

Syllabus

Kant's Critique of Pure Reason

PHIL 3013: class # 9003

Designation: HF

Credit: 3 Units

Instructor: Dr. Chapman Waters

Office: CTIHB 247

Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 3pm - 5pm

Email: chapman.waters@utah.edu

Class Location: GC 3153

Class Time: MWF 9:40am - 10:30am

Prerequisites: none, but a previous course in philosophy would be a bonus.

Course Description

This semester we will devote ourselves to Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*. Through a careful reading of select portions of this text, as well as secondary sources, we will examine such issues as the possibility of synthetic a priori cognition, the possibility of mathematical knowledge, the possibility of metaphysical knowledge, transcendental idealism, knowledge of the external world, the nature of scientific inquiry, Kant's views regarding the soul, free will, and God, and the relationship between theoretical philosophy and moral philosophy.

Fair Warning: Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* is one of the most confusing, poorly written books in the history of Western philosophy. This course will be reading intensive and many assigned readings are extremely difficult. The material is nonetheless valuable, philosophically speaking, and students will be able to appreciate the merits of Kant's philosophy only if they are willing to put in the effort needed to do so — e.g., by attending class regularly, taking the time needed to prepare for each class meeting, engaging with class topics during lectures, among other things. Students who have a proclivity for “min-maxing” (i.e., attempting to earn the highest grade possible given the least amount of effort) are encouraged to drop this class.

Learning Outcomes

Students will gain an understanding of the historical and philosophical importance of Kant's work, develop skills needed to decipher extremely difficult philosophical texts, and further hone their ability to defend and analyze arguments — both verbally and in writing.

Required Texts

All course readings will be available on the course CANVAS page or on Perusall.

Grading

Grades will be given on a 0-100 point grading scale:

100-93:	A
92-90:	A-

89-87:	B+
86-83:	B
82-80:	B-
79-77:	C+
76-73:	C
72-70:	C-
69-60:	D
59-0:	E/F

Final grades will be determined as follows:

15%	Accountability Tasks
20%	Canvas Quizzes
20%	Reading Discussions in Perusall
25%	Term Paper
20%	Comprehensive Final Exam

ACCOUNTABILITY TASKS

There will be between 5 and 20 accountability tasks assigned over the course of the semester. These will take various forms, including (but not limited to) taking attendance, short pop-quizzes, group-work, in-class debates, short-reflection pieces on that day's reading, among other things. What accountability tasks have in common is that they will be given during class-meetings and students will not know on which days they will be administered. Moreover, it's possible that more than one accountability task will be assigned during a single class period. These assignments will not be difficult. I anticipate that most students who come to class prepared will be able to earn most or all of the points on any given task. The goal of these assignments is to motivate students to attend class and to come to class prepared.

CANVAS QUIZZES

There will be *four* quizzes administered and turned in through the Canvas course webpage this semester. You must complete all four. Quizzes will cover the content of the following lecture and/or the content of the previous lecture or lectures. They will contain relatively easy, multiple choice questions which can only be answered if the student has done the reading for the relevant class session and/or attended previous lectures. Take note: each quiz will have a due date and a "time window" in which it is to be completed — usually 24 or 48 hours (note: this is the only time constraint for these assignments). You will *not* be permitted to complete a quiz after its due date has passed. *It is your responsibility to ensure that you complete each quiz before the time at which it is due. Again, you are required to complete each and every quiz that is administered through Canvas.*

READING DISCUSSIONS IN PERUSALL

Perusall is a "social reading platform" available to students via Canvas. It allows students to digitally annotate readings (with text, links, and embedded content). The goal is to make the process of figuring out what's happening in class readings one that is collaborative, engaging, and (hopefully) fun. There will likely be between 8 and 10 of these assignments offered this semester — depending upon how fast we move. *Only those six with the highest scores will count toward your final grade. It is your responsibility to ensure that you've engaged with at least six different discussions by the end of the semester.* For more information about Perusall and these assignments, see the

appropriate document on the Canvas course homepage posted under “IMPORTANT CLASS LINKS.”

TERM PAPER

There are three components to your term paper, together worth 25% of your final grade. More detailed instructions will be provided in class and on Canvas (including a grading rubric), but here is the basic format:

Abstract (2.5%): The abstract will include a thesis statement and 150 word summary of the paper you plan to write.

Prospectus (7.5%): Students will provide an outline of the content of their term paper, sketching the arguments, objections, etc., that they intend to provide. This should be no more than 1.5 or 2 pages in length (typed, single spaced). I will provide students with written feedback on these.

Final Draft (15%): All previous steps (1 - 2) are designed to help you to write the final version of your term paper successfully. Your main objective is to provide a reasoned defense of a claim that is philosophically relevant to Kant’s transcendental idealism. The final version of the paper is to be between 5 and 8 pages, double spaced in MLA format.

COMPREHENSIVE FINAL EXAM

The comprehensive final exam will consist entirely of multiple choice questions. A study guide is posted on Canvas which will be routinely updated throughout the semester.

Course Policies

Class Meetings — According to the University’s stipulations, this qualifies as an “in-person” course. In the absence of further developments relating to the evolving COVID-19 crisis, then, we will plan on meeting in-person at our regularly scheduled times. In-person classes will not be recorded nor will students have the option to attend class via online modalities. However, if you need to seek an ADA accommodation to request an exception to this policy due to a disability, please contact the Center for Disability and Access (CDA). CDA will work with us to determine what, if any, ADA accommodations are reasonable and appropriate. Students who become quarantined due to a COVID-19 infection will receive accommodations on a case by case basis, provided that they are in contact with me about the situation in a timely manner.

Covid-19 Vaccinations — I *strongly* encourage any students who are currently unvaccinated to get vaccinated as soon as possible. While Utah law prohibits state universities from requiring COVID-19 vaccinations, it is highly effective in preventing severe COVID-19 symptoms, hospitalization, and death from coronavirus. Vaccinations are available to everyone 12 years and older. Appointments are open in the U of U Health system for patients as well as additional vaccine providers throughout Utah. For up-to-date campus vaccination information go to: <https://alert.utah.edu/covid/vaccine/>

Self-Reporting — Students *must* self-report if they test positive for COVID-19 via <https://coronavirus.utah.edu/> Students are encouraged to take advantage of university COVID-19 testing services: <https://alert.utah.edu/covid-19-testing/>. Voluntary asymptomatic testing will continue to be available weekly for all members of the campus community.

Face Masks — At the time this sentence is being written, it is unclear whether we will be required to wear face coverings this semester. We will follow the official public health and safety guidelines regarding face masks and physical distancing, whatever they turn out to be, as the semester progresses. *According to the CDC, wearing a mask remains an effective means of preventing infection for both unvaccinated and vaccinated people. Regardless of what someone chooses (mask or no mask), the university seeks to foster a sense of community and asks everyone on campus to be respectful of individual decisions on mask wearing.*

Canvas — The Canvas course webpage is your contact point for this course, and so, it's important that you familiarize yourself with it (for a tutorial page, visit the link pasted below). The "homepage" will provide a detailed course schedule that will be updated as we go. I will also use the Canvas homepage to distribute all course materials (course schedule, readings, handouts, study guides, etc.). Moreover, all coursework will be turned in through Canvas.

Canvas Tutorial: <https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10701>

Coursework Deadlines: In the absence of justifiable prior arrangements or cases of serious, unexpected and documented medical emergencies or bereavement, coursework must be turned in as scheduled. For circumstances that are not emergencies, students must send the instructor a request for an accommodation; this request should be sent a sufficient amount of time *before* the officially scheduled due date for the student to learn whether the excuse is acceptable. Requests sent after an assignment's deadline has passed will not be considered.

Academic Integrity: You are expected to do your own work on all assignments. The *minimum* penalty for cheating or plagiarism is a failing grade in the course. You will also be reported to the University's Academic Misconduct Committee. Students are responsible for knowing and understanding the University's policy on academic misconduct. For further information about this, consult the following website:

<https://regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-400.php>. Course Policies

Coursework Schedule

Below, I've provided a general outline of when coursework will be due. However: *this schedule is NOT a binding legal contract*. I reserve the right to revise this schedule as I see fit. If there are any changes, they will be reflected in the official "Course Schedule" on the CANVAS course page.

Weeks 1 - 3:

Reading Discussions 1 and 2
Canvas Quiz 1

Weeks 4 - 7:

Reading Discussions 3 - 5
Canvas Quiz 2

Weeks 8 - 10:

Reading Discussions 6 - 8
 Canvas Quiz 3
 Term Paper: Abstract

Weeks 11 - 16:

Remaining Reading Discussions
 Canvas Quiz 4
 Term Paper: Prospectus
 Term Paper: Final Draft

Finals Week: Thursday 4/26 – Wednesday 5/3

Final Exam: Wednesday, May 3, 2023 from 8:00am - 10:00am in our regular classroom (unless specified otherwise)

Other Policies and Resources

Problematic Historical Figure Statement

Historical figures in philosophy, as well as many other intellectual domains, often held horrible views; views that, if held today, would be regarded as abhorrent. The fact is that many notable thinkers from history were racists, sexists, or any number of other terrible things. Kant was no exception. Fortunately, though, Kant's more abhorrent views are more-or-less isolated from the topics we'll encounter in this class. Still, it's important to acknowledge both the good and the bad in such historical figures — and that one's being an intellectual giant in one domain doesn't mean that one isn't a despicable, block-headed fool in another.

Veterans Center

If you are a **student veteran**, I want you to know that the U of Utah has a Veterans Support Center on campus. They are located in Room 161 in the Olpin Union Building. Hours: M-F 8-5pm. Please visit their website for more information about what support they offer, a list of ongoing events and links to outside resources: <http://veteranscenter.utah.edu/>. Please also let me know if you need any additional support in this class for any reason.

Lauren's Promise: I will listen and believe you if someone is threatening you

Lauren McCluskey, a 21-year old honor student and athlete, was murdered in October of 2018 by a man she briefly dated on the University of Utah campus. *We must all take measures to ensure that this never happens again.* Any form of sexual harassment or violence will not be excused or tolerated at the University of Utah. If you are experiencing sexual assault, relationship violence, or stalking, you may report it to me and I will connect you with the appropriate resources. If you are in immediate danger, call 911.

LGBT Resource Center

If you are a member of the **LGBTQ community**, I want you to know that my classroom is a safe zone*. Additionally, please know that the U of Utah has an LGBT Resource Center on campus. They are located in Room 409 in the Oplin Union Building. Hours: M-F 8-5pm. You can visit their website to find more information about the support they can offer, a list of events through the center and links to additional resources: <http://lgbt.utah.edu/>. Please also let me know if there is any additional support you need in this class.

Learners of English as an Additional/Second Language

If you are an English language learner, please be aware of several resources on campus that will support you with your language development and writing. These resources include: the Department of Linguistics ESL Program (<http://linguistics.utah.edu/esl-program/>); the Writing Center (<http://writingcenter.utah.edu/>); the Writing Program (<http://writing-program.utah.edu/>); the English Language Institute (<http://continue.utah.edu/eli/>). Please let me know if there is any additional support you would like to discuss for this class.

ADA

The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in the class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Union Building, 581-5020 (V/TDD). CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations. All written information in this course can be made available in an alternative format with prior notification to the Center for Disability Services.

Nondiscrimination

The University of Utah does not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, genetic information or protected veteran's status, in employment, treatment, admission, access to educational programs and activities, or other University benefits or services. Inquiries concerning perceived discrimination or requests for disability accommodations may be referred to the University's Title IX/ADA/Section 504 Coordinator in the Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action, 135 Park Building, 801- 581-8365, or the Office of the Dean of Students, 270 Union Building, 801-581-7066.

Sexual Misconduct/Title XI

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender (which includes sexual orientation and gender identity/expression) is a civil rights offense subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, color, religion, age, status as a person with a disability, veteran's status or genetic information. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you are encouraged to report it to the Title IX Coordinator in the Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action, 135 Park Building, 801- 581-8365, or the Office of the Dean of Students, 270 Union Building, 801-581-7066. For support and confidential consultation, contact the Center for Student Wellness, 426 SSB, 801-581-7776. To report to the police, contact the Department of Public Safety, 801-585- 2677(COPS).

Wellness Statement

Personal concerns such as stress, anxiety, relationship difficulties, depression, cross-cultural differences, etc., can interfere with a student's ability to succeed and thrive at the University of Utah. For helpful resources contact the Center for Student Wellness at www.wellness.utah.edu or 801-581-7776.

University Safety Statement.

The University of Utah values the safety of all campus community members. To report suspicious activity or to request a courtesy escort, call campus police at 801-585-COPS (801-585-2677). You will receive important emergency alerts and safety messages regarding

campus safety via text message. For more information regarding safety and to view available training resources, including helpful videos, visit safeu.utah.edu.

Philosophy Resources: (helpful for research and getting a better handle on complex issues)

Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy: <https://plato.stanford.edu/>

Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy: <https://www.iep.utm.edu/>