

### **Seminar Paper/Presentation Assignment**

During this semester, each student in the course will write and present two or three seminar papers. You will first present your seminar paper in class. The written version is due to me three days later. Your grade for the seminar paper will depend on both the paper and your presentation of it.

#### **Papers**

Your seminar papers should demonstrate attempts to grapple with the primary readings for class. You may also consider secondary or background readings. 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. 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?
- Is the author attempting to account for particular mathematical results?
- What is the relation between the recommendations in the reading and actual mathematical practice?
- What does the author think about the nature of mathematical objects?
- Does the author think that mathematical truths are necessary?
- How does the author think we acquire mathematical knowledge?

More specific questions can be found in the Themes to Explore section of each chapter in *An Historical Introduction to the Philosophy of Mathematics*.

You may extend one or more of your seminar papers into your term paper.

#### **Presentations**

You will lead the class on the day we discuss your seminar paper. The presentation of your seminar paper may be as ambitious as you wish. You may focus on the content of your paper. You might generate discussion by presenting a controversial position. You might ask interesting questions. You may also discuss any particular difficulties in the material, or topics that you were unable to cover in the paper.

You may be creative about how to interact with the class. You may do a PowerPoint presentation. You may read a draft of your seminar paper. You may work from notes or a full draft of the paper. If you want us to read a draft of your paper before class, please send it around at least 24 hours before class.

There are two goals for the seminar paper presentations. The first goal is to stimulate class discussion, focusing our thoughts on the central theses, and raising questions. The second goal is to get feedback on your writing process, find places where you need help thinking about an argument, say, or exploring a line of criticism.

#### **Sign-ups**

We will sign up for the first two seminar papers on the second day of class. Slots are available for classes 3-21.

### Seminar Paper Sign-Up List

Class	Date	Topic	
3	Tuesday, January 26	Plato's Platonism	
4	Thursday, January 28	Aristotle's Qua	
5	Tuesday, February 2	Mathematics, Clarity, and Distinctness	
6	Thursday, February 4	Innate Ideas	
7	Tuesday, February 9	Lockean Conceptualism	
8	Thursday, February 11	Hume's Distinction	
9	Tuesday, February 16	The Synthetic <i>A Priori</i>	
10	Thursday, February 18	The Synthetic <i>A Priori</i>	
11	Tuesday, February 23	Cantor's Paradise	
12	Thursday, February 25	Logicism	
13	Tuesday, March 1	Logicism	
14	Thursday, March 3	Formalism and Incompleteness	
15	Tuesday, March 8	Intuitionism	
16	Thursday, March 10	Conventionalism	
17	Tuesday, March 29	The Problem	
18	Thursday, March 31	Two Dogmas of Empiricism	
19	Tuesday, April 5	The Indispensability Argument	
20	Thursday, April 7	Dispensabilism	
21	Tuesday, April 12	The Weasel	
Below This Line Reserved for Third Seminar Papers			
22	Thursday, April 14	Autonomy Platonism I	
23	Tuesday, April 19	The Unfortunate Consequences	
24	Thursday, April 22	Intuition in Mathematics I	
25	Tuesday, April 26	Intuition in Mathematics II	
26	Thursday, April 28	Autonomy Platonism II	
27	Tuesday, May 3	Reflective Equilibrium	
28	Thursday, May 5	Autonomy Platonism III	