



The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Syllabus

Central Problems in Philosophy - 15187

Last update 24-09-2019

HU Credits: 2

Degree/Cycle: 1st degree (Bachelor)

Responsible Department: Philosophy

Academic year: 0

Semester: 1st Semester

Teaching Languages: Hebrew

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: David Enoch

Coordinator Email: David.Enoch@mail.huji.ac.il

Coordinator Office Hours: Mon, 11-12

Teaching Staff:

Prof David Enoch

Course/Module description:

Philosophy consists in taking usual commonsensical thought a step further. The problems that philosophers discuss are often problems you have already thought about, at least in an initial way, but perhaps you haven't studied them systematically, with the kind of rigor and intellectual responsibility to which we aspire when we do philosophy. This course will offer a kind of a "tasting menu" of central problems in different philosophical sub-disciplines, and will attempt to give you a feel for what a precise, intellectually responsible (if somewhat introductory) discussion of these problems. Among the questions we will discuss: How (if at all) can we know anything at all? What is the relation between my body, my mind, and me? Do we have a free will, and if so, how can it be made compatible with the way in which the empirical sciences describe the world? Should we always act in ways that will bring about the best consequences? Is there an objective moral truth?

Course/Module aims:

Familiarity with central philosophical problems, and mostly with the philosophical way of thinking` preparation for more in-depth discussions in later courses.

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

I don't believe in stating measurable learning outcomes for this kind of course. Sorry.

Attendance requirements(%):

100 (though I don't intend to check)

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: Lecture.

In the course "Critical Reading in Philosophical Texts" some of the issues that will be discussed and written about will be relevant to this course as well.

Course/Module Content:

(I may make some changes later on.)

Skepticism; Skepticism and the Philosophy of Language; The Mind Body problem; is morality relative?; free will; Speech and silencing - between philosophy of language and feminism; the meaning of life.

Required Reading:

(I may make some changes later on.)

- תומאס נייגל, מה המשמעות של כל זה?, פרק ראשון "מבוא" ופרק שני "איך אנחנו יודעים משהו?".
תל אביב, ידיעות ספרים, 2008

- Jonathan Dancy, *Introduction to Contemporary Epistemology* (Blackwell Publishers), chap. 1.

- דקארט, "ההיגיון הראשון", בתוך: רנה דקארט, הגיונות על הפילוסופיה הראשונית, (בתרגום דורי מנור, תל אביב, 2001), עמ' 43-51.

- George Berkeley, *Three Dialogues Between Hylas and Philonous*.

- תומאס נייגל, מה המשמעות של כל זה?, פרק חמישי "משמעותן של מילים".

- Hilary Putnam, "Brains in a Vat", chapter 1 in his *Reason, Truth and History* (Cambridge University Press, 1981).

- תומאס נייגל, מה המשמעות של כל זה?, פרק רביעי "בעיית הגוף והנפש".

- Janet Levin, "Functionalism", in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, available here:

<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/functionalism/>

- David M. Armstrong, "The Nature of Mind", in his *The nature of Mind and Other Essays*.

- David Lewis, "Mad Pain and Martian Pain", in his *Philosophical Papers* vol. 1.

- תומאס נייגל, "איך זה להיות עטלף?", בתוך: שאלות עלמוות. ירושלים, מאגנס, 2010

- תומאס נייגל, מה המשמעות של כל זה?, פרק שלישי "תודעות אחרות".

- Frank Jackson, "What Mary Didn't Know", *The Journal of Philosophy* 83 (1986).

- David Enoch, "Why I'm an Objectivist about Ethics (And Why You Are, Too)", forthcoming in *The Ethical Life* (Shafer-Landau ed., Oxford University Press).

- אלעזר וינריב, בעיות בפילוסופיה של המוסר, כרך ג, 163-168. תל אביב, האוניברסיטה הפתוחה, 2008.

- Rachels, J., "The Challenge of Cultural Relativism", in his *The Elements of Moral Philosophy*, 20-36.

- David Enoch, "How Is Moral Disagreement a Problem for Realism?" *The Journal of Ethics* 13 (2009), 15-50.

- תומאס נייגל, מה המשמעות של כל זה?, פרק שישי "רצון חופשי".

- Galen Strawson, "Free Will", in the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.

- Robert Kane, *A Contemporary Introduction to Free Will* (OUP 2005), especially chapter 1.

- Susan Wolf, "Asymmetrical Freedom," *Journal of Philosophy* 77 (March): 151-66 (1980).

- Peter Van Inwagen, *An Essay on Free Will*, chap. 3-5 (pp. 55-189).

- Eric Olson, "Personal Identity", in the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, available here:

<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/identity-personal/>

- Derek Parfit, *Reasons and Persons*, sections 89-90 (253-266).

- Rae Langton, "Speech Acts and Unspeakable Acts", *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 22 (1993), 293-330.

- Jennifer Saul, *Feminist Philosophy of Language*, in the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, available here:

<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/feminism-language/>

- תומאס נייגל, "האבסורד", בתוך: שאלות עלמוות. ירושלים, מאגנס, 2010.
- Thomas Nagel, "The Absurd", *The Journal of Philosophy* 68 (1971), 716-727.
- Bertrand Russell, "What I Have Lived For", from his autobiography.
- תומאס נייגל, מה המשמעות של כל זה?, פרק עשירי, "משמעות החיים".

Additional Reading Material:

The material above includes required and recommended texts.

Course/Module evaluation:

End of year written/oral examination 100 %

Presentation 0 %

Participation in Tutorials 0 %

Project work 0 %

Assignments 0 %

Reports 0 %

Research project 0 %

Quizzes 0 %

Other 0 %

Additional information: