

Protoseminar (PHIL 700)
Spring 2022 Syllabus

Instructors: Luc Bovens & Alex Worsnip

Class Meetings: Wednesdays, 10am-12:30pm, Caldwell 213

Luc's Office Hours: Tuesdays, 11am-1pm

Alex's Office Hours: Wednesdays, 2-3pm [via Zoom] & Thursdays, 11am-12pm [in person]

We will study and discuss a wide range of papers, drawn from many areas of philosophy and written in a variety of philosophical styles. The aim of the course is to help you to develop professional skills such as the ability to read carefully, to reconstruct arguments, to present material in oral and written form, and to contribute productively to discussions.

Each week, a student is assigned to introduce the text assigned and lead the class discussion. You will find a schedule of presenters and readings below. Each student will be presenting twice. All the readings will be available electronically on Sakai.

Every week in which you are **not** assigned to lead the class discussion, you are to write a short paper. The paper should be no more than two pages (double-spaced, 12-point font, 1-inch margins) and can discuss any aspect of the reading. Papers are due the night before class at 8pm. Please turn in your paper through the Assignments function on Sakai.

Every week, please come to class ready to discuss the assigned papers.

If you complete all of the assigned work on time, then you will receive a P+ for the course. There is no final exam or final term paper.

Schedule of Meetings

Aug. 17 Richard Kraut, "Two Conceptions of Happiness"
Presenter: Jackson

Aug. 24 Marya Schechtman, "Personhood and Personal Identity"
Presenter: Rachel

Aug. 31 Jennifer Morton & Sarah Paul, "Grit"
Presenter: Kyle

Sept. 7 David Lewis, "Scorekeeping in a Language Game"
Presenter: Ava

Sept. 14 Judith Jarvis Thomson, "Self-Defense"
Presenter: Thomas

Sept. 21 Tamar Gendler, "Alief and Belief"
Presenter: Felix

- Sept. 28** Kwame Anthony Appiah, “Race, Culture, Identity: Misunderstood Connections,” Part 1: Analysis: Against Races¹
Presenter: Myraeka
- Oct. 5** Cicero, *Tusculan Disputations*, Book 3
Presenter: Rachel
- Oct. 12** Dana Nelkin, “The Lottery Paradox, Knowledge, and Rationality”
Presenter: Jackson
- Oct. 19** P.F. Strawson, “Freedom and Resentment”
Presenter: Ava
- Oct. 26** Elizabeth Anderson, “What’s the Point of Equality?”
Presenter: Felix
- Nov. 2** Amie Thomasson, “Fictionalism Versus Deflationism”
Presenter: Kyle
- Nov. 9** Thomas Kelly, “Sunk Costs, Rationality, and Acting for the Sake of the Past”
Presenter: Thomas
- Nov. 16** Samantha Matherne, “Aesthetic Autonomy and Norms of Exposure”
Presenter: Myraeka
- Nov. 23 *No class – Thanksgiving break*
- Nov. 30** End of semester roundup/debrief

¹ Note: the assigned reading is only Part 1 (pp. 30-74), but we have posted the whole piece on Sakai, also including Part 2: Synthesis: For Racial Identities (pp. 74-105). You may wish to continue reading, as the two parts complement each other nicely, but you are not required to.