

## PHIL 525R Kant's Metaphysics & Epistemology

Wednesdays 1-3:45pm, Philosophy Seminar Room (Bowden 216)



Image from Antje Herzog's *Lampe und sein Meister Immanuel Kant: Eine Graphic Novel* (2017)

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**Office:** Bowden 110  
**Office Hours:** By appointment  
(Zoom)

### Course Description:

Kant's Metaphysics & Epistemology  
Syllabus

This course is a graduate seminar on Kant's metaphysics and epistemology. We will practice two simultaneous analytics: we will situate Kant's metaphysics and epistemology within the history of Western thought and engage with a number of contemporary interpretations or reiterations. Guiding foci of the seminar include the relationship between epistemology and metaphysics, the problem of dualisms, the transcendental method, and the nature of pure reason. We will be reading a wide sample of Kant's writings on metaphysics and epistemology, including the *Critique of Pure Reason* (a.k.a., the first *Critique*), *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics*, *Critique of Judgment* (a.k.a., the third *Critique*), *Lectures on Logic*.

The seminar will accommodate different levels of interest and background in Kant's thought.

### **Required Primary Texts:**

- Immanuel Kant. *Critique of Pure Reason*. The Cambridge Edition (ISBN: 978-0521657297)
- Immanuel Kant. *Critique of the Power of Judgment*. The Cambridge Edition (ISBD: 978-0521348927)
- Immanuel Kant. *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics*. The Hackett Edition (ISBN: 978-0872205932)

*N.B.* It is crucial that students obtain and read these translations of Kant's works and not others. Additional texts will be posted on Canvas; you must have them with you during relevant class meeting.

### **Recommended Commentary on Kant's M&E:**

Henry Allison, *Kant's Transcendental Idealism: An Interpretation and Defense*. Yale University Press, 1983 (enlarged edition 2004).

Jill Vance Buroker, *Kant's Critique of Pure Reason: An Introduction*. Cambridge University Press, 2006.

Students interested in secondary sources on Kant's metaphysics and epistemology are invited to consult and collaborate with the instructor.

**Format:** This is a graduate seminar. Generally, each class meeting will include a mix of two components: 1) Instructor's presentation that provides

a close textual reading of one or more key portions of the assigned reading; and 2) Discussion facilitated by students.

### **Course Requirements:**

**1. Preparation for, attendance at, and thoughtful participation** in all class meetings. These are mandatory for all those enrolled, including auditors. It is very important that each participant makes at least one contribution each week (via a question, comment, follow-up). Contributions that encourage thoughtful participation of others and that are of interest to all or most are the most valuable ones. Those contributions that only further one's own thinking and that are of no or little interest to others are the least valuable ones; I suggest that you take up the latter with the professor during office hours or scheduled meetings.

**2. A Total of 3 (Three) Short papers (500-750words):** Each of these will be a brief write-up on a part of the assigned reading for the week. These need to be emailed to submitted to Canvas at your own pace. These are meant to help you to unpack Kant's loaded vocabulary as you read along the *Critique*, so they should be aimed at clear, thoughtful, and careful exegeses and should not reproduce jargon. Everyone enrolled in this class is required to turn in **3 (Three) of these papers any time/week throughout the term**; auditors will be asked to turn in 1 (One) in order to earn a passing grade. Papers will be graded with a  $\sqrt{+}$  to indicate an excellent understanding of the author's main points and arguments, a  $\sqrt{\phantom{x}}$  to indicate an adequate understanding, or a  $\sqrt{-}$  to indicate an inadequate understanding (This should be taken as an invitation to meet with the instructors during office hours).

**3. Discussion Facilitation** includes two parts: A brief write-up (no more than 1000-words) to be shared with the entire class during our meeting for facilitation of seminar discussion. The write-up will go slightly beyond exegesis and offer a set of questions to be taken up during seminar. It is better if these questions also point us to a number of key passages for in-class close reading as well as discussion. During class meeting, you will use the written version as a guide to facilitate discussion by means of questions and comments of your own and from the class. Depending on class size, we may have to double-up for some of the weeks, in which case presenters should coordinate among themselves not to cover the same topics or passages.

You are strongly encouraged to send me a rough draft or email for feedback and comments NO LATER than by 11:59pm on the Sunday before seminar meets and I will get back to you by Monday afternoon with comments. Presentations are required for all those enrolled in class (including auditors); you will sign-up at the end of our first meeting.

**4. A Final Paper:** A conference-length (up to 3500-words) final paper is due online (on Canvas) by **11:59pm on Wednesday, December 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023**. The final paper may build on your exegeses and/or your presentation, and must utilize at least two secondary sources. A brief outline and projected bibliography should be emailed to me by **11:59pm on Wednesday, December 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023**. Required for those enrolled in class (excluding auditors).

**Grade Distribution:** Participation, Preparation, Attendance: 15%; 3 Short papers: 15%; Discussion Facilitation: 30%; Final paper: 40%. I reserve the right to make judgment calls about a student's overall performance, and to grade for progress over the course if I see fit.

**Different Abilities** are welcome and will be accommodated in this class. I recognize that there are multiple ways to learn and that this multiplicity should be acknowledged in the design and structure of university courses and the evaluation of their participants. I also encourage students in this course to discuss their learning styles and comprehension requirements with me during my office hours or, if necessary, at another arranged time. For additional information about accessibility and accommodations, please contact the Department of Accessibility Services at (404) 727-9877 or [accessibility@emory.edu](mailto:accessibility@emory.edu).

**Non-Sexist Use of Language:** We academics no longer use "man" or "mankind" to refer to the entirety of humanity or a hypothetical person. See: APA Guidelines on Non-Sexist Use of Language <http://www.apaonline.org/?page=nonsexist> (on Blackboard; originally published in 1986); and Pauline Kleingeld on Kant on gender-neutral language, "The Problematic Status of Gender-Neutral Language in the History of Philosophy: The Case of Kant" (on Canvas, published in 1993). This is also a grammar point and attending to it will serve you well throughout the rest of your professional lives.

**Reading Schedule (under Construction – Check Canvas for Weekly Modules and Files)**

Reading schedule may change depending on the pace of the seminar and at the discretion of the instructor. I will incorporate more or different recommended readings based on participants' interests. Be sure to have relevant e-texts with you in class.

CPR → *Critique of Pure Reason*

CJ → Critique of Judgment

Prolegomena → *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics*, Hackett (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition)

### **WEEK 0.5: August 23 - Course Introduction: Metaphysics and Epistemology**

**Read: No readings.**

I want us to talk about *the meaning and history of metaphysics and epistemology in philosophy broadly*. To that end, before we meet on Wednesday 8/23, please think about the following questions and come prepared to discuss them:

1. What is metaphysics?
2. What is epistemology?

### **WEEK 1: August 30 - The Synthetic *A Priori* as THE Problem of Metaphysics**

**Read:**

CPR: Introduction B Edition (pp. 136-152)

Prolegomena: Kant's "Preface" and "Preamble" (pp. 1-22)

### **WEEK 2: September 6 – Transcendental Aesthetic: Space and Time**

**Read:**

CPR: Transcendental Aesthetic A and B (pp. 155 -192)

Prolegomena: Remarks I-III (pp. 28-34)

### **WEEK 3: September 13 -Transcendental Analytic: Logic**

### **WEEK 4: September 20 – Transcendental Analytic: Concepts, Schemata, Principles**

### **WEEK 5: September 27 – Phenomena and Noumena – Refutation of Idealism**

**WEEK 6: October 4 – Transcendental Dialectic – Pure Reason and Its Ideas**

**WEEK 7: October 11 Antinomies of Reason: Focus: 3<sup>rd</sup> Antinomy**

**WEEK 8: OCTOBER 18 Appendix: Regulative Use of Reason**

**WEEK 9: October 25: Determining versus Reflective Judgments (Critique of Judgment)**

**WEEK 10: Nov 1 – No CLASS – DH out of the country**

**WEEK 11: November 8: Critique of Judgment - selections**

**WEEK 12: November 15 Canon of Pure Reason and Introduction to Groundwork for Metaphysics of Morals**

**WEEK 13: Nov 22 – BREAK (No seminar meeting)**

**WEEK 14: November 29: Preface and Introduction A Edition to CPR. Conclusion of CPR and Prolegomena. Selections from Logic Lectures**

**This schedule may change due to our pace. Always check Canvas for updated module info.**

**\*\*\*Final Paper Outline and Bibliography due by 11:59pm, December 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023.**

**Final Paper due by 11:59pm, December 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023\*\*\***

## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES ON KANT'S METAPHYSICS AND EPISTEMOLOGY**

***This is a very brief list - Come talk to me if you need more information on these or other sources***

Adorno, *Lectures on Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*

Ameriks, *Interpreting Kant's Critiques*

Banham et al, Eds. *The Continuum Companion to Kant*

Beck, Ed. *Kant's Theory of Knowledge*  
Bird, *The Revolutionary Kant: A Commentary on the Critique of Pure Reason*  
Buchdahl, *Kant and the Dynamics of Reason: Essays on the Structure of Kant's Philosophy*  
Caygill, Ed. *A Kant Dictionary*  
Da Silva, "Hacking the Subject"  
Deleuze, *Kant's Critical Philosophy*  
Forster, *Kant's Transcendental Deductions*  
Foucault, *Introduction to Kant's Anthropology; The Order of Things; "What is Enlightenment?"*  
Friedman, *Kant and the Exact Sciences*  
Guyer, *Kant and the Claims of Knowledge*  
Heidegger, *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics; Phenomenological Interpretation of Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*  
Kerszberg, *Critique and Totality*  
Kukla, "Islands of Truth in Kant and Rousseau"  
Longuenesse, *Kant and the Capacity to Judge*  
Moten, "Knowledge of Freedom"  
Nuzzo, *Ideal Embodiment*  
Park, *Africa, Asia, and the History of Philosophy*  
Pippin, *Kant's Theory of Form*  
Schott, *Cognition and Eros: A Critique of the Kantian Paradigm*  
Sandford, "Spontaneous Generation"  
Shaper et al, Eds. *Reading Kant*  
Smith, *A Commentary to Kant's Critique*  
Strawson, *Bounds of Sense*  
Terada, *Looking Away* (especially ch. 2)  
Wood, *Kant*