

Kant - PHIL10169

Course Guide 2019/2020

School of Philosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences
University of Edinburgh

Course organiser

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Timetable

Semester 1
Monday 14.10-16.00
David Hume Room 3.11 DSB

1. Course description, objectives, and expectations

This course will present a comprehensive picture of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*. We will cover the different questions and arguments of Kant's Transcendental Idealism in the order in which they appear in the *Critique*. The objective of this course is three-fold. **First**, to develop a more advanced understanding of Kant's metaphysics and epistemology as presented in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. **Second**, to recognise the place of this work in the development of modern philosophy and in the history of philosophy to this day more generally. **Third**, with a combination of analysis of primary sources and secondary literature, this course has the aim of enhancing key philosophical abilities such as the analysis and commentary of primary texts and the reconstruction and evaluation of arguments.

Students taking this course will be expected to read the parts of the *Critique* required for each lecture, together with the relevant secondary literature for each topic. On completion of this course, students should be able to:

- (1) Demonstrate a **detailed understanding** of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* and its place in the history of western thought
- (2) **State confidently** the main doctrines presented in this text
- (3) Engage with **primary texts** by identifying and assessing questions and arguments
- (4) Have some awareness of interpretative **problems and objections** to Kant's theory

2. Lecture schedule and readings

Note about primary sources:

The essential reading for all lectures is the *Critique of Pure Reason* (CPR). You must have access to a copy of it and bring it to class. The following edition is strongly recommended:

I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, edited by N. Kemp Smith, Palgrave

Another good edition is: I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant, Cambridge University Press

We will also read parts of the *Prolegomena to any Future Metaphysics*, which Kant wrote afterwards in order to provide a summary of the CPR. The following edition is strongly recommended:

I. Kant, *Prolegomena to any Future Metaphysics*, translated and edited by G. Hatfield, Cambridge Texts in the History of Philosophy, Cambridge University Press

Lecture schedule (complete references in Section 4 below):

WEEK 1. Background and Kant's Copernican Revolution

Seminar discussion: What does Kant mean by a 'critique' of reason? Why does he think that there is a need for such a critique?

Primary reading:

CPR, Preface to the Second Edition Bvii-xliv,
Prolegomena, 15-22 [4:271-5]

Secondary reading:

Burnham & Young (2007) 5-23
Gardner (1999) Chapter 1

WEEK 2. Synthetic a priori knowledge

Seminar discussion: What is the distinction between analytic/synthetic knowledge? Can it be successfully drawn? What is its role in Kant's argument for transcendental idealism?

Primary reading:

CPR, Introduction (B1-B30)
Prolegomena, 119-125 [4:365-371]

Secondary reading:

Gardner (1999) Chapter 3
Buroker (2006) 27-35
Van Cleve (1999) Chapter 2

WEEK 3. The transcendental aesthetic

Seminar discussion: Explain the significance of Kant's argument(s) for, the claim that space and time are transcendently ideal. What does he mean? Why is it important? Is his argument successful?

Primary reading:

CPR, The Transcendental Aesthetic (B33-B73)
Prolegomena, 36-40 [4:285-6]

Secondary reading:

Shabel (2010) 'The transcendental aesthetic'
Gardner (1999) Chapter 4
Janiak (2016), 'Kant's views on space and time'

WEEK 4. Phenomena and noumena

Seminar question: What is Kant's argument in favour of the things in themselves? Is it successful?

Primary reading:

CPR, 'Phenomena and Noumena' (B294-315)
Prolegomena, 40-46 [4 :288-94]

Secondary reading:

Gardner (1999) 200-6
Ward (2006) 97-103
Langton (1998) Chapter 1

Optional reading (more complex):

Langton (1998) Chapter 2
Van Cleve (1999) Chapter 7
Chignell (2014) 'Modal motivations for noumenal ignorance'

WEEK 5. The transcendental analytic I: Categories

Seminar question: what is the role of the deduction in Kant's overall argument for transcendental idealism? What does it mean for his system if the deductions are unsuccessful?

Primary reading:

CPR, Transcendental Logic, Introduction and Division I, Transcendental Analytic, Book I, Chapter I (A 66-83/B 92-116)
CPR, Transcendental Analytic, Book I, Ch. II (A 84-95/B 116-129)

Secondary reading:

Wood (2005) Chapter 3
Longuenesse (2005) *Kant on the Human Standpoint*, Chapter 4
Guyer (2010) 'The deduction of the categories: the metaphysical and transcendental deductions'

Optional reading (more complex):

Van Cleve (1999) Chapter 7
Pereboom (2019) 'Kant's transcendental arguments'

WEEK 6. Participation session (We'll discuss the details during week 1)

WEEK 7. The transcendental analytic II: The analogies of experience

Seminar question: What is the status of causation for Kant? Does he provide a successful answer to Hume's skeptical doubts about causation?

Primary reading:

CPR, Transcendental Analytic, Book II, 'The System of the Principles of Pure Understanding':
A 154-62/B 193-202, and 'The Second Analogy': A 189-211/B 232- 256.
Prolegomena, 63-65 [4:310-11]

Secondary reading:

Ward (2006) 73-81
Buroker (2006) 173-83
Gardner (1999) 165-88

Optional reading (more complex):

De Pierris & Friedman (2018) 'Kant and Hume on causality'
Longuenesse, *Kant on the Human Standpoint*, Chapter 6
Ginsborg (2017) 'Why must we presuppose the systematicity of nature?'

WEEK 8. The antinomies of pure reason

Seminar question: Is Kant successful in securing freedom from the threat of natural determinism?

Primary reading:

CPR, 'The Antinomy of Pure Reason' (B432-488)
Prolegomena, 86-87 [4:332-3], 104-108 [4:350-4]

Secondary reading:

Burnham & Young (2007) 146-151
Wood (2005) 89-100
Gardner (1999) 245-264
Grier (2006) 'The logic of illusion and the antinomies'

Optional reading (more complex):

Allison (1990) *Kant's theory of freedom*, Part 1

WEEK 9. The refutation of idealism

Seminar question: Why does Kant need a refutation of idealism? Is his refutation successful?

Primary reading:

CPR, Transcendental Analytic, Book II, Ch. II (B274-9)
Prolegomena 128-131 [4:374-6]

Secondary reading:

Emundts (2010) 'The refutation of idealism and the distinction between phenomena and noumena'
Buroker (2006) 188-97
Guyer (1999) 179-88

Optional reading (more complex):

Strawson (1966) Chapter 3
Allison (1983) Chapter 10

WEEK 10. The ideal of pure reason

Seminar question: discuss Kant's three questions: "What can I know? What ought I to do? What may I hope? And What is man?" What do they mean? How do they relate to each other?

Primary reading:

CPR, 'Canon of pure reason' (A795-830).

Secondary reading:

Grier (2010) 'The ideal of pure reason'
Gardner (1999) Chapter 9
Ward (2006) Chapter 8
Buroker (2006) Chapter 11

WEEK 11. Kant's legacy. German idealism.

Seminar question: What are the major sources of tension in Kant's Critique?

Primary reading:

CPR, 'Architectonic of pure reason' (A832-851).

Secondary reading:

Beiser (1987) The fate of reason, Introduction
Gardner (1999) Chapter 10
Walker (1978) Chapter 10

Optional reading (more complex):

Sedgwick (2006) 'Hegel's critique of Kant'

3. Assessment

This course will be assessed by a shorter mid-term essay (1500 words) due on **Thursday 24th October by 12 noon** (35%) and a final essay (2500 words) due on **Thursday 12th December by 12 noon** (60%). Students will also have to prepare a **creative presentation worth 5%**. You can choose any of the seminar questions for your essays.

4. Complete reading list

Most secondary readings are available online via library log in. If for some reason you are unable to get a copy of a required reading, do let me know.

H. Allison (1990) *Kant's Theory of Freedom*, Cambridge University Press (available online via library log in)

F. Beiser (1987) *The Fate of Reason*, Harvard University Press

J. Buroker (2006), *Kant's Critique of Pure Reason. An Introduction*, Cambridge University Press (available online via library log in)

- D. Burnham & H. Young (2007), *Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*, Edinburgh University Press (available online via library log in)
- A. Chignell (2014) 'Modal motivations for noumenal ignorance' *Kant-Studien* 105 (4):573-597 (online)
- G. De Pierris & M. Friedman (2018) 'Kant and Hume on causality', *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*
- D. Emundts (2010), 'The refutation of idealism and the distinction between phenomena and noumena' in P. Guyer (ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*, Cambridge University Press (available online via library log in)
- S. Gardner (1999), *Routledge Philosophy Guidebook to Kant and the Critique of Pure Reason*, Routledge (available online)
- H. Ginsborg (2017) 'Why must we presuppose the systematicity of nature?' In M. Massimi & A. Breitenbach (eds.), *Kant and the Laws of Nature*, Cambridge University Press (available online via library log in)
- M. Grier (2006) 'The logic of illusion and the antinomies' in G. Bird (ed.) *A Companion to Kant*, Wiley-Blackwell
- P. Guyer (2010) 'The deduction of the categories: the metaphysical and transcendental deductions' in P. Guyer (ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*, Cambridge University Press (available online via library log in)
- A. Janiak (2016), 'Kant's views on space and time', *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*
- R. Langton (1998), *Kantian Humility: Our Ignorance of Things in Themselves*, Oxford University Press (available online via library log in)
- B. Longuenesse (2005) *Kant on the Human Standpoint*, Cambridge University Press (available online via library log in)
- D. Pereboom (2019) 'Kant's transcendental arguments', *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*
- S. Sedgwick (2006) 'Hegel's critique of Kant' in G. Bird (ed.) *A Companion to Kant*, Wiley-Blackwell
- L. Shabel (2010) 'The transcendental aesthetic' in P. Guyer (ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*, Cambridge University Press (available online via library log in)
- P. F. Strawson (1966), *The Bounds of Sense: An Essay on Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*, Routledge
- J. Van Cleve (1999), *Problems from Kant*, Oxford University Press (available online via library log in)
- R. Walker (1978) *Kant*, Routledge
- A. Ward (2006) *Kant. The Three Critiques*, Polity
- A. Wood (2005), *Kant*, Blackwell