

Phil 106: Kant

Spring 2012

Tues. and Thurs., 6–7:45pm, Stevenson Acad. 175.

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Office hours: Tues. 2:15–3:15, Thurs. 12:45–1:45pm.

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Course Requirements

Participation in discussion sections (good participation will be possible grounds for raising course grade, especially if it is on a borderline).

Two take home exams, due Thurs., Apr. 26 and Thurs., May 17 (a choice of essay questions) (each worth 20% of the grade); take-home final exam (also a choice of essay questions), due Tues., June 12 (60% of the grade). Students who receive an A- or higher on the first two exams may choose to write a final paper (approximately 8–10 pages) in place of the final, on a topic to be discussed in advance with the instructor.

Instructions for the exams are available on-line; there are links to them from this syllabus as well as from my main course page and from the eCommons site for the course. I will discuss the exams in class when the due date draws near (but feel free to ask about them at any time).

Exams are to be handed in, as attachments, via the “Assignments” tool on eCommons. Please submit in MSWord format (.doc or .docx are both fine), or in a format easily convertible to MSWord (e.g., plain text or RTF). The eCommons site is set to accept late submissions, though late papers (without an approved extension) may not receive full credit. It is *not* set to allow resubmissions: once you press the “submit” button, it will not let you change your response. If, however, you mistakenly submit something and want to change it, please contact me and I will make an exception.

Note that all three exams are due by midnight on the due date.

For answers to some common questions about my assignments, please see this FAQ.

Attendance at lecture is *strongly* encouraged, but it is not a course requirement and I will not be taking attendance.

Texts

Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, tr. Norman Kemp Smith (ISBN: 1403911959).

The above text should be available at the Literary Guillotine. Some commentaries and secondary works will be available on reserve at McHenry (see below).

If you want to use a different translation you are welcome to, but you should be aware that it may be confusing because translations can differ greatly. Of course, if you know German, you should read in the original.

This year we will be reading exclusively the text of the second (“B”) edition. Page numbers in both the first and second (“A”) editions are marked in the margin of Smith’s translation. In most cases where the two editions differ, it should be relatively easy to figure out what the text of the B edition says: Smith mostly either prints the B-edition text with A-edition difference in footnotes, or, where there are big differences, prints the two texts separately.

I will put on reserve the following secondary texts, which you may or may not find useful: Walsh, *Kant’s Criticism of Metaphysics*; Gardner, *Routledge Philosophy Guidebook to Kant and the Critique of Pure Reason*; Strawson, *The Bounds of Sense*; Bennett, *Kant’s Analytic and Kant’s Dialectic*; Allison, *Kant’s Transcendental Idealism*; Guyer, ed., *Cambridge Companion to Kant* Longuenesse, *Kant And The Capacity To Judge : Sensibility And Discursivity In The Transcendental Analytic Of The Critique Of Pure Reason*. (The first two on this list have been highly recommended to me as beginning-level texts, but I haven’t read them myself as of now; your mileage may vary. The others are somewhat more involved. Strawson and Bennett are basically anti-Kant — they claim to think that he’s a great philosopher, but attack and ridicule most of what he actually says — whereas Allison is basically pro-Kant. The *Cambridge Companion* is a collection of essays by various authors. Longuenesse is a more difficult author, but one whom I personally have found useful. There is plenty of other literature on Kant, of course.)

Readings

Tues., Apr. 3: (no reading, first class).

Preface, Introduction, and Transcendental Aesthetic

Thurs., Apr. 5: Preface, from “Metaphysics is a completely isolated speculative science” to “and the loss of which it can therefore never feel,” and beginning of Introduction, through end of part V (Bxiv–xxxv, B1-18).

Tues., Apr. 10: end of Introduction and beginning of Transcendental Aesthetic, through end of §6 (B19–53).

Thurs., Apr. 12: **no class**, due to end of Passover.

Tues., Apr. 17: end of Transcendental Aesthetic (B53–73).

Transcendental Analytic

Thurs., Apr. 19: Introduction to the Transcendental Logic, and beginning of Metaphysical Deduction, through the end of §10 (B74–109).

Tues., Apr. 24: end of Metaphysical Deduction, and beginning of Transcendental Deduction, through the end of §15 (B109–131).

Thurs., Apr. 26: end of Transcendental Deduction (B132–69) and **first take home exam due.**

Tues., May 1: Schematism (and various introductory material) (B169–202).

Thurs., May 3: Introduction to the Analogies, Second Analogy, Postulates of Empirical Thought, and Refutation of Idealism (B218–24, B232–47, B265–79).

Tues., May 8: Phenomena and Noumena (B295–315).

Thurs., May 10: Amphiboly (B316–49).

Transcendental Dialectic

Tues., May 15: Introduction to the Dialectic, and beginning of the Concepts of Pure Reason (B349–77).

Thurs., May 17: end of the Concepts of Pure Reason, and beginning of the Inferences of Pure Reason (B377–406), and **second take home exam due.**

Tues., May 22: Paralogisms (B406–32).

Thurs., May 24: Introduction to Antinomies, and Third Antinomy (B432–453, B472–79).

Tues., May 29: Concluding Note on the Solution of the Mathematical-Transcendental Ideas, and Solution to the Third Antinomy (B556–86).

Thurs., May 31: Ideal (B595–619).

Tues., June 5: Impossibility of the Cosmological and Ontological Proofs (B620–42).

Transcendental Doctrine of Method

Thurs., June 7: Canon (B823–58).

Tues., June 12: **take-home final due.**