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Office Hours: Monday 11am-1pm  
Cathedral of Learning 1009E

## METAPHYSICS & EPISTEMOLOGY CORE

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

We're going to try to gain a basic understanding of some important positions in contemporary philosophy of language, philosophy of mind, and epistemology while developing a core philosophical skill set. We begin with an extended unit on language covering a few classic texts and concepts, using Kripke's *Naming and Necessity* as a focal point. In the subsequent part of the course we'll cover a brief and more scattered set of topics in philosophy of mind and epistemology.

### COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

- Responses
- 60% Papers (20% each)
- 20% Presentation
- 20% Participation

*Responses:* Every week, starting with our second meeting, e-mail me a **short** paragraph response or question by Sunday evening (7pm) about *one* of the readings for the subsequent class. These are informal and meant to give me a sense for what is troubling people in the readings. They won't be graded, but *must be completed for course credit*.

*Papers:* There will be three papers of between 5 and 7 full pages (double spaced, 12pt.). *Respect these length limits.* Assignment distribution dates are below. You should have a little less than two weeks to complete each paper. Late assignments are docked a half-letter grade per day, barring special excuses.

*Presentation:* You'll sign up to present and critique some argument found in one of the later readings and help lead a subsequent discussion on the topic. More instructions are on the "presentations" handout.

*Participation:* You must participate during every other student's presentation, either by asking questions, providing constructive suggestions, or giving friendly, searching criticism. Combativeness is frowned upon, as is monopolizing discussion.

### TEXTS

There is only one text to purchase for the course: Kripke's *Naming and Necessity*. You can find other readings here:

[www.jshaw.net/courses/core.html](http://www.jshaw.net/courses/core.html)

You will need a password to access the documents, which you can find on the syllabus handed out on the first day of class.

## SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND READINGS

The following is what I hope we can accomplish, but it isn't set in stone.

### LANGUAGE

- Aug. 29 Introduction, the Problem of Intentionality  
Grice, "Meaning"
- Sep. 12 Frege & Russell  
Frege, "Sense and Reference"  
Russell, "On Denoting"
- Sep. 19 Russell (continued), A Primer in Modal Logic  
Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy,  
"Modal Logic" §§1, 2, 6, 14 (first few paragraphs)
- Sep. 26 Naming & Necessity  
*Naming & Necessity* (focus on Lectures I/II)
- Oct. 3 Indexicals & Demonstratives  
Kaplan, "Demonstratives"  
**\*First Paper Assigned\***
- Oct. 10 Assertion, Metalinguistic Two-Dimensionalism, Implicature  
Stalnaker, "Assertion"  
Grice, "Logic and Conversation"
- Oct. 18 (NB: Tuesday!) Catch up...  
[Given time, I may add a reading on semantic externalism]

### MIND & EPISTEMOLOGY

- Oct. 24 Functionalism  
Kim, *Philosophy of Mind*, pp. 129-57, 169-79, 186-9
- Oct. 31 Worries for Functionalists  
Block, "Troubles with Functionalism" pp.277-300  
Block, "Inverted Earth" pp.53-72 (skip the last section)
- Nov. 7 Arguments for Dualism  
Jackson, "Epiphenomenal Qualia"  
Chalmers, "The Two-Dimensional Argument against  
Materialism"  
**\*Second Paper Assigned\***
- Nov. 14 Skepticism and Dogmatism  
Pryor, "The Skeptic and the Dogmatist"  
White, "Problems for Dogmatism"
- Nov. 21 **\*No Class\***
- Nov. 28 Epistemic Contextualism and its Discontents  
Lewis, "Elusive Knowledge"  
Schiffer, "Contextualist Solutions to Skepticism"
- Dec. 5 "Knowledge First" Epistemology: Luminosity, KK  
Williamson, *Knowledge and its Limits*  
§§1.1-1.5, 4.1-4.5, 5.1-5.2  
**\*Third Paper Assigned\***