

HURON UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

Undergraduate Course Outline 2022–2023

Phil3040F: Origins of Analytic Philosophy

Mon 2:30–3:30, Wed 3:30–5:30
Classroom: W101 (Huron)
Office: Lucas House Annex

Instructor: Emerson Doyle
email: edoyle9@uwo.ca
Hours: Wed 1:00–3:30 or anytime via Zoom

Course Description

Analytic philosophy developed in the main as a response to the Idealist philosophy that had become fashionable in Europe during the latter half of the 19th century. It grew throughout the 20th century to become the dominant method of Western philosophy. Somewhat ironically, both traditions trace their origins back to Kant's criticisms of the Early Moderns. What distinguishes the analytic tradition is its close connection to the contemporaneous development of modern logic, its focus upon an analysis of language as the interface between mind and world, and its sensitivity to the revolutionary mathematical and scientific advancements being made at the time. Indeed, we can do worse than to characterize early analytic philosophy as the application of logico-mathematical methods to philosophical questions raised in the sciences, including computer science, semantics, psychology, physics both large and small, mathematics, and biology.

This course aims to give us a sense of the motivations, methods, problems, and solutions that compose the early analytic tradition, both as a philosophical school and in terms of the wider cultural and scholarly contexts within which analytic philosophy developed. After a brief look at the intellectual landscape forming the background of the analytic tradition, we will take a “problem focused” approach, considering a variety of topics which showcase analytic methods.

Course Objectives & Methods

Students should finish the course with an understanding of some of the key issues that faced 20th century philosophy, as well as an understanding of analytic methods more generally. You will also have the opportunity to improve your writing, critical analysis, and argumentative abilities. These are extremely valuable skills not just for success in academia, but also within the personal and professional spheres more generally.

We'll begin most weeks with a short lecture on background and key concepts. The remainder of the class will be more free-form, consisting of discussion, textual analysis, and close reading of the material. Obviously, students will be expected to attend every class having done all the readings, and to regularly make contributions to class discussion. In my experience this makes for the most enjoyable and beneficial sort of classroom environment.

Analytic philosophy at a glance

	Frege	Russell	Vienna Circle	Quine	Oxford	TLP	PI
linguistic turn	(x)	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
rejection of metaphysics	x	x	✓	x	(✓)	(✓)	✓
philosophy ≠ science	(x)	x	(✓)	x	✓	✓	✓
reductive analysis	(x)	✓	✓	(✓)	x	✓	x
formal logic	✓	✓	✓	✓	(x)	✓	x
science oriented	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	x	x
argument	✓	✓	(✓)	(✓)	✓	(x)	(✓)
clarity	✓	(✓)	✓	(✓)	✓	x	(x)

Parentheses indicate either that the verdict is contestable or that the feature is partly present or partly absent.

From Hans-Johann Glock's *What is Analytic Philosophy?*

Texts

- All course readings will be posted on OWL.

Recommend Texts (primary & secondary sources, as background/starting point for essays)

- Beaney, M. (2018) *Analytic Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction*. OUP.
- Demopoulos, W. (2013) *Logicism and its Philosophical Legacy*. CUP.
- Lapointe, S. & Pincock, C. (2017) *Innovations in the History of Analytic Philosophy*.
- Martinich, A.P. & Sosa, D. (2011) *Analytic Philosophy: An Anthology, 2nd Ed.* Wiley.
- Miller, A. (1998) *Philosophy of Language*. Routledge.

You will be expected to come to class not only having done the readings, but also having critically reflected upon them. Our material will sometimes be dense, involving difficult concepts and arguments. Some weeks I will post a set of “Questions for Thought” that reinforce and review the material. But you should always bring questions to class for discussion! Such discussions will be an essential element of the course, taking up the majority of our time.

Requirements

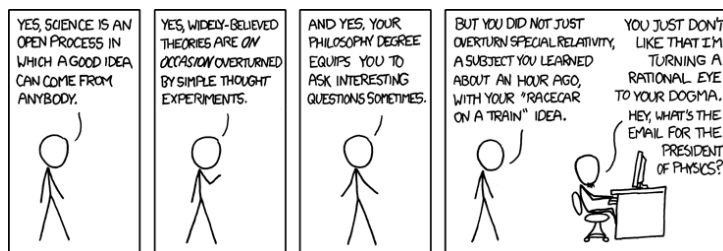
- Free Responses: 10% (10 responses each worth 1%)
- Argumentative Papers: 50% (6/8 pages maximum, two papers 20% & 30%)
- Class Presentation: 15% (leading discussion for one week’s readings)
- Final Exam: 25% (during the Fall exam period)

Free Responses are a response to **anything** related to the content of class discussion or readings for the week. No length or topic requirement, but your thoughts should be substantial. Responses should be posted to the appropriate OWL Forum by Wednesdays at 10:00am. Each response is worth 1%. There will be **no opportunity** to hand these in late or if you miss class.

Paper topics for the first paper will be distributed in advance. You’ll develop your own topic for the second paper, in consultation with me. Both papers are expected to be substantial contributions which involve research outside the readings from class. Late work submitted without arrangement with me **in advance** will be penalized by **5% per day late**, including weekends.

You will prepare a short **Class Presentation** for one week’s readings. We’ll decide presentation assignments in the first week or two. Besides a formal presentation to the class in the style of my summary lectures, you should also be prepared to lead the class discussion for the topics that week.

The **Exam** will occur during the appropriate exam period. These will be “take-home” style assignments requiring a demonstration of understanding and significant synthesis of course content.



Schedule

*Please be advised that the reading list is tentative.

Week 1 (Sept 12/14)

Analytic Origins: Idealism vs. Direct Realism

- Griffin, “Russell and Moore’s Revolt against British Idealism”
- Bradley, selections from *Appearance and Reality*
- Moore, “The Refutation of Idealism”

Week 2 (Sept 19/21)

Analytic Origins: Kant and the Synthetic A Priori

- Conant, J. & Elliott, J. (eds), selection from *The Norton Anthology of Western Philosophy: After Kant*
- Kant, selections from *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics*
- Frege, selections from *Foundations of Arithmetic*

Week 3 (Sept 26/28)

A Paradox of Analysis? Sense and Reference

- Frege, “Sense and Reference”
- Miller, selections from *Philosophy of Language*
- Carnap, selections from *Logical Foundations of Probability*

Week 4 (Oct 03/05)

Logicism: Mathematics from Logic?

- Frege, selections from *Foundations of Arithmetic*
- Selections from the Frege–Russell Correspondence
- Doyle, “Number Theory, Logicism, and Paradox”

Week 5 (Oct 12)

That Paradigm of Analysis: The Theory of Descriptions

- Russell, “On Denoting” & “Mr. Strawson on Referring”
- Strawson, “On Referring”
- Miller, selections from *Philosophy of Language*

Week 6 (Oct 17/19)

Logicism Continued

- Russell, selections from *Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy*
- Demopoulos & Clark, “The Logicism of Frege, Dedekind and Russell”

First Paper due October 19th — 20%

Week 7 (Oct 24/26)

The Theory of Logical Atomism

- Wittgenstein, selections from *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*
- Russell, selections from *The Philosophy of Logical Atomism*

Week ☹ (Oct 31/Nov 02)

No Class — Reading Week!! (whew!)

Week 9 (Nov 07/09)

*Drop Date Nov. 12

Applications: The Elimination of Metaphysics

- Carnap, “The Elimination of Metaphysics. . .”
- Hempel, “Problems and Changes in the Empiricist Criterion of Meaning”

Week 10 (Nov 14/16)

Applications: The Foundations of Computation and A.I.

- Turing, excerpt from “On Computable Numbers”
- Turing, “Computing Machinery and Intelligence”
- Searle, “Can Computers Think?”

Week 11 (Nov 21/23)

Applications: The Analytic–Synthetic Distinction

- Carnap, “Empiricism, Semantics, and Ontology”
- Quine, “Two Dogmas of Empiricism”

Week 12 (Nov 28/30)

Applications: The Definition of Truth

- Tarski, “The Semantic Conception of Truth”
- Putnam, “Do True Assertions Correspond to Reality?”

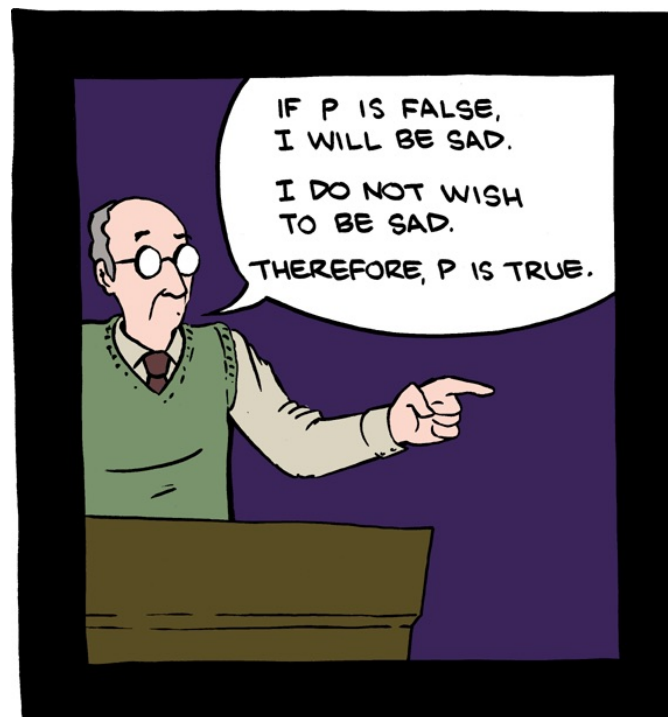
Week 13 (Dec 05/07)

Applications: The Structure of Science via Ramsey Sentences

- Carnap, selection from *Introduction to Philosophy of Science*
- Demopoulos, “Three Views of Theoretical Knowledge”

Second Paper due December 07th — 30%

Final Exam during Fall Exam Period — 25%



There. Now you can skip 99% of philosophical debates.