Phil 309: Kant

Instructor: Dr. Audrey Yap (ayap@uvic.ca)
Office Hours: TWF 10:30-11:20 and by appointment
Class Information: TWF 11:30-12:20 in CLE A203.
Course Website: Through CourseSpaces http://coursespaces.uvic.ca
Textbook: Immanuel Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, Trans. Wood and Guyer
Additional Readings posted on CourseSpaces.

Course Objectives:

Immanuel Kant is an extremely influential figure in the history of Western philosophy, but he was also strongly influenced by the intellectual environment of his own time. The plan for this course is premised on the idea that an understanding of Kant’s engagement with the best science of his time is a helpful way to understand what he was up to in the Critique of Pure Reason. This is one of his best known and most important works, and so understanding its project will be our focus for the course. This is all in spite of the fact that science and mathematics has progressed quite a bit since his time. But if we want to understand what he was up to, and how much of Kant is still applicable to our contemporary context, we need to understand the ways in which his views are historically embedded. Also, Kant is also notoriously difficult to understand. Sorry. But what this means is that, on top of the content knowledge of Kant, the primary philosophical skill that we will be exercising here is the ability to understand complex arguments and reconstruct them as clearly as possible.

Communication: Office hours are held on a drop-in basis. You do not need to make an appointment to see me during those times, although the amount of time I can spend talking to any one person during office hours can depend on how many people are waiting. If you do want to schedule an appointment outside my office hours, try emailing me with a few suggestions for times that would work for you. I’m also happy to try and answer short questions either before or after class, time permitting. In general, email is my preferred method of communication, especially for any official requests. If you ask me a question over email, you can expect a reply within about 1 working day. If you don’t hear back from me after that time frame, feel free to try again in case your message went astray. When you do address me (over email or otherwise), please do so as either Audrey, Professor (Prof.) Yap, or Dr. Yap. Please don’t use any of Mrs/Miss/Ms/Mr, for a variety of reasons. If you are ever nervous about sending me an email, or asking a question, feel free to include a picture of a puppy with your request. This will not affect whether or not I will be able to help you with your request, but will give you an excuse to look for pictures of puppies. Finally, my pronouns are she/hers. If you think I am unlikely to know the name you would prefer to be called, or the pronouns I ought to use for you, through the entry that I will see for you through CourseSpaces/UVic registration, please don’t hesitate to make me aware.
Coursework: You will have two take home tests (each worth 25% of your final grade) during the semester and a take home final after the end of the semester, worth 40% of your grade. You will have two days to complete each of these tests, and the dates of distribution and completion can be found on the schedule below. Everything in this class will be graded anonymously, as a way for me to try to mitigate the effects of my own biases, many of which are likely unknown to me! This means that everything will be submitted on CourseSpaces, and you should not include your name on any of your assignments. Test questions will typically ask you to reconstruct and/or engage with a key argument or concept that we have covered during the semester. I will be grading them primarily on the basis of accuracy and clarity. Spelling and grammar only count insofar as they influence my ability to understand what you are saying. You are expected to be clearer writers than Kant was. However, I will do my best to ensure that the questions themselves give you a clear idea of grading expectations, so you can understand what constitutes a complete answer to each question.

The final 10% will be a participation grade. Before the start of each week’s classes, you will have the opportunity to submit a question or a comment about the week’s reading. This can just be a paragraph talking about something that you found interesting or confusing in the reading. I may address some of these questions in class that week, though I will not say whose questions we are discussing. In order to receive full credit, you must do this in 10 out of the 12 weeks of the semester.

Work that has been copied, or has been provided or someone else to copy, will not be given credit. For more information on academic integrity, and unauthorized editing, see the University Calendar (https://web.uvic.ca/calendar/undergrad/info/regulations/academic-integrity.html). More specifically, note that sharing information or answers when doing take-home tests counts as a violation of Academic Integrity.

Percentage grades correspond to letter grades according to the following scale:
90-100 = A+; 85-89 = A; 80-84 = A-; 77-79 = B+; 73-76 = B; 70-72 = B-; 65-69 = C+; 60-64 = C; 50-59 = D; 0-49 = F.
The A range means exceptional, outstanding and excellent performance. A grade in the B range means a very good, good and solid performance. A grade in the C+ or C range means satisfactory, or minimally satisfactory, performance. A grade of D or D- indicates merely passable or marginal performance. An F indicates unsatisfactory performance.
Schedule:

- **Week One: Jan 7, 8, 10**  
  Topic: What is Kant Even Doing?  
  Reading: Preface Bvii - Bxliv (p. 106-124)  
  Optional: Introduction to the *Critique of Pure Reason* by Guyer and Wood (p. 1-23)

- **Week Two: Jan 14, 15, 17**  
  Topic: Analytic and Synthetic Judgements. What is Transcendental Philosophy?  
  Reading: Introductions A1 - A16, B1 - B30 (p. 127-152)  
  Optional: Lucy Allais, “Kant’s Argument for Transcendental Idealism in the Transcendental Aesthetic”

- **Week Three: Jan 21, 22, 24**  
  Topic: Space and Time  
  Reading: Transcendental Aesthetic B33 - B78 (p. 172-192)  
  Optional: Transcendental Aesthetic A19 - A49 (p. 155-171)

- **Week Four: Jan 28, 29, 31**  
  Topic: Pure Concepts of the Understanding.  
  Reading: The Idea of a Transcendental Logic A50/B74 - A57/B82 (p. 193-197)  
  Transcendental Analytic A65/B89 - B116 (p. 201-218)  
  Optional: The Idea of a Transcendental Logic A57/B82-A64/B88 (p. 197-200)

- **Week Five: Feb 4, 5, 7**  
  Topic: The Transcendental Deduction (B Deduction)  
  Reading: Transcendental Deduction A84/B117-A95/B128 (p. 219-226)  
  Transcendental Deduction B125 - B169 (p. 245-266)  
  Optional: Dieter Heinrich, “The Proof-Structure of Kant’s Transcendental Deduction”

- **Week Six: Feb 11, 12, 14**  
  Topic: What?  
  Reading: Béatrice Longuenesse, “Kant on A Priori Concepts: The Metaphysical Deduction of the Categories”  
  Michael Friedman, excerpt from *Kant and the Exact Sciences*  
  Selections from *Jäsche Logic*
• Week Seven: Feb 25, 26, 28  
  Topic: Analytic of Principles, Axioms of Intuition, Anticipations of Perception  
  Reading: Analytic of Principles A137/B176 - A166/B207 (p. 271-295)

• Week Eight: Mar 3, 4, 6  
  Topic: Analogies of Experience  
  Reading: Analytic of Principles A176/B218 - A218/B265 (p. 295-321)

• Week Nine: Mar 10, 11, 13  
  Topic: Postulates. Applications of these Principles.  
  Reading: Analytic of Principles A218/B266 - B294 (321-337)  
  Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science: Metaphysical Foundations of Phenomenology (p. 93-104)

• Week Ten: Mar 17, 18, 20  
  Topic: Paralogisms  

• Week Eleven: Mar 24, 25, 27  
  Topic: Antinomies  
  Reading: Antinomies A436/B454 - A484/B512, A490/B519 - A497/B525 (p. 470-507, 511-514)  
  Optional: Michelle Grier, “The Logic of Illusion and the Antinomies”

• Week Twelve: Mar 31, Apr 1, 3  
  Topic: On Philosophical Method  
  Reading: Doctrine of Method A708/B736-A712-B740, A726/B754-A769-B797 (p. 628-9, 636-658)  
  Optional: Onora O’Neill, “Vindicating Reason”

Note: This syllabus is provisional, and should only be used to give a rough guide to the course schedule. Dates and readings may be changed if necessary.