PHIL 3481: INTRODUCTION TO METAPHYSICS
WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY IN ST. LOUIS • FALL 2011
TTH 2:30PM-4:00PM • EARTH & PLANETARY SCIENCES 203

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COURSE OUTLINE
This course is an introduction to central debates of contemporary analytic metaphysics. Metaphysics is concerned with the nature of the most general kinds of things and the relationship between these things. We will discuss the nature of and relationship between properties, material objects, time, space, and modality.

READING
Most of the readings for this course can be found in the following books:

*Loux, Michael J. 2002: Metaphysics: A contemporary introduction (Routledge)
Sider, Theodore, Hawthorne, John and Zimmerman, Dean W. 2008: Contemporary Debates in Metaphysics (Blackwell)
van Inwagen, Peter 1990: Material Beings (Cornell University Press)

** denotes a required book available at the Washington University Bookstore. All readings that are not contained in * will be available as a pdf on Telesis.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS
Grades for this course will be based on three papers (five to seven pages in length), and class participation. Class participation will be graded by attendance and participation in class discussions. The final grade for the course will be composed according to the following scheme:

First Paper 30%
Second Paper 30%
Third Paper 30%
Class participation 10%
UNEXCUSED ABSENCES, LATE WORK, PLAGIARISM, PASS-FAIL, INCOMPLETES
6 unexcused absences result in the final grade F. Late work will be docked one letter grade per calendar day (weekends and holidays included). No electronic submissions will be accepted. Students suspected of plagiarism will be turned in to the Academic Integrity Officer; see http://www.wustl.edu/policies/undergraduate-academic-integrity.html for the University plagiarism policy. Students taking the course Pass-Fail must earn at least a C to receive a passing grade. Incompletes will be given only under exceptional circumstances. Finally, no open laptops and no food will be permitted in the classroom.

SCHEDULE

| Properties                | Week 1 (8/30, 9/1) | Realism                                        |
|                          |                    | (Loux 2002: Ch.1, Loux 2008: Ch. 1)            |
|                          | Week 2 (9/6, 9/8)  | Nominalism                                     |
|                          |                    | (Loux 2002: Ch. 2, Loux 2008: Ch. 3)           |
|                          | Week 3 (9/13, 9/15)| Bundles and Substrata                          |
|                          |                    | (Loux 2002: Ch. 3, Loux 2008: Ch. 6)           |

| First Paper on topics of Weeks 1-3 |
| Questions on 9/15; due on 9/22 |

Material objects

| Week 4 (9/20, 9/22) | Persistence and change |
|                     | (Sider 2001: Chs. 3 & 4) |
| Week 5 (9/27, 9/29) | Composition            |
|                     | (van Inwagen 1990, Markosian 2009, Van Cleve 2009) |
| Week 6 (10/4, 10/6) | Coincidence            |
|                     | (Sider 2001: Ch. 5)    |
| Week 7 (10/11, 10/13)| Discontinuity          |
|                     | (Burke 1980, Sattig 2011) |
Week 8 (10/18, 10/20)  Vague objects and the problem of the many
                   (Lewis 1993)

Week 9 (10/25, 10/27)  TBA

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**Second Paper on topics of Weeks 4-9**
Questions on 10/27; due on 11/3

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**Time, modality and causation**

Week 10 (11/1, 11/3)  The nature of time: tense and presentism
                   (Sider 2001: Ch. 2, Smart 2009, Zimmerman 2009)

Week 11 (11/8, 11/10)  Time travel
                   (Lewis 1976, van Inwagen 2010)

Week 12 (11/15, 11/17)  Possibility and possible worlds
                   (Bricker 2009, Melia 2009)

Week 13 (11/22, *Thanksgiving*)  Modality *de re*
                   (Divers 2002: Ch. 16)

Week 14 (11/29, 12/1)  Causation and counterfactuals
                   (Collins, Hall and Paul 2004: Introduction)

Week 15 (12/6, 12/8)  TBA

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**Third Paper on topics of Weeks 10-14**
Questions on 11/29; due on 12/8