



FACULTY OF ARTS  
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

**PHIL 523 Lec 01 – Advanced Topics in Metaphysics**  
**Topic 1: “Laws of Nature”**

**Fall Term 2011**

**Course Outline**

**Lectures:** TuTh 1400-1515 in SS 010

**Instructor:** Noa Latham

**Office:** SS 1250

**Phone:** 220-5528 (no messages)

**Email:** [latham@ucalgary.ca](mailto:latham@ucalgary.ca)

**Office hours:** Tu 12.30-1.30, Th 3.30-4.30, and by appointment.

**Course Description**

Topics to be discussed include what laws of nature are and how they are to be distinguished from accidental regularities; the relation between laws and induction, causation, counterfactuals, explanation, and the direction of time; whether there are fundamental laws and how they relate to ceteris paribus laws and special science laws; whether laws are necessary and if so what kind of necessity; whether laws are relations between universals; the relation between laws and the individuation of properties and natural kinds.

**Required Texts**

A course reader available from Bound and Copied (Students' Union).

Additional readings posted on Blackboard

**Requirements and Evaluation**

Four short papers 1200 words max, due Oct 1, Oct 15, Oct 29, Nov 14 submitted electronically by midnight, the best three of which will be worth 10% each of the course grade. A term paper proposal 500 words max submitted electronically due Nov 19 by midnight. A term paper (hard copy) roughly 5000 words worth 60% of the course grade, due in the course drop box opposite my office December 12 at 4pm. A 20 minute class presentation worth 10% of the course grade.

Late assignments will be marked down by one grade step, e.g. from a B+ to a B, for each day of lateness. (The time between Fri and Mon counts as one day.) If you are anticipating any difficulty in turning your assignment in on time you must discuss the problem with me before the due date.

I shall be using Blackboard to post assignments and grades, to confirm what we are reading for the next lecture, and to provide some questions on those readings. Cumulative and final grades will be computed by Gradebook on the Blackboard site using the following scale:

A+	98-100	B+	86-89	C+	74-77	D+	62-65
A	94-97	B	82-85	C	70-73	D	58-61
A-	90-93	B-	78-81	C-	66-69	F	0-57

Missing assignment = 0.

## Electronic Devices

Those wishing to use a computer to take notes are requested to sit in the back row of the class. Cellphones are not to be used in class.

## Tentative Schedule

Sep 13	Introduction
Sep 15	Covering Law Explanations: Hempel
Sep 20, 22	Regularity Account of Laws: Hempel, Bird
Sep 27, 29	Humean Account of Laws: Lewis, Loewer
Oct 4, 6, 11	Humeanism and Scepticism: Latham
Oct 13	Laws as Relations between Universals: Armstrong
Oct 18, 20	Generative Account of Laws: Latham, Armstrong, Maudlin
Oct 25, 27	Laws and the Direction of Time: Latham, Maudlin
Nov 1	Fundamental Level: Schaffer
Nov 3, 8	Dispositionalist Essentialism: Bigelow, Ellis, Lierse; Bird
Nov 15, 17, 22	Categoricalism: Bird, Latham
Nov 24	Ceteris Paribus Laws: Cartwright
Nov 29, Dec 1	Student Presentations
Dec 6, 8	Student Presentations

## 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 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, 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.

### **FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND PROTECTION OF PRIVACY (FOIP) ACT**

The University of Calgary is under the jurisdiction of the provincial FOIP Act in all aspects of its operations as a publicly funded institution. The Department of Philosophy ensures the student's right to privacy by requiring all graded assignments be returned to the student directly from the instructor unless other arrangements have been made in writing and filed with the Department Administrator.

### **FACULTY OF ARTS PROGRAM ADVISING & STUDENT INFORMATION RESOURCES**

- Have a question, but not sure where to start? The new Faculty of Arts Program Information Centre (PIC) is your information resource for everything in Arts. Drop in at SS110, phone 403-220-3580 or email at [artsads@ucalgary.ca](mailto:artsads@ucalgary.ca). You can also visit the Faculty of Arts website at <http://arts.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate> which has detailed information on common academic concerns.
- For program planning and advice, contact the Student Success Centre at 403-220-5881 or visit them in their new space on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor of the Taylor Family Digital Library.
- For registration (add/drop/swap), paying fees and assistance with your Student Centre, contact Enrolment Services at 403-210-ROCK [7625] or visit them at the MacKimmie Library Block.
- Email Contact Addresses for Students Union Representatives for the Faculty of Arts:  
[arts1@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts1@su.ucalgary.ca)   [arts2@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts2@su.ucalgary.ca)  
[arts3@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts3@su.ucalgary.ca)   [arts4@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts4@su.ucalgary.ca)