

SPRING 2018 GRADUATE SEMINARS

Phil275C, Agnieszka Jaworska – Proseminar in Value Theory

The seminar will survey some central issues in contemporary moral theory. We begin with various questions about the nature of reasons for action: what do we mean by a reason for action? What is the connection between reasons and desires or motives – e.g., are all reasons desire-based? The balance of the seminar will survey (all too briefly) some of the main currents in contemporary normative theory –consequentialism (Philip Pettit and Peter Railton), contractualism (T.M. Scanlon), contemporary neo-Kantianism (Christine Korsgaard), and virtue theory (Philippa Foot and John McDowell).

Phil 272A, Andrews Reath – Topics in Kant’s Moral Theory

This workshop will be a follow up to my Winter Quarter seminar on Kant’s *Groundwork*. Depending on the interest of the group, the “topics” will be taken from other Kantian texts (the *Critique of Practical Reason*, the *Metaphysics of Morals*, *Religion within the Bounds of Mere Reason*) or from recent secondary literature (by writers such as Stephen Engstrom, Barbara Herman, Christine Korsgaard, Onora O’Neill, Tamar Schapiro, Allen Wood). Students with sufficient background in Kant’s moral theory may take only the Spring Quarter workshop, but my hope is that some students will take both the seminar and the workshop. Those who do will have the opportunity to spend the spring working on a substantive paper that will serve as the basis of the grade for both seminars (administrative details to be worked out – I may ask for a short writing assignment in the winter to be the basis of an interim grade).

Phil 280, Erich Reck – Frege and Logicism

While today Gottlob Frege is most widely known for his contributions to the philosophy of language and logic, his main project, throughout his career, was to show that arithmetic is “part of logic”, i.e., to introduce and argue for what was later called “logicism”. Both influential and controversial from early on, logicism came to be considered one of the main positions in 20th-century philosophy of mathematics (besides intuitionism and formalism). In addition, it played a central role in the rise of “analytic philosophy”, in a variety of ways. In this seminar, we will study excerpts from several of Frege’s writings so as to trace the development of his logicist views, understand their historical and philosophical significance, and examine their limits. Along the way, this will lead us to Frege’s famous sense/reference distinction and to his anti-psychologistic conception of concepts, functions, and classes. It will also bring up questions about the relationship of Frege to some “continental” schools, e.g., neo-Kantianism. In the last third of the seminar, we will consider two important responses to Frege’s project more briefly: Russell’s subsequent version of logicism, developed to avoid certain problems with Frege’s (including Russell’s antinomy); recent attempts to resurrect Frege’s approach, or central parts of it, as developed by Crispin Wright, Bob Hale, and others (“Scottish neo-logicism”). Overall, the seminar is intended as a graduate-level introduction to both Frege and the topic of logicism.

Phil 282, Jozef Muller -

Either Plato's *Euthydemus*, *Protagoras*, and *Gorgias* on happiness, virtue, hedonism and related topics; OR Aristotle's *Posterior Analytics* (on demonstration and definition)