

Philosophy 2²3³: Intuitions and Philosophy
Fall 2009
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1pm - 2:15pm
Library 209

Hamilton College
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Seminar Paper/Presentation Assignment

During this semester, you are expected to write two seminar papers, one in the first half of the course, and one in the second half. Classes will generally run as discussions of the seminar paper for that day. Seminar papers should summarize important arguments and raise questions for discussion. In contrast to a standard, rhetorical philosophy paper, seminar papers may be mainly exegetical. You need not defend a thesis in a seminar paper, though some theme will be welcome. I expect some critical examination of the readings, though it need not be fully developed. Here are some general questions you might try to answer in your seminar papers.

- What is the big picture? What questions is the author attempting to answer?
- What thought experiments are relevant to the author's thesis?
- What experiments, or scientific research, if any, are relevant to the author's thesis?
- Is the author defending or criticizing the use of intuitions in philosophy? How?
- How does this philosopher's approach to a particular question relate to or differ from others we have already seen?
- Is the argument in the article convincing?
- Would further analysis or experimental research support or refute the author's thesis?

Your seminar papers must demonstrate attempts to grapple with the primary reading for class. You may also consider secondary readings, or background readings. You are stimulating class discussion, focusing our thoughts on the central theses, and raising questions. It is good practice to end seminar papers with a few questions you believe will be useful for the class to discuss. Classes will begin with an opportunity to present your paper, at which time you may discuss any particular difficulties in the material, or topics that you were unable to cover in the paper.

Each seminar paper is due at noon the day before the class in which it will be discussed (i.e. Monday or Wednesday). This deadline is necessary for all participants in the seminar to be able to read the paper and prepare comments and questions for class. You may email the paper to me first, or you may email the paper to all the members of the class directly.

All students are expected to come to class having read the seminar paper or papers for that day. Every one should be prepared to ask questions, or make comments, on the paper for that day. Comments on the paper should be constructive.

Presentations

At the beginning of the class for which you have written a seminar paper, you will present your paper. The presentation of your seminar paper may be as ambitious as you wish. You might generate discussion by presenting a controversial position. You might ask interesting questions. You may be creative about how to interact with the class. You may read your seminar paper. You may do a PowerPoint presentation. If you want to do something more inventive, like have us break into groups to prepare a debate, I would be happy to help you think out the plan.

Presentations should last at least five-ten minutes, though you may lead the entire class period.

Presentation Resources:

Please feel free to meet with me before your presentations. I will try to have notes for each class available in time for you to use them in your preparation.

Many students find the oral communications lab, located in KJ 152, helpful. They have a wealth of resources readily available, and are eager to help. The staff at the lab can assist you both with the content of your presentation, and with determining how best to present your material. When you have prepared a draft of your presentation, they can record you while you practice giving the presentation. You can watch the recording with a tutor, or by yourself. You can sign up for an appointment with a tutor on the door of the lab, or you can email them at: oralcomm@hamilton.edu. Their website offers valuable resources: <http://www.hamilton.edu/academics/department.html?dept=Oral%20Communication>

Sign-ups

We will sign up for both seminar papers on the second day of class.

Seminar Paper Sign-Up List

First Half

Date	Topic	Seminar Paper
Tuesday 9/8	The Myth of the Given	
Thursday 9/10	Reflective Equilibrium in Science	
Tuesday 9/15	The Scientific Method	
Thursday 9/17	Reflective Equilibrium in Ethics	
Tuesday 9/22	Reflective Equilibrium in Linguistics	
Thursday 9/24	Problems with Rationality	
Tuesday 9/29	Practical Reasoning	
Thursday 10/1	Epistemic Relativism	
Tuesday 10/6	Descriptivism and Direct Reference	
Thursday 10/8	Free Will and Moral Responsibility I	
Tuesday 10/13	Free Will and Moral Responsibility II	

Second Half

Date	Topic	Seminar Paper
Tuesday 10/20	Free Will and Moral Responsibility III	
Thursday 10/22	Free Will and Moral Responsibility IV	
Tuesday 10/27	Prospect Theory and the Doctrine of Doing and Allowing	
Thursday 10/29	Self-Trust	
Tuesday 11/3	Intentionality	
Thursday 11/5	Folk Psychology and Juror Impartiality	
Thursday 11/12	Reflective Equilibrium and the Scientific Method	
Tuesday 11/17	Defending Intuition I	
Thursday 11/19	Defending Intuition II	
Tuesday 12/1	Naturalizing Intuition	
Tuesday 12/8	Whither Reflective Equilibrium	