

PHIL 309 (A01): Kant

CRN# 12738

MTh 13:00-14:20, Room TBA

Instructor: Dr. Thomas Land

Office: CLE B 331

Office Hours: Wed 3:00-4:00 and by apmt.

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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 that (i) any genuinely philosophical knowledge is metaphysical knowledge; (ii) 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) 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.

Learning Outcomes

This course has four 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 problems they face;
- (iii) learn to assess the cogency of different interpretations of a single text; and
- (iv) hone important analytical skills. These include reading and analyzing difficult philosophical texts; constructing 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

There are two required books. The first is available in hard copy at the UVic Bookstore:

Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, transl. Paul Guyer and Allen Wood, New York: Cambridge UP, 1998

The second required book is available in electronic form through the UVic Library:

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

Link: <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.library.uvic.ca/lib/uvic/detail.action?docID=2036416&query=James+O'Shea%2C+Kant's+Critique+of+Pure+Reason%3A+An+Introduction+and+Interpretation%2C+>

Additional readings are available on *Brightspace*.

Several different translations of the *Critique of Pure Reason* are available in English. None is perfect; each has advantages and disadvantages. The Guyer/Wood translation is our official text in this class. But it is sometimes helpful to consult other translations as well (and of course the German original, if you can). I recommend, in particular, the following two (both are widely available):

- Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, transl. Norman Kemp Smith, revised second ed., New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003 (first edition published in 1923)
- Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, transl. Werner Pluhar, Indianapolis: Hackett, 1996

The German text of the *Critique* (along with the rest of Kant's corpus) is available online at

<http://korpora.org/Kant/verzeichnisse-gesamt.html>

Course Format

A mix of lecture and discussion, with some group work components. You are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the assigned material in detail. So you need to read the material carefully and take good notes. Kant is hard, and the readings often dense. You need to read slowly and note points that are unclear, seem implausible etc. To help with this, I will post weekly reading questions. These are meant to focus and guide your reading.

Evaluation

a. Requirements

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

<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Due Date</i>	<i>Weight</i>
10 Weekly Discussion Questions	Wednesdays at 5:00pm	1% each
Test #1	Released: Sep 27, Due: Oct 4	22%
Test #2	Released: Oct 28, Due: Nov 4	28%
Final Exam (take-home)	Released: Dec 2, Due: Dec 16	40%

Weekly Discussion Questions

During any 10 of 12 weeks, submit a question relating to the week's reading. The idea is for you to signal to me what you find interesting and/or hard to understand, so that I can address this in lecture. Write a paragraph to half a page. But: Don't just say 'What is Kant up to on page xyz?' Instead, explain what you *do* understand and where you get lost.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you reach the required number of submissions. Graded pass/fail.

Tests

Both tests will be take-home exams, which require you to answer one or two essay questions. The focus is on exposition, i.e. stating and explaining Kant's views and arguments.

Final Exam

A take-home exam consisting of essay questions. Some questions will focus on exposition, others will combine exposition and discussion.

b. Late Penalties

Weekly Discussion Questions: Questions submitted after the deadline receive a mark of 'fail'.

Tests and Final Exam: 20 percentage points per day (weekends count as one day).

There are no exceptions to these deadlines unless there are good reasons for an extension.

c. N Grades

Students who have completed the two tests and the final exam will be considered to have completed the course. Failure to complete any one of these three requirements will result in a grade of "N" regardless of the cumulative percentage on other elements of the course. N is a failing grade and factors into GPA as a value of 0.

Course Schedule (may be adjusted as we go along)

Wk.	Date	Reading
1	Sep 8, 12	Introduction: The project of a critique of pure reason <u>Required:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• B-Preface• O'Shea, pp. 11-39
2	Sep 15, 19	Framing the question: synthetic a priori judgments, concepts and intuitions <u>Required:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• B-Introduction• Transcendental Aesthetic, §1• O'Shea, 40-49 <u>Recommended:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lanier Anderson, "The Introduction to the <i>Critique</i>: Framing the Question"
3	Sep 22, 26	Space and Time <u>Required:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Transcendental Aesthetic, §§2-6• O'Shea, 78-100 <u>Recommended:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lisa Shabel, "The Transcendental Aesthetic"
4	Sep 29, Oct 3	Transcendental Idealism I <u>Required:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Transcendental Aesthetic, §§7 and 8• O'Shea, 100-115

		<p><u>Recommended:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Henry Allison, <i>Kant's Transcendental Idealism</i>, Chp. 1&2 <p><i>Test #1 due on Oct 4</i></p>
5	Oct 6, 13	<p>Transcendental Idealism II</p> <p><u>Required:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lanier Anderson, "Transcendental Idealism as Formal Idealism" <p><u>Recommended:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lucy Allais, excerpt from <i>Manifest Reality</i>
6	Oct 17, 20	<p>The Metaphysical Deduction</p> <p><u>Required:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction to the Transcendental Logic (A50/B74-A66/B91) 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"
7	Oct 24, 27	<p>Transcendental Deduction I</p> <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'"
8	Oct 31, Nov 3	<p>The Transcendental Deduction II</p> <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"> Peter Strawson, "Imagination and Perception" <p><i>Test #2 due on Nov 4</i></p>
9	Nov 7, 14	<p><i>No class on Nov 10 (reading break)</i></p> <p>The Analogies of Experience I</p>

		<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”
10	Nov 17, 21	<p>The Analogies of Experience II</p> <p><u>Required:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second Analogy (A189/B232-A211/B256) • Postulates of Empirical Thinking in General (A218/B265-B294) • O’Shea, 186-196 <p><u>Recommended:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jay Rosenberg, “Simultaneity and Succession”
11	Nov 24, 28	<p>First, Second, and Third Antinomy: Conflict</p> <p><u>Required:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A293/B349-A309/B366, A321/B377-A332/B389, A405/B432-A451/B479 • O’Shea, 50-62
12	Dec 1, 5	<p>First, Second, and Third Antinomy: Resolution</p> <p><u>Required:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A490/B518-A558/B586 • O’Shea, 62-77 <p><u>Recommended:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Markus Kohl, “Kant on Idealism, Freedom, and Standpoints”
<p>Take-home final due on December 16</p>		

Attendance and Notes

You 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, I elaborate on these in class, so downloading the handouts is no substitute for attending 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 on 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. One good way of taking notes is to annotate handouts.

If you miss class, please ask another student to share their notes with you and/or ask them what happened in class. Since we are in the middle of a pandemic and there is a good chance that some of you will need to self-isolate at some point during the semester, I want to encourage everyone to be generous about sharing notes. Think of this as a contribution you can make to keeping everyone safe.

Office Hours

I hold regular office hours. I encourage you to make use of these. No sign-up needed; just drop in. 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 sooner you do, the better I will likely be able to help you. Office hours will be on Zoom. Use the office hour link provided in *Brightspace* under 'Course Tools' > 'Zoom'.

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 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 posting your question to the discussion forum on course mechanics.

Intellectual property of materials on D2L Brightspace

Please note that all assignments for this course and all materials posted to the course's *Brightspace* site 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.

Online Student Conduct

The University of Victoria is committed to promoting critical academic discourse while providing a respectful and supportive learning environment. All members of the university community have the right to experience, and the responsibility to help create, such an environment. The University will not tolerate racism, sexualized violence, or any form of discrimination, bullying or harassment. *By logging into UVic's learning systems and interacting with online resources you are engaging in a university activity. This means that your conduct is subject to University policies in those settings.*

(<https://www.uvic.ca/services/studentlife/student-conduct/online-student-conduct/index.php>).

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](#).

Accessibility

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. If you anticipate or experience any barriers to learning in this course, please feel welcome to discuss your concerns with me. If you require academic accommodations you need to register with the Centre for Accessible Learning

(<https://www.uvic.ca/services/cal>). Please do so as early as possible. You can find information about

academic accommodations through the Centre for Accessible Learning's website (<https://www.uvic.ca/services/cal/programs/academic/index.php>).

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, and I encourage you to make use of these in this type of situation. (See 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.