

The University of Calgary – Department of Philosophy

**Philosophy 467 Lecture 01
Problems in the Philosophy of Science
Winter 2009**

Course Outline

Lectures: T/R 9:30-10:45

Location: SS 1255

Instructor: Dr. Megan Delehanty

Email: mdelehan@ucalgary.ca

Office Hours: R 11-12 or by appointment

Office: SS 1240

Phone: 220-2828

Course Description

Causation is one of the core issues in metaphysics, and figuring out precisely what causation is – or even what we think it is – has been an enduring project for philosophers. In this class, we will begin with a brief historical introduction to causation and the problems of causation. Why is causation important and why it is problematic? We will then examine the relations among causation, induction, laws, and counterfactual theories of (token) causation. We will then read about manipulability theories of causation which invoke "manipulability" or "agency" to resolve some of the mysteries of causation (especially, asymmetry). Finally, we will examine probabilistic theories of causation.

Course Text

No text is required. Readings (usually PDF files) will be posted on Blackboard.

Course Requirements

The largest component of the grade (65%) will be determined by one term paper (approx. 12-15 pages) due on the last day of class (April 16). As well, students will be required to submit 10 one page reflections on the weekly readings (due the day the readings are to be discussed in class). These will be graded on a pass/fail basis and will count for 20% of the grade. Note that you are required to do only 10, meaning that you can choose three weeks to skip (use these wisely!). Finally, each student will be responsible for a brief presentation (~20 min) and leading the class discussion on one set of readings (15 % of the grade).

10 weekly reflection pieces	20%
Presentation	15%
Term paper (due April 16)	65%

Grading Scale

95-100 = A+	78-80 = B+	68-70 = C+	58-60 = D+
85-94 = A	75-77 = B	65-67 = C	50-57 = D
81-84 = A-	71-74 = B-	61-64 = C-	< 50 = F

Policy on Late Assignments

No late assignments or papers are permitted unless a medical note is provided and/or permission is granted by the instructor *prior* to the set date.

It is the student's responsibility to keep up with the lectures, reading assignments, and due dates for assignments. Depending on the pace of the discussion, dates for particular readings may differ from that listed in the syllabus. Accordingly, due dates for the one-page reflections may also vary. Updated schedule information will be posted on Blackboard.

Schedule

Week 1	T Jan 13 R Jan 15	Introduction (no readings) 1) Gurol Irzik, Three Dogmas of Humean Causation
Week 2	(Jan 20, 22)	Hume on causation 1) Hume reading (<i>An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding</i> , section VII) 2) Beauchamp reading (Hume's Two Theories of Causation)
Week 3	(Jan 27, 29)	Neo-Humean accounts 1) Mackie, <i>The Cement of the Universe</i> , ch. 3 2) Hausman, Ch. 3
Week 4	(Feb 3, 5)	Non-Humean accounts (seeing causation) 1) Anscombe, "Causality and Determination" 2) Ducasse, "On the Nature and Observability of the Causal Relation"
Week 5	(Feb 10, 12)	Causation and counterfactuals 1) Lewis, "Causation as influence" 2) Dowe, "Is causation influence?" 3) Menzies, "Counterfactual theories of causation"
Week 6	(Feb 17, 19)	NO CLASS (Reading Week)
Week 7	(Feb 24, 26)	Causation and transference 1) Salmon, "Causation without counterfactuals" 1) Hitchcock, "Salmon on Explanatory Relevance" 3) Dowe, "Causal Processes"
Week 8	(Mar 3, 5)	Causation and manipulation 1) Woodward, "Causation and Manipulability" 1) Hausman, <i>Causal Asymmetries</i> , Ch. 5 3) Gasking, Causation and Recipes"

Week 9	(Mar 10, 12)	<p>Causation and stable capacities</p> <p>1) Cartwright, excerpt from <i>Nature's Capacities and Their Measurements</i></p> <p>2) Harre and Madden, excerpt from <i>Causal Powers: A Theory of Natural Necessity</i></p>
Week 10	(Mar 17, 19)	<p>Probabilistic Causation I – Probability</p> <p>1) Hajek, “Interpretations of probability”</p> <p>2) Gillies, “Varieties of Propensity”</p> <p>3) Eels, “Objective Probability Theory Theory”</p>
Week 11	(Mar 24, 26)	<p>Probabilistic Causation II</p> <p>1) Hitchcock, “Probabilistic Causation”</p> <p>3) Salmon, Probabilistic Causality”</p> <p>3) Hitchcock, “The Mishap at Reichenbach Fall: Singular and General Causation”</p>
Week 12	(Mar 31, Apr 2)	<p>The Common Cause Principle</p> <p>1) Reichenbach, <i>The Direction of Time</i></p> <p>2) Sober, “Venetian Sea Levels, British Bread Prices, and the Principle of Common Cause”</p>
Week 13	(Apr 7, 9)	<p>Mechanism</p> <p>1) Glennan, “Mechanisms and the Nature of Causation”</p> <p>2) Machamer, Darden, and Craver, “Thinking about Mechanisms”</p> <p>3) Gannett, “What’s in a Cause?: The Pragmatic Dimensions of Genetic Explanations”</p>
Week 14	(Apr 14, 16)	Catching up OR new topic of interest to class

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 offense, 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:

1. 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),*
2. *parts of the work are taken from another source without reference to the original author;*
3. *the whole work (e.g., an essay) is copied from another source; and/or*
4. *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.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

If you are a student with a disability who wishes to receive academic accommodation you must register with the Disability Resource Center. Students who have not registered with the Disability Resource Center are not eligible for formal academic accommodation. Info is available at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/UofC/Others/DRC/> or 220-8237.