

The University of Calgary
Department of Philosophy

Philosophy 609 Lec 02
TOPICS IN THE HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY:
Topic 02: Carnap
Winter 2010 — Richard Zach

Course Outline

Instructor: **Richard Zach**
Office: 1254 Social Sciences
Office Hours: MW 2:30–3:30 (tentative) or by appointment
Phone: (403) 220–3170 email: rzach@ucalgary.ca
Lectures: **W 6:30–9:00**
1253 Social Sciences

Course Description

Rudolf Carnap (1891–1970) was one of the leading philosophers of the 20th Century. After studying physics and philosophy in Germany, Carnap taught philosophy in Vienna, Prague, and—after emigrating to the United States in 1935—at the University of Chicago and UCLA. His contributions to philosophy of science, semantics, logic and probability theory helped define the major philosophical problems of the 20th Century and set unprecedented standards for approaching them with clarity and rigor.

Required Text

Readings will be distributed in electronic format through the course website.

Requirements

Six short writing assignments (250 words max., 5% each for a total of 30%, graded on pass/fail basis), a final paper (5000 words max., 40%), and preparing and leading one class session (10%). Class participation counts for 20% of your grade.

There will be no exams.

The aim of the short writing assignments is to get you engaged with the readings before they are discussed in class. A short writing assignment consists in a one-page writeup of something you think of while you do the reading. It can be a question together with an attempted answer, a worry,

a short note on a connection between the reading for that week and some other topic (from this or another class). Ideally, it would be something that can form the basis of a discussion in class.

You have to turn in six such short essays. You can choose when you submit them, and on what you want to write. They are due on Tuesdays at 6pm and you may submit them by email. However, you have to complete at least two of these assignments in weeks 1–6, and at least two in weeks 7–12.

Evaluation

Your final paper, your presentation, and your course participation will receive a letter grade reflecting the level of mastery of the material shown by the work you submit. The meanings of letter grades are defined in the *Calendar*, for written work, they amount roughly to the following criteria:

- A** Excellent—superior performance, showing comprehensive understanding of subject matter. (Your writing is clear and concise; your assignments make obvious that your understanding of the issues and arguments is correct and complete; you show superior ability in representing and assessing others’ philosophical arguments; you show significant ability for original philosophical thinking).
- B** Good—clearly above average performance with knowledge of subject matter generally complete. (You show a good grasp of the assigned reading, but either your writing is not perfectly clear or your assignments are largely only expository and don’t show the critical ability required for an A).
- C** Satisfactory—basic understanding of the subject matter. (Your work shows that you’ve worked through the reading and attended class, but your assignments misrepresent the arguments we’re discussing, or your criticisms are off the mark.)
- D** Minimal pass—marginal performance. (Your work is unclear or confused; or you grossly misrepresent the arguments we’re discussing.)
- F** Fail—Unsatisfactory performance. (Your work fails to show that you’ve made a serious attempt at coming to grips with the material; or your writing borders on the incomprehensible.)

The correspondence of letter grades with grade points is defined in the *Calendar* (A = 4, B = 3, C = 2, D = 1, F = 0). “Slash” grades are possible with grade point values 0.5 below the higher grade (e.g., A/B = 3.5). For short writing assignments, a “pass” will receive 4 grade points, a fail, 0.

In computing your final grade, your marks will be converted to grade points and averaged according to the weights given above. The final grade will be the letter grade corresponding to the weighted average of your assignments, exams, and participation plus a margin of 0.2. For the final grade, +’s and –’s are possible, too; as defined in the *Calendar*, +/- adds/subtracts 0.3 grade points. In other words, a course average of 3.8 or higher receives an A; at least 3.5 and less than 3.8, an A–;

at least 3.1 and less than 3.5, a B+; at least 2.8 and less than 3.1, a B; and so on. (This means that for two A's and an A/B you still get an A overall; for two A's and a B, an A−.) There is no D− grade; to earn a D you require a course average of at least 0.8. The A+ grade is reserved for “truly outstanding” performance.

Assignments and Policies

Late work and extensions. A final paper handed in late will be penalized by the equivalent of one grade point per calendar day. A short writing assignment handed in late will be penalized by one half grade point for every two hours (or part thereof) it is late (i.e., it will receive a 3.5 if handed in after 6pm but before 8pm, a 3.0 if handed in before 10pm, etc.).

Plagiarism. You will find the University policy on plagiarism at the end of the printed version of this outline. Plagiarism is a very serious academic offense. It is *not limited* to copying papers wholesale from the Internet; close paraphrase of the texts, of the lectures, or of anyone (other than you) without attribution constitutes plagiarism. Your assignments should only contain your own formulations. You should use direct quotes from the texts sparingly, and clearly mark them as such by using quotation marks and giving a source reference. When in doubt, consult with the instructor. **Plagiarism will result in a failing grade in the course and a report to the Dean's office.**

Course Website

A course website on U of C's BlackBoard server has been set up. You should be automatically registered on the first day of class if you're registered in the class. To access the BlackBoard site, you can either go directly to blackboard.ucalgary.ca and log in with your UCIT account name and password, or you can access it through the myUofC portal at my.ucalgary.ca. To sign up for a UCIT account, see the the Student Computer Support website at www.ucalgary.ca/computersupport. ***Please log on at least once by the end of the second week of classes.***

If you are not registered in the course on the first day of class, you will be added to the website within a day of registering.

I will use the email function on BlackBoard to send out important notices. Therefore, ***please make sure your email address in BlackBoard is current.*** For instructions on how to update your email address, see elearn.ucalgary.ca/blackboard/email.

INTELLECTUAL HONESTY

Intellectual honesty is the cornerstone of the development and acquisition of knowledge and requires that the contribution of others be acknowledged. As a result, cheating or plagiarism on any assignment or examination is regarded as an extremely serious academic offence, the penalty for which may be an F on the assignment and possibly also an F in the course, academic probation, or requirement to withdraw. The University Calendar states that plagiarism exists when:

- the work submitted or presented was done, in whole or in part, by an individual other than the one submitting or presenting the work (this includes having another impersonate the student or otherwise substituting the work of another for one's own in an examination or test);
- parts of the work are taken from another source without reference to the original author;
- the whole work (e.g., an essay) is copied from another source; and/or
- a student submits or presents work in one course which has also been submitted in another course (although it may be completely original with that student) without the knowledge of or prior agreement of the instructor involved.

While it is recognized that scholarly work often involves reference to the ideas, data and conclusions of other scholars, intellectual honesty requires that such references be explicitly and clearly noted. Plagiarism is an extremely serious offence. Plagiarism occurs not only when direct quotations are taken from a source without specific acknowledgement, but also when original ideas or data from the source are not acknowledged. A bibliography is insufficient to establish which portions of the student's work are taken from external sources; footnotes or other recognized forms of citation must be used for this purpose.

CHEATING

Cheating is an extremely serious academic offence. Cheating at tests or examinations includes but is not limited to dishonest or attempted dishonest conduct such as speaking to other candidates or communicating with them under any circumstances whatsoever; bringing into the examination room any textbook, notebook, memorandum, other written material or mechanical or electronic device not authorized by the examiner; writing an examination or part of it, or consulting any person or materials outside the confines of the examination room without permission to do so, or leaving answer papers exposed to view, or persistent attempts to read other students' examination papers.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodation. If you are a student with a documented disability who may require academic accommodation and have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre, please contact their office at 220-8237. Students who have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre are not eligible for formal academic accommodation. You are also required to discuss your needs with your instructor no later than fourteen (14) days after the start of this course.

STUDENTS' UNION REPRESENTATIVE

The Humanities Representative is Britney Luimes, MSC 251, humanitiesrep@su.ucalgary.ca or 220-3913.