

The University of Calgary
Department of Philosophy

Philosophy 307 Lec 01
19TH AND 20TH CENTURY ANALYTIC PHILOSOPHY

Fall 2008 — Richard Zach

Course Outline

Instructor: **Richard Zach**
Office: 1254 Social Sciences
Office Hours: TuTh 3:30-4:30 (subject to change) or by appointment
Phone: (403) 220-3170 email: rzach@ucalgary.ca
Lectures: **TuTh 2:00-3:15**
Education Classroom Block 284

Course Description

We will study some important figures from the early history of analytic philosophy. “Analytic philosophy” is a catch-all term for a style of philosophy that has been dominant in English-speaking philosophy departments since the 1950s. However, it has its roots in the works of some 19th century logicians and philosophers, specifically Gottlob Frege, who in turn influenced Bertrand Russell, Ludwig Wittgenstein, and the Logical Empiricist philosophers of the so-called Vienna Circle (here represented by A. J. Ayer). From them, 20th century analytic philosophy has inherited a preoccupation with logic, language, and mathematics. In this course, we will study some of the writings of these early analytic philosophers. We’ll read four books, in addition to several papers: Frege’s *Foundations of Arithmetic* concerns the content of mathematical propositions and the grounds of their truth. Russell’s *The Philosophy of Logical Atomism* and Wittgenstein’s *Tractatus* are concerned with the ultimate structure of reality, and the connection between it and the structure of language. The logical empiricists were decisively influenced by these views, and in turn very influential for the development of analytic philosophy, so we’ll also study their views, specifically, those of A. J. Ayer’s *Language, Truth, and Logic*.

Prerequisites A previous course in Philosophy or consent of the Department.

Required Texts

A. J. Ayer, *Language, Truth, and Logic* (Hackett)

Gottlob Frege, *The Foundations of Arithmetic*, trans. J. L. Austin (Northwestern)

Bertrand Russell, *The Philosophy of Logical Atomism* (Open Court)

Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (Routledge)

Selected additional texts will be made available electronically.

Requirements and Evaluation

Writing Assignments. There will be 4 short writing assignments (5% each, or 20% of the final grade; 200 words max), one mid-term paper (700 words max; 30%), and one final paper (1,000 words max; 30%). There will be no exams.

All assignments should be typed/printed, double-spaced, on white (recycled is ok) letter-size paper with 3 cm margins all around, preferably in 12 point Times or a similar serif font.

Participation. Class participation counts for 20% of your final grade. Your participation will be assessed on the basis of your contribution to discussion in class and on the course website. (If you are shy and don't want to speak in class, 5 posts with substantive philosophical content in the online discussion forum will earn you an A for this part of the final grade.) However, if all of your posts occur within one 7-day period, at most 3 of them will be counted toward your participation mark. Only posts before the due date of the final paper count.

Evaluation and Grades. On each assignment you will receive a letter grade reflecting the level of comprehension of the readings and your ability to assess philosophical arguments shown by the work you submit. There will be no +/- grades, but "slash" grades (e.g., A/B) are possible. 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 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.)

Note the emphasis in the above on the fact that it is not enough that you understand the issues we discuss, your written work must *show this*. Thus, the quality of your writing

will be a major factor in which grade you'll get. If your sentences miss subjects or verbs, your cross-references are unclear, or you use terminology ambiguously, you will receive a lower mark than if you had composed and proof-read your paper more carefully.

In computing your final grade, your marks will be converted to grade points and averaged according to the weights given above. 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 receive 0.5 below the value of the higher grade (e.g., A/B = 3.5).

The final grade will be the letter grade corresponding to the weighted average of your assignments, papers, 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. Assignments handed in late will be penalized by the equivalent of one grade point per calendar day, unless you can document a medical or other valid reason for why your assignment is late. If you turn an assignment in late, you must give it to the instructor in person or put it in the department dropbox (it will then be date-stamped by department staff). Note that the dropboxes are cleared at 4 pm, the department closes at 4:30 pm on weekdays and *is closed Saturdays and Sundays*.

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; copying and close paraphrase of the texts, of the lectures, or of anyone (other than you) without clear 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 on the assignment or in the course and a report to the Dean's office.**

Checking your grades and reappraisals of work. University policies for reappraisal of term work and final grades apply (see the *Calendar* section "Reappraisal of Grades and Academic Appeals"). In particular, term work will only be reappraised within 15 days of the date you are advised of your marks. Please keep track of your assignments (make sure to pick them up in lecture or in office hours) and your marks (check them on the website) and compare them with the graded work returned to you.

Course Website

A course website on U of C's BlackBoard server has been set up. You will be automatically registered 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 (my.ucalgary.ca; log in with your eID).

Tentative Schedule (topics and due dates subject to change)

Week 1 (Sept 9, 11). Introduction, Background, Frege

Week 2 (Sept 16, 18). Frege, *Foundations*

Assignment 1 due

Week 3 (Sept 23, 25). Frege, *Foundations*, Sense and Reference

Week 4 (Sept 30, Oct 2). Frege, Concept and Object, Thoughts

Assignment 2 due

Week 5 (Oct 7, 9). Russell, Descriptions

Week 6 (Oct 14, 16). Russell, *Logical Atomism*

Midterm paper due

Week 7 (Oct 21, 23). Russell, *Logical Atomism*

Week 8 (Oct 28, 30). Wittgenstein, *Tractatus*

Assignment 3 due

Week 9 (Nov 4, no class Nov 6). Wittgenstein, *Tractatus*

Week 10 (Nov 13, no class Nov 11). Wittgenstein, *Tractatus*

Week 11 (Nov 18, 20). Ayer, *Language, Truth and Logic*

Assignment 4 due

Week 12 (Nov 25, 27). Ayer, *Language, Truth and Logic*

Week 13 (Dec 2, 4). Review

Final paper due

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.

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 Daniel Pagan, MSC 251, humanitiesrep@su.ucalgary.ca or 220-3913.