Phil 10014
THE PHILOSOPHY OF WITTGENSTEIN
T11.10-13.00, Dugald Steward Building 1.17

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Office Hrs: Tue, 2-3pm or by appt.

Course Description:
Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951) is considered by many to be the most important philosopher of the 20th century. In this course we will study his later work by focusing on a close reading of Philosophical Investigations (1953). We will look in detail at the following topics: criticism of the Augustinian picture of language, ostensive definition and meaning as use, family resemblance, philosophy as description and therapy, meaning, understanding, & rule-following, the private language argument and the inner and the outer. Throughout we will pay attention to tensions in the text between what look like arguments for interesting, sometimes even radical-sounding theses about language and mind, and the claim that philosophy is descriptive and “leaves everything as is” (PI #124). At points we will also try to relate his thought to contemporary issues in philosophy of language and mind and see what can be learned for our current purposes.

Assignments and Grading:
- Final Exam (100%), April/May

Readings:
You are expected to bring a paper copy of the following to each class:


For guidance we will read from:


Many of the suggested secondary readings are drawn from (these are marked with *):


For further introductory background you can profitably read any of the following:

- Severin Schroeder, Wittgenstein, 2006
Schedule (required readings in bold):

W1, 14.01: Introduction: Frege and Russell, *Tractatus, the Middle Period*

Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*
Wittgenstein, *The Blue and Brown Books*
Monk “Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Sketch of his Life”*
Kienzler “Wittgenstein’s Philosophical Development”*

W2, 21.01: *The Augustinian Picture*

PI #1-27
Ahmed, pp. 1-16
Goldfarb “I Want You to Bring Me a Slab”
Perry “Davidson’s Sentences and Wittgenstein’s Builders”

W3, 28.01: *Ostension, Meaning as Use, and Referentialism*

PI #28-64
Ahmed, pp. 16-40
Büttner “Names and Ostensive Definition”*
Stenius “Mood and Language-Game”

W4, 4.02: *Family Resemblance*

PI # 65-88
Ahmed, pp. 40-61
Pelczar “Wittgensteinian Semantics”
Forster “Wittgenstein on Family Resemblance Concepts”

W5, 11.02 *The Nature of Philosophy*

PI # 89-137
Ahmed, pp. 61-69
Glock “Philosophy and Philosophical Method”*

W6, 17.02: Flexible Reading Week, NO CLASS

W7, 25.02: *Meaning, Understanding, and Rule-Following I*

PI # 138-184
Ahmed, pp. 69-94
Bridges “Meaning and Understanding”*
McDowell “Are Meaning, Understanding etc. Definite States?”
**W8.** 3.03: *Meaning, Understanding, and Rule-Following II*

**PI # 185-242**

Ahmed, pp. 94-106

Ebbs “Rule-Following”*
Fogelin, *Taking Wittgenstein at His Word*, Ch. 1

**W9.** 10.03: *Kripke’s Wittgenstein*


Wright “Following a Rule”
McDowell, “Wittgenstein on Following a Rule”
Boghossian “The Rule-Following Considerations”
Ginsborg “Primitive Normativity and Scepticism about Rules”

**W10.** 17.03: *The Private Language Argument*

**PI # 243-275**

Ahmed, pp. 107-128

Kanterian “Privacy and Private Language”*
Ayer & Rhees “Can There Be a Private Language?”
Grandy “The Private Language Argument”
Fogelin, *Taking Wittgenstein at His Word*, Ch. 2
Kripke, *Wittgenstein on Private Language*, Ch. 3
Wright “Does PI 258-260 Suggest a Cogent Argument Against Private Language?”
McDowell “One Strand in the Private Language Argument”

**W11.** 24.03: *The Inner and the Outer*

**PI # 275-315**

Ahmed, pp. 129-149

Child “The Inner and the Outer”*

**W12.** 31.03: *Further Themes & Wittgenstein’s Influence*

Ahmed, pp. 150-153

PI #316-693
Wittgenstein, *Philosophy of Psychology – A Fragment*
Wittgenstein, *On Certainty*
Schroeder “Grammar and Grammatical Statements”*
Forster, *Wittgenstein on the Arbitrariness of Grammar*