

PROVISIONAL COURSE OUTLINE – this course outline gives an accurate idea of the content and structure of the course, but some details may change in the final and binding version of the course outline, which will be made available at the beginning of the second term.

PHIL 309: Kant

MTh 11:30-12:50

Instructor: Dr. Thomas Land

Office Hours: TBD

Email: tland@uvic.ca

Course Description

This course provides an introduction to the *Critique of Pure Reason*, one of the central texts in the history of philosophy. Its guiding theme is Kant's attempt to vindicate the idea that metaphysics provides us with a special kind of non-empirical knowledge. Kant is convinced (i) that any genuinely philosophical knowledge is metaphysical knowledge; (ii) that the very possibility of such knowledge is called into doubt by prevalent conceptions of the human mind (such as those of Descartes, Locke, Leibniz, and Hume); and (iii) that assuaging this doubt (and thus vindicating metaphysical knowledge) requires a careful analysis of human cognitive capacities. In this course we study the account of our cognitive capacities that Kant proposes and ask whether he succeeds in vindicating metaphysical knowledge. In particular, we consider Kant's claim that the two most basic capacities, sense-perception and conceptual thought, are distinct in nature and yet are required to cooperate in a particular way if there is to be any knowledge at all. In considering this claim we will discuss the following topics: spatial representation; concepts; the relation between empirical knowledge and a priori knowledge; self-consciousness; causality; idealism; and free will. The focus will be on a close study of Kant's text.

Course Objectives

This course has three main objectives. By successfully completing this course you will

- (i) acquire knowledge of Kant's central views in metaphysics, epistemology, and philosophy of mind;
- (ii) come to understand some of the considerations motivating these views as well as some of the objections to them; and
- (iii) hone important philosophical (as well as more general analytical) skills. These include reading and analyzing difficult philosophical texts; composing and assessing arguments; articulating and communicating complex ideas; and composing philosophical essays.

Course Website

This course has an associated website on UVic's *Brightspace* tool. This will be used for assignments, communication, and to make available additional materials. To access your customized *Brightspace* page, sign in to UVic and click on *Online Tools*. You should see *Brightspace* as an option. If you are unable to access *Brightspace*, please contact me.

Texts

The following two books are required for this course and available at the UVic Bookstore:

Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, translated by Werner S. Pluhar, Indianapolis: Hackett, 1996

James O'Shea, *Kant's Critique of Pure Reason: An Introduction and Interpretation*, Durham: Acumen, 2012

Additional readings will be made available via *Brightspace*.

You are welcome to use different translations of the *Critique of Pure Reason* **in addition** to the required one, but you **must** use the one listed above as your primary source. This means that it is a required book, even if you already own a copy of the *Critique* in a different translation.

Course Format

This course will be taught as a *synchronous online course*. This means that, while there will be no in-person classroom meetings, the class will meet virtually at the scheduled times. These meetings will be a mix of lecture and discussion. We will try as much as possible to recreate the atmosphere of a seminar in the virtual setting. For this reason, regular attendance and active participation are essential. Use the Zoom link provided on *Brightspace* to attend meetings.

Evaluation

a. Requirements

There are five requirements for this course, which are as follows:

<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Due Date</i>	<i>Weight</i>
Attendance and Class Participation	N/A	10%
10 Quote and Comment Assignments	TBD	1.5% each
Midterm Exam (take-home)	TBD	30%
Final Paper	TBD	45%

To receive a passing grade for the course, students must receive a passing grade on **each** of the five requirements.

Attendance and Class participation

This component of the overall grade measures attendance and participation in equal parts. As regards attendance, you are permitted two unexcused absences without having this portion of the grade affected. Any additional absence will require documentation. As regards participation, you are encouraged to participate actively in class discussion. This includes asking questions. Both quantity and quality of participation will be taken into consideration.

Quote and Comment Assignment

Over the course of the semester you must submit ten short assignments in which you (a) select a quote from the reading assigned for a particular class and then (b) explain why you think this quote is important for the philosophical significance of the reading. Assignments are due at 4:00pm on the day of the class for which the assignment is being submitted. Assignments will be graded on a pass/fail basis and not receive written feedback. More detailed instructions will be made available on the course website.

Midterm Exam and Revised Midterm Exam

There will be a take-home midterm exam on topics assigned by me. You will receive written comments on your midterm and are required to revise your exam in light of these comments and submit the revised version. By submitting the revised version you may improve the original exam's grade by up to 15 points.

Final Paper

You need to write a final paper on a topic relating to the course content. I will make suggestions for topics, but you are welcome to choose your own topic. If you choose your own topic, you must get it approved by me no later than March 26. The final paper may be up to 3500 words in length.

b. Late Penalties

Weekly Questions: Questions submitted after the deadline count as missed and receive no marks.

Final Paper: The penalty for submitting the final paper late is 25 percentage points per day.

There are no exceptions to these deadlines unless there are documented medical or compassionate grounds for an extension.

Course Schedule

Wk.	Date	Reading
1	Jan 7	Introduction (no reading)
2	Jan 11, 14	<u>Required:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • B-Preface, B-Introduction • O’Shea, pp. 13-49 <u>Recommended:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lanier Anderson, “The Introduction to the <i>Critique</i>: Framing the Question”
3	Jan 18, 21	<u>Required:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transcendental Aesthetic, §1-6 • O’Shea, 78-100 <u>Recommended:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charles Parsons, “The Transcendental Aesthetic”
4	Jan 25, 28	<u>Required:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transcendental Aesthetic, §§7 and 8 • O’Shea, 100-115 <u>Recommended:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lisa Shabel, “The Transcendental Aesthetic”
5	Feb 1, 4	<u>Required:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Henry Allison, <i>Kant’s Transcendental Idealism</i>, Chps. 1&2
6	Feb 8, 11	<u>Required:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lucy Allais, excerpt from <i>Manifest Reality</i> • Introduction to the Transcendental Logic (A50/B74-A66/B91)
Reading Week – no class on Feb 15, 18		

7	Feb 22, 25	<p><u>Required:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clue to the Discovery of All Pure Concepts (A66/B91-A83/B109) • O’Shea, 126-132 <p><u>Recommended:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Béatrice Longuenesse, “Kant on A Priori Concepts: The Metaphysical Deduction of the Categories”
8	Mar 1, 4	<p><u>Required:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On the Deduction of the Pure Concepts (§§13-14) (A84/B116-B129) • Transcendental Deduction (B), §§15-21 (B129-B146) • O’Shea, 116-126, 132-149, 152-157 <p><u>Recommended:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barry Stroud, “Kant’s ‘Transcendental Deduction’”
9	Mar 8, 11	<p><u>Required:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transcendental Deduction (B), §§22-27 (B146-B169) • Analytic of Principles: Introduction, Schematism (A130/B169-A147/B187) • O’Shea, 158-164 <p><u>Recommended:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dieter Henrich, “The Proof-Structure of Kant’s Transcendental Deduction” • Peter Strawson, “Imagination and Perception”
10	Mar 15, 18	<p><u>Required:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • System of all Principles of the Pure Understanding, introduction and sections I & II (A148/B187-A158/B197) • Analogies of Experience: General Principle, First Analogy (A176/B218-A211/B256) • O’Shea, 172-186 <p><u>Recommended:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jay Rosenberg, “Duration and Persistence: Substance in the Analogies”
11	Mar 22, 25	<p><u>Required:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second Analogy • Postulates of Empirical Thinking in General (A218/B265-B294) • O’Shea, 186-196 <p><u>Recommended:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Michael Friedman, “Causal Laws and the Foundations of Natural Science”
12	Mar 29 Apr 1	<p><u>Required:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Third Antinomy (A444/B472-A451/B479, A490/B518-A507/B535, and A532/B560-A558/B586)

		<p><u>Recommended:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Markus Kohl, “Kant on Determinism and the Categorical Imperative”
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Attendance and Notes

Students are expected to attend class and come prepared to discuss the assigned readings. Handouts I use for lecturing will be made available on the course website. However, these will be elaborated upon in class, so downloading the handouts is no substitute for coming to class. They do, however, give you a sense of what was discussed if you have to miss class. You do not generally need to inform me if you have to miss class.

The use of handouts is for your own learning only. You are not permitted to distribute them to others or make them available on the internet (e.g. by posting them to a social media). Doing so constitutes a violation of copyright.

It is crucial to your success in this course that you take good lecture notes. Research shows that taking good notes helps your learning. By taking your own notes (and this does *not* mean copying the lecture word for word) you process the material more thoroughly than you otherwise would and you make later reviewing easier for yourself. A good way of taking notes is to annotate handouts.

Office Hours

I hold regular office hours so that students may drop in and ask questions about the course material. I encourage you to make use of these. I especially encourage you to come to office hours if there is something you don't understand or if you are struggling in the course.

The function of office hours is not, however, for me to repeat to you a lecture you have missed. If you ask me to do this, I will tell you to obtain a set of lecture notes from another student. If after doing so you have specific questions about the material, I will be happy to answer them during office hours.

Email

I will sometimes communicate important information about assignments, readings, or other matters to you via email. Emails will be sent to the address listed in UVic's system as your contact information. It is your responsibility to check this email address once a day.

If you contact me via email, I will try hard to respond in a timely manner, which generally will be within 48 hours (longer on weekends). To make sure your email does not end up in my spam folder, I encourage you to put the course number in the subject line and use your UVic email address.

If you have a question about assignments, due dates, or other course policies, the syllabus should be your first resource. *I will not respond to any emails that ask questions which are answered in the syllabus.* Your second resource should be the course's student discussion board, which is accessible through the course website. Students are encouraged to use this feature to discuss questions about course mechanics as well as course content. I periodically monitor the discussion board, to make sure that all information is correct.

Intellectual property of materials on D2L Brightspace

Please note that all assignments for this course and all materials posted to the D2L Brightspace are the intellectual property of myself and the University of Victoria. Do not circulate this material or post it to note-sharing sites without my permission. Posting course materials to note-

sharing sites or otherwise circulating course materials without the permission of your instructor violates the [Policy on Academic Integrity](#). Any evidence you are circulating materials without permission will be referred to the Chair of the Philosophy Department for investigation.

Academic Integrity (Plagiarism etc.)

Violations of academic integrity, such as plagiarism, cheating on exams etc., constitute breaches of university policy and carry serious penalties (e.g. failing the class, being put on disciplinary probation). Note that it is *your responsibility* to be aware of what constitutes plagiarism and other violations of academic integrity, and that *ignorance of this is not an acceptable excuse*. For information, please consult [UVic's Policy on Academic Integrity](#).

Significant Dates (<https://events.uvic.ca/dates/>)

- Tue, Jan 19: last day for 100% reduction of fees
- Wed, Jan 20: last day to for adding second-term courses
- Sun, Feb 7: last day for 50% reduction of tuition fees. 100% of tuition fees will be assessed for courses dropped after this date.
- Mon-Fri, Feb 15-19: Reading Break
- Sun, Feb 28: last day for withdrawing from second-term courses without penalty of failure
- Thu, Apr 1: Final class in this course

Accessibility

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. If you need an academic accommodation you will need to register with the Centre for Accessible Learning (<https://www.uvic.ca/services/cal>). Please do so as early as possible. Please feel free to go directly to the Centre for Accessible Learning or to approach me.

Grading Scheme

Percentage	Letter Grade	Grade Point	Grade Definition
90-100	A+	9	An A+, A, or A- is earned by work which is technically superior , shows mastery of the subject matter, and in the case of an A+ offers original insight and/or goes beyond course expectations. Normally achieved by a minority of students.
85-89	A	8	
80-84	A-	7	
77-79	B+	6	A B+, B, or B- is earned by work that indicates a good comprehension of the course material, a good command of the skills needed to work with the course material, and the student's full engagement with the course requirements and activities. A B+ represents a more complex understanding and/or application of the course material. Normally achieved by the largest number of students.
73-76	B	5	
70-72	B-	4	
65-69	C+	3	A C+ or C is earned by work that indicates an adequate comprehension of the course material and the skills needed to work with the course material and that indicates the student has met the basic requirements for completing assigned work and/or participating in class activities
60-64	C	2	
50-59	D	1	A D is earned by work that indicates minimal command of the course materials and/or minimal participation in class activities that is worthy of course credit toward the degree.
0-49	F	0	F is earned by work which, after the completion of course requirements, is inadequate and unworthy of course credit towards the degree.

Interpretation of these grade definitions is at the discretion of the instructor. If you receive a grade that you believe is unfair, please begin by discussing the matter with the instructor (or TA) in a respectful, open-minded manner. If you still believe the grade you received is unfair you can appeal the matter to the chair of the department.

For additional information regarding grades, please see pp. 51-53 of the most recent edition of the UVic Undergraduate Calendar.

All evaluations of tests and assignments will be calculated according to percentage scores. Letter grades and grade point scores are listed purely for reference.

Counselling Services

Your mental health is as important as your physical health. During the semester, you might feel overwhelmed, lonely, or stressed about your academic performance. You might experience a personal or family tragedy. The University provides FREE counselling services. (Check www.uvic.ca/services/counselling/ for more information).

Course Experience Surveys (CES)

I value your feedback on this course. Towards the end of term, as in all other courses at UVic, you will have the opportunity to complete an anonymous survey regarding your learning experience (CES). The survey is vital to providing feedback to me regarding the course and my teaching, as well as to help the department improve the overall program for students in the future. The survey is accessed via MyPage and can be done on your laptop, tablet, or mobile device. I will remind you and provide you with more detailed information nearer the time but please be thinking about this important activity during the course.