section 6.
- † Bertrand Russell (1912). *The Problems of Philosophy* London: Thornton Butterworth. Chapter 6.
- † Nelson Goodman (1983). *Fact, Fiction, and Forecast* Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press. Chapters 3&4.
- † P.F. Strawson (1952). *Introduction to Logical Theory* London: Methuen.
- * Adam Morton (2003). *A Guide Through the Theory of Knowledge* London: Blackwell.
- * The Stanford Encyclopedia Entry on the Problem of Induction.
- # David Papineau (1992). 'Reliabilism, Induction and Scepticism' *Philosophical Quarterly* 42:1-20.
- # Hans Reichenbach (1940). 'On the Justification of Induction' *Journal of Philosophy* 37:97-103.
- # Karl Popper (1935). *The Logic of Scientific Discovery* London: Routledge.

Question: How, if at all, can induction be justified?

6.10 Tutorial 8 – Writing Philosophy and Revision

Exactly how we will approach this tutorial depends on how the rest of the tutorials have gone. There are several things that we can do. One thing we could do is try to improve your general ability to write philosophy essays. There are a couple of ways in which we can go about this. One is the writing project, which involves you writing a summary of a philosophical paper, looking for specific details from it. The second involves you writing timed responses to particular exam questions, which we can then discuss in the tutorial and set about figuring out how to improve them.

Another option for the tutorial involves using it to go back over particular parts of the previous tutorials that you're unclear on, or would like to discuss further in a bit more detail. Doing this won't involve redoing any of the tutorials, but we'll pick out particular themes that might be worth exploring and see about investigating these in more detail. It will give you a chance to develop your views on some of this material further and think about it more carefully with a view to preparing for the exam. In this way, we could also think about some of the connections between the different areas that we haven't been able to bring out in thinking about the issues individually during the tutorials.

Lastly, we could spend the tutorial expanding your knowledge of the material by thinking about the philosophy of Descartes and Hume more generally. During the tutorials, we will be thinking about the issues with one eye on Descartes and Hume and their contributions to those issues. We can think about the bigger pictures concerning Descartes and Hume and get a broader perspective on their general philosophical approaches. As I described earlier in this document, this is one way of approaching this tutorial course. It isn't the way that we take, but we could have a think about the general philosophical overviews of Descartes and Hume in the final tutorial to give a broader perspective on the issues that we have been thinking about.

7 Course Syllabus *Philosophy of Religion*

Stephen Wright
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Michaelmas 2015

7.1 Course Content

7.1.1 Course Overview

Week	Topic
1	Evidentialism and Reformed Epistemology
2	Ontological Arguments
3	Cosmological Arguments
4	Arguments from Design
5	Omniscience
6	Freedom and Foreknowledge
7	Omnipotence and Benevolence
8	The Problem of Evil

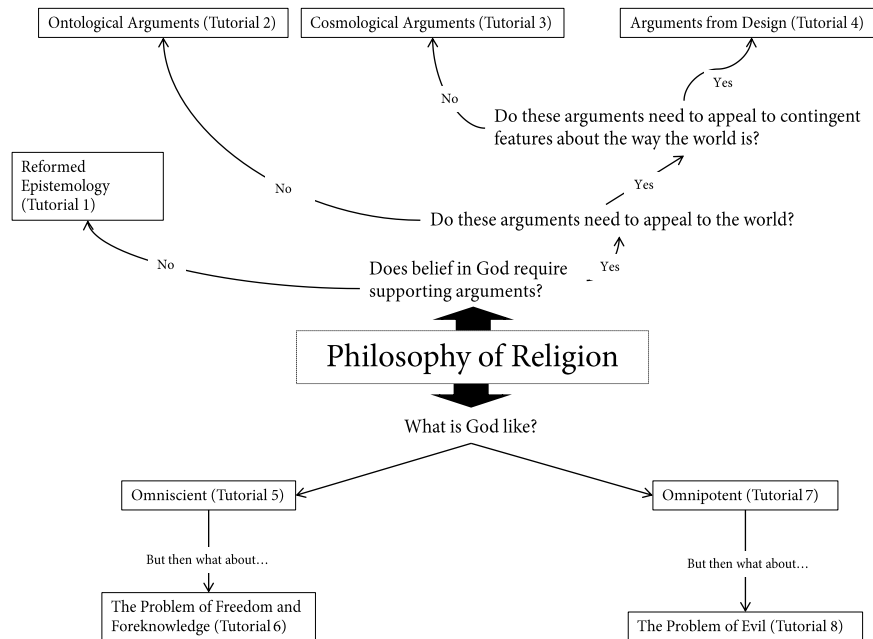
In the *Philosophy of Religion* course, we will look at the theories of various prominent authors that have been concerned with justification for belief in God and the nature of God. Most prominently, we will look at Hume's *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion* and more recent work by Alvin Plantinga, Richard Swinburne and J.L. Mackie. Our approach, however, will be a thematic one. We will be thinking about some of the fundamental questions concerning the nature of God, the existence of God and the respectability or otherwise of belief in God. The course is divided into two parts. In the first part of the course, we will consider arguments for the existence of God. We will begin by considering whether or not such arguments are required for rational belief in God at all, looking at Alvin Plantinga's *reformed epistemology*, which claims that they are not. With this in hand, we will come to consider *ontological arguments*, *cosmological arguments* and *arguments from design*, three prominent types of argument that purport to establish the existence of God.

During the second part of the course, we will turn our attention to the kinds of properties that God is supposed to have and consider the implications of God having these kinds of properties. We will begin by thinking about the idea that God is supposed to be all-knowing, or *omniscient*. Initially, we will consider what being omniscient amounts to, before considering whether there is a problem with God being omniscient because God's omniscience prevents human free action. Having considered omniscience and its relationship to human freedom, we will then go on to consider the idea that God is supposed to be all-powerful, or *omnipotent*. Having considered what omnipotence amounts to, we will consider whether or not the existence of evil in the world provides evidence against the

idea that God is both omnipotent and morally impeccable.

An idea of how all of this fits together is given below:

7.1.2 Concept Map



7.2 Course Admin

7.2.1 Website

I'll post the materials for these tutorials on my website as we go along. They can be downloaded at:

www.stephenwrightphilosophy.com on the right-hand side of the page under the 'Philosophy of Religion' link.

7.2.2 A Note on the Reading List

For each class I've identified two different types of reading. Readings marked as required are exactly that – they're readings you just have to do. Some of these are hard, but don't worry, we can discuss anything that you don't understand in tutorials. After this, there are some further readings. These you will want to look at in your own time, possibly after the tutorial (or maybe before) and they will help develop your thinking on these subjects further. For the purposes of the tutorial essay, however, I'd like you to focus particularly carefully on the readings

that I've identified as required for the class. This is *not* to say that all of the readings for each week will be relevant to every essay for that week. You'll have to use (and develop) your judgement for working out what is and isn't useful in each case. But it is to say that you should read those required readings particularly carefully because I'll be expecting you to know about them in advance of the tutorial.

† denotes required reading.

* denotes background reading.

Lastly, don't be shy about asking me if you find any of the readings hard to get hold of. If you can't find any of the readings, I'll either email you a PDF of it or else replace it on the reading list with something that can be found or sent.

7.2.3 Essays and Assessment

This course is assessed by a three-hour unseen examination, which you will take along with your other Finals examinations. There are, however, weekly essays that must be written before each tutorial. If your other course requirements enable you to claim an exemption from writing essays in any particular week, then you must let me know about this in the week before you come to write the essay (so if you're claiming an exemption from an essay in 7th week, then you must let me know this by the end of the tutorial in 6th week.)

Exemptions aside, you are required to write and submit an essay of around 2,000 words each week. This needs to be written and emailed to me (address above) at least 24 hours in advance of the tutorial. I'll read them and comment on them and get them back to you before the tutorial starts. During the tutorial, I won't get you to read out your essay, but you should have it with you, because the material that you've developed will be relevant to the questions that we'll be thinking about and you're warmly encouraged to use the content of your essays in discussion.

7.2.4 Tutorials

In tutorials, we'll be talking about four things:

- (1) The readings that you've been looking at.
- (2) The essay that you've written.
- (3) Anything that you're particularly keen to discuss.
- (4) A set of questions on the subject that I've prepared.

Different tutorials might give different weight to each of (1)-(4) and that's absolutely fine. In some tutorials we might discuss your essay less, or you might have fewer questions occurring to you in other tutorials. If nothing obvious emerges, then we'll work through a set of pre-prepared questions that I'll have put together on the topic of the tutorial. I'll give you a copy of these at the end of the tutorial and at the end of the course, I'll make a copy of the course outline with

all of the questions available. But I won't tell you what the questions will be in advance. The reason is that you will ultimately be assessed by an unseen examination and this will test your understanding and your ability to think on your feet. One of the best ways to prepare for this is to confront questions that you haven't previously seen and think your way through them, with some support, advice and guidance. That's what having an unseen question sheet in tutorials simulates. After the tutorials, you can use the questions to structure your own revision, if you wish. The questions won't be a comprehensive list of everything that might come up and they won't all be essay questions. Some will simply test your understanding. But working your way through them would be a good way to start your revision when the time comes.

7.2.5 Doing Philosophy

During your time doing philosophical work, you'll want to read things that aren't on the reading lists. And it's really important that what you read is good quality. It's very easy to waste a lot of time and energy in philosophy reading stuff that just isn't helpful. If you read stuff from poor sources, you're liable to wind up confused or misinformed. You want to be reading things that are written by people who have, at the very least, more philosophical experience than you. In the case of several sources, though, there's no filtering or checking to make sure that this is the case. Obviously, the reading lists provided by the faculty are a great place to look. But even they don't contain *everything*. With that in mind, here are some guidelines for you to get you started. As always, do get in touch and ask me if you find yourself in any doubt at all.

Some good places to start your reading are:

The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy at <http://plato.stanford.edu> is an excellent resource. It gives you an overview of some of the topics that we'll be working on and also comes with a useful bibliography, all of which is of an appropriate quality for you to be using.

The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy at <http://www.iep.utm.edu/> is another excellent online philosophy encyclopedia. Like the Stanford Encyclopedia, its entries are reviewed before they are published and also have useful suggestions for further reading.

Philpapers at <http://www.philpapers.org> is an online collection of philosophy articles that can be searched by category. There are some excellent articles on here and the site is a useful way of finding things to read. This site requires some caution, though. Unlike the above two, anyone can add their papers, regardless of whether or not they have actually been published in journals, or are ever going to be! As a rule of thumb, if you can't see publication details for a paper on this site, then proceed with caution. This notwithstanding, it is an excellent and important source.

Google Scholar at <http://scholar.google.co.uk/> is a relatively recent research tool and one that's extremely useful. The best thing that you can use Google Scholar for is finding papers that are relevant to what you've been reading. If you run a search for a paper that you've just read, Google Scholar will help throw

up any papers that have cited the paper you searched for. This is extremely useful for helping you figure out where to go next. As with PhilPapers, however, there's no quality filter, so if you are in any doubt about what you've found (as with any of the above resources) feel free to ask me first. Lastly, note that this *is* an acceptable use of Google's resources, where searching for philosophers or themes and then reading what you find absolutely is *not*. Likewise, stay off looking for things on Wikipedia.

7.2.6 Preliminary Reading

If you haven't previously taken any kind of introductory epistemology or metaphysics course before, then I would recommend either of the following books to give you an overview of the kind of epistemology and metaphysics that we'll encounter on this course:

Peter van Inwagen (2009) *Metaphysics* (3rd Edition) Boulder: Westview Press.
Michael Williams (2001) *Problems of Knowledge: A Critical Introduction to Epistemology* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

If, on the other hand, you have studied epistemology and metaphysics before, then I would recommend either of the following introductions to the philosophy of religion:

Brian Davies (2004) *An Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion* Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Linda Zagzebski (2007) *The Philosophy of Religion: An Historical Introduction* London: Blackwell Publishing.

Both the Davies and Zagzebski books discuss many of the issues that we'll be thinking about during this course.

7.3 Tutorial 1 – Evidentialism and Reformed Epistemology

We will begin our investigation into the philosophy of religion by considering the question of whether or not belief in God needs to be supported by the kind of evidence provided by independent argumentation. According to reformed epistemologists, belief in God can be properly basic, the idea being that it does not stand in need of independent justification (though belief in God might be justified only if there is no counterevidence). This view has an affinity with *foundationalism* in contemporary epistemology. By contrast, those taken with evidentialism hold that belief in God being justified depends on the provision of some suitable argument to the conclusion that God exists.

- † Plantinga, Alvin (2000). Religious Belief as Properly Basic, in Davies, Brian (ed.), *Philosophy of Religion: A Guide and Anthology* Oxford: Oxford University Press 42-94.
- † Audi, Robert (2008). Belief, Faith, and Acceptance. *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 63 (1/3):87-102.
- * Alston, William P. (2001). Religious Belief and Values. *Faith and Philosophy* 18 (1):36-49.
- * Swinburne, Richard (1981). *Faith and Reason* Oxford: Oxford University Press, Chapter 3.
- * Kretzmann, Norman (2000). Evidence and Religious Belief, in Davies, Brian (ed.), *Philosophy of Religion: A Guide and Anthology* Oxford: Oxford University Press 95-107.
- * van Inwagen, Peter (1996). It Is Wrong, Everywhere, Always, for Anyone, to Believe Anything Upon Insufficient Evidence, in Jeff Jordan & Daniel Howard-Snyder (eds.), *Faith, Freedom and Rationality* Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield 137-154.
- * Pritchard, Duncan (2000). Is ‘God Exists’ a ‘Hinge Proposition’ of Religious Belief? *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 47 (3):129-140.

Questions: Can one be rational, justified or warranted in holding a religious belief without independent evidence?

7.4 Tutorial 2 – Ontological Arguments

God is supposed to have certain properties. Furthermore, he is supposed to have these properties *essentially*. According to most, he is supposed to be a perfect being or a being greater than anything else that can be conceived. Ontological arguments seek to show that having these properties implies existence. So we get a reason for thinking that God exists from considering God's essential nature. We'll have a look at three different types of ontological argument. The first comes from St. Anselm, the second is Descartes' ontological argument from the *Meditations* and the third, which will be our primary focus, is the *modal ontological argument* from Alvin Plantinga.

- † Plantinga, Alvin (1974). *God, Freedom, and Evil* Michigan: Harper & Row, Part IIc.
- † Tooley, Michael (1981). Plantinga's Defence of the Ontological Argument. *Mind* 90 (359):422-427.
- * van Inwagen, Peter (1977). Ontological Arguments. *Nous* 11 (4):375-395.
- * Descartes, Rene (1641). *Meditations on First Philosophy* Cambridge: Cambridge Texts in the History of Philosophy, Meditation 5.
- * Gassendi, Pierre, Caterus, Johannes and Descartes, Rene (2000). Descartes Replies to Critics, in Davies, Brian (ed.), *Philosophy of Religion: A Guide and Anthology* Oxford: Oxford University Press 330-337.
- * Kant, Immanuel (1781). *Critique of Pure Reason* Cambridge: The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant, A592-602/B620-630.
- * Mackie, J.L. (1982). *The Miracle of Theism* Oxford: Oxford University Press, Chapter 3.

Question: 'If non-existence disqualifies something from being the greatest conceivable thing, then the material universe is the greatest conceivable thing, because it is the greatest thing that exists. So in proving the existence of the greatest conceivable thing the ontological argument does not prove the existence of God.' Is this a respectable response to the ontological proof?

7.5 Tutorial 3 – Cosmological Arguments

Cosmological arguments seek to move from the fact that there is a world to show that God exists. We will investigate three strategies for doing this in this tutorial. Firstly, we will look at strategies that seek to exploit the idea that everything that exists must have some cause, including the universe. We will also think about cosmological arguments that appeal to the idea of the *Principle of Sufficient Reason*. Lastly, we will think about the cosmological argument given by Aquinas, which exploits the idea of a *first cause*.

- † Rowe, William L. (1970). Two Criticisms of the Cosmological Argument. *The Monist* 54 (3):441-459.
- † Craig, William Lane (1984). Professor Mackie and the Kalam Cosmological Argument. *Religious Studies* 20 (3):367 - 375.
- † Mackie, J.L. (1982). *The Miracle of Theism* Oxford: Oxford University Press, Chapter 5.
- * Aquinas, Thomas (2000). A Thirteenth-Century Cosmological Argument, in Davies, Brian (ed.), *Philosophy of Religion: A Guide and Anthology* Oxford: Oxford University Press 188-190.
- * Sadowsky, James A. (1980). The Cosmological Argument and the Endless Regress. *International Philosophical Quarterly* 20 (4):465-467.
- * Anscombe, G.E.M. (1974). 'Whatever Has a Beginning of Existence Must Have a Cause': Hume's Argument Exposed. *Analysis* 34 (5):145-151.
- * van Inwagen, Peter (2009). *Metaphysics* Boulder: Westview Press, Chapter 7.
- * Swinburne, Richard (2004). *The Existence of God* (2nd Edition) Oxford: Oxford University Press, Chapter 7.
- * Oppy, Graham (1991). Craig, Mackie, and the Kalam Cosmological Argument. *Religious Studies* 27 (2):189-197.

Question: Does any version of the cosmological argument provide a good argument for the existence of God?

7.6 Tutorial 4 – Arguments from Design

Arguments from design claim that an argument for the existence of God comes from the observation that the world exhibits certain features. Specifically, the world appears to have been designed. In this tutorial we will examine various different types of design argument. We will focus our attention on two separate points. Firstly, we will consider whether or not the world really exhibits the kinds of features that advocates of design arguments seek to appeal to. Secondly, we will consider whether or not these features of the world (if they exist) support the kind of argument for God's existence that defenders of design arguments claim that they do.

- † Hume, David (1779). *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion* Indiana: Hackett, Parts II and V.
- † Swinburne, Richard (2004). *The Existence of God* (2nd Edition) Oxford: Oxford University Press, Chapter 8.
- † van Inwagen, Peter (2009). *Metaphysics* (3rd Edition) Philadelphia: Westview Press, Chapter 9.
- * Mackie, J.L. (1982). *The Miracle of Theism* Oxford: Oxford University Press, Chapter 8.
- * Paley, William (2000). An Especially Famous Design Argument, in Davies, Brian (ed.), *Philosophy of Religion: A Guide and Anthology* Oxford: Oxford University Press 253-259.
- * Plantinga, Alvin (1974). *God, Freedom, and Evil* Michigan: Harper & Row, Part IIb.
- * Leslie, John (1982). Anthropic Principle, World Ensemble, Design. *American Philosophical Quarterly* 19 (2):141-151.
- * Swinburne, Richard (1972). The Argument From Design - a Defence. *Religious Studies* 8 (3):193-205.
- * Geach, P. T. (1973). An Irrelevance of Omnipotence. *Philosophy* 48 (186):327-333.

Question: Is any form of design argument still viable?

7.7 Tutorial 5 – Omniscience

Omniscience is supposed to be one of God's properties. In this tutorial, we'll think about what this amounts to. We'll start by thinking about what it means for God to be omniscient, whether or not there are things that an omniscient God might not be able to know, before moving on to think about the extent to which the kind of knowledge that an omniscient God might have is similar in kind of the kind of everyday knowledge about the world that human beings with finite minds might have.

- † Kretzmann, N. (1966). Omniscience and Immutability. *Journal of Philosophy* 63 (14):409-420.
- † Grim, Patrick (1985). Against Omniscience: The Case From Essential Indexicals. *Noûs* 19 (2):151-180.
- † Castañeda, Hector-Neri (1967). Omniscience and Indexical Reference. *Journal of Philosophy* 64 (7):203-210.
- * Plantinga, Alvin and Grim, Patrick (1993). Truth, Omniscience, and Cantorian Arguments: An Exchange. *Philosophical Studies* 71 (3):267-306.
- * Hoffman, Joshua and Rosenkrantz, Gary S. (2002). *The Divine Attributes* Malden: Blackwell, Chapter 6.
- * Aquinas, Thomas (2000). Why Ascribe Knowledge to God? in Davies, Brian (ed.), *Philosophy of Religion: A Guide and Anthology* Oxford: Oxford University Press 446-455.
- * Wierenga, Edward (1989). *The Nature of God: An Inquiry into the Divine Attributes* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, Chapter 2.
- * Swinburne, Richard (1977). *The Coherence of Theism* Oxford: Oxford University Press, Chapter 10.
- * Chisholm, Roderick (1976). Knowledge and Belief: 'De Dicto' and 'De Re'. *Philosophical Studies* 29 (1):1-20.

Question: What could an omniscient God fail to know?

7.8 Tutorial 6 – Freedom and Foreknowledge

Following on from our discussion of omniscience, we will consider the implications of God's omniscience for the possibility of human freedom. According to one plausible-looking line of thought, since God already knows what we're going to do (and not just knows but *infallibly knows*) what we do isn't up to us in any interesting sense. The idea is that it's already decided at the point that we seem to make up our minds. In this tutorial, we will think about whether or not human freedom can be made compatible with God's infallible foreknowledge.

- † Alvin Plantinga (1999). On Ockham's Way Out, in Stump, Eleanor and Murray, Michael J (eds.), *Philosophy of Religion: The Big Questions* Oxford: Blackwell Publishing 13-27.
- † Zagzebski, Linda (2002). Recent Work on Divine Foreknowledge and Free Will, in Kane, Robert (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Free Will* Oxford: Oxford University Press 45-64.
- † Stump, Eleanore & Kretzmann, Norman (1981). Eternity. *Journal of Philosophy* 78 (8):429-458.
- * Hasker, William (1985). Foreknowledge and Necessity. *Faith and Philosophy* 2 (2):121-156.
- * Craig, William Lane (1998). On Hasker's Defense of Anti-Molinism. *Faith and Philosophy* 15 (2):236-240.
- * Brant, Dale Eric (1997). On Plantinga's Way Out. *Faith and Philosophy* 14 (3):334-352.
- * Stump, Eleanore & Kretzmann, Norman (1991). Prophecy, Past Truth, and Eternity. *Philosophical Perspectives* 5:395-424.
- * Pike, Nelson (1965). Divine Omniscience and Voluntary Action. *Philosophical Review* 74 (1):27-46.

Question: 'For the future to be under my control, it must be that I can determine facts about the future. If there are such facts, then God can know them. If God can know them, then He can infallibly know them. So God can infallibly know the future even though the future is under my control.' Is this argument any good?

7.9 Tutorial 7 – Omnipotence and Moral Perfection

The God of classical theism is supposed to be omnipotent. In this tutorial, we'll think about what being omnipotent amounts to. Even an omnipotent being, most theists say, can't perform logical impossible actions or create contradictory things. This just isn't part of what being omnipotent means. In the light of this observation, we'll think about the relationship between omnipotence and being perfectly moral. One might think that being perfectly moral involves creating the best of all possible worlds. But what if this is a logical impossibility?

- † Wierenga, Edward (1989). *The Nature of God: An Inquiry into the Divine Attributes* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, Chapter 1.
- † Wielenberg, Erik J. (2000). Omnipotence Again. *Faith and Philosophy* 17 (1):26-47.
- † Pike, Nelson (1969). Omnipotence and God's Ability to Sin. *American Philosophical Quarterly* 6:208-16.
- * LaCroix, Richard (1977). The Impossibility of Defining "Omnipotence". *Philosophical Studies* 32:181-90.
- * Adams, Robert (1972). Must God Create the Best? *Philosophical Review* 81:317-32.
- * Conee, Earl (1994). The Nature and Impossibility of Moral Perfection. *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 54:815-25.
- * Garcia, Laura (2009). Moral Perfection, in Flint, Thomas and Rea, Michael (eds.), *Oxford Handbook of Philosophical Theology* Oxford: Oxford University Press, Chapter 10.
- * Swinburne, Richard (1977). *The Coherence of Theism* Oxford: Oxford University Press, Chapter 9.
- * Rowe, William (2004). *Can God Be Free?* Oxford: Oxford University Press, Chapter 6.

Question: 'If God exists, He must be omnipotent and impeccable. If He is omnipotent, He is able to sin. If He is impeccable, He is not. Therefore there is no God'. Discuss

7.10 Tutorial 8 – The Problem of Evil

The existence of evil in the world seems difficult to explain if an omniscient, benevolent and omnipotent God exists. It seems as though an omniscient, benevolent and omnipotent God wouldn't allow the kind of evil that we see in the world to exist. In this tutorial we will think about how far the existence of evil yields an argument to the conclusion that God doesn't exist. We'll also think about various ways in which theists have sought to respond, including the scope and limits of the *free will defence*, which claims that the fact that humans have free will is a good thing and explains the existence of evil in some sense.

- † Mackie, J.L. (1955). Evil and Omnipotence. *Mind* 64 (254):200-212.
- † Schellenberg, J.L. (2000). Stalemate and Strategy: Rethinking the Evidential Argument from Evil. *American Philosophical Quarterly* 37:405-19.
- † van Inwagen, Peter (1991). The Problem of Evil, the Problem of Air and the Problem of Silence. *Philosophical Perspectives* 5:135-165.
- † Rowe, William L. (1979). The Problem of Evil and Some Varieties of Atheism. *American Philosophical Quarterly* 16 (4):335-341.
- * Lewis, David (1993). Evil for Freedom's Sake? *Philosophical Papers* 22 (3):149-172.
- * Swinburne, Richard (2004). *The Existence of God* (2nd Edition) Oxford: Oxford University Press, Chapter 11.
- * Hume, David (1779). *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion* Indiana: Hackett, Parts X and XI.
- * Pike, N. (1963). Hume on Evil. *Philosophical Review* 72:180-97.
- * Draper, Paul (1989). Pain and Pleasure: An Evidential Problem for Theists. *Noûs* 23 (3):331-350.
- * Plantinga, Alvin (1974). *God, Freedom, and Evil* Michigan: Harper & Row, Part Ia.

Question: Does the postulation of an afterlife help to solve the problem of evil?