

**PHIL 630: Kant**  
Spring 2010  
Mondays, 7:15-9:45

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Shannon Nason  
OFFICE: UNH 3635  
OFFICE HOURS: TR 8:30-10:00, W 10:00-12:00, 1:00-3:30, and by appointment  
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**Course Description**

This seminar will consist of a detailed study of the core metaphysical and epistemological topics that compose the system of Immanuel Kant's transcendental idealism. Our task will be to read slowly and carefully through Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781; revised 1787), giving close attention to various secondary sources that reflect an ongoing debate about the meaning and coherency of his innovative idealism. Some core topics of concern in the class will be: the reality of space and time, the limits of human knowledge, the mind's role in constituting human experience, freedom of the will, the viability of metaphysics, the distinction between phenomena and noumena, and the limits and scope of natural theology. Another guiding area of concern will be the extent to which Kant's transcendental idealism is merely an epistemological theory or whether he offers a genuine metaphysical idealism.

**Student Learning Outcomes**

*By the end of this course, students will have*

a general understanding of the foundations of Kantian transcendental idealism;  
an appreciation for Kant's place in the history of philosophy; and  
specialized knowledge of an aspect of Kant's *Critique*,

*and be able to*

explain the fundamentals of Kantian transcendental idealism to non-specialists;  
orient themselves in a complex and difficult philosophical text;  
enter into the ongoing dialogue among secondary authors on Kant; and  
write a paper on Kant that is of Ph.D. student quality, and appropriate for presentation at a philosophy conference.

**Required Texts**

1. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Paul Guyer and Allen Wood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998) – students **must** use this translation
2. Immanuel Kant, *Inaugural Dissertation*, "On the Form and Principles of the Sensible and Intelligible World" (on Eres)
4. Henry Allison, *Kant's Transcendental Idealism: An Interpretation and Defense*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004) (KTI)
5. Various Secondary Sources (on Eres)

**Seminar Requirements**

Two Seminar Presentations (5-6 pp.) 20% each  
Final Paper (15-20 pp.) 50%  
Participation 10%

## Notes on Seminar Requirements

**Seminar Presentations:** Around two pages of each presentation should be a summary of the main points of the reading assignment. The remainder must be a careful analysis of what you take to be the central argument of the passage, identifying in particular Kant's strategy for defending the central claim or claims of the passage. Use quotations as appropriate, but the emphasis is on putting Kant's claims and arguments into your own words. Presentations are to be summary and analysis of the *primary source only*. Bring enough copies of your paper for everyone in the seminar plus the instructor (around 10 copies). On the day of your presentation, you will read the entirety of your presentation, followed by discussion. You will want to take notes on the questions and comments from fellow students and the instructor during the discussion of your presentation, as these may prove helpful for developing the core argument of your final paper.

**Participation:** Your participation grade is based primarily on your questions and comments on presentation papers and is judged not only on quantity but also on quality. Your participation should reflect a careful reading of the texts for the day and a thoughtful consideration of the presentation papers. A thoughtful question or comment on each presentation paper will earn you full participation credit. If it happens that you do not participate in the discussion of a presentation paper either through absence or lack of preparation, you are responsible for sending questions and comments to the presenter by e-mail within 48 hours of the presentation, cc'd to me. This will earn you half participation credit for that day. You are required to respond in some fashion to every presentation, whether in class or by e-mail.

**Final paper:** Your final paper should be around 15 pages in length (maximum 20), with a discussion that is explicitly in conversation with other scholars who have treated your topic in their published works. Your final paper must include a consideration of at least three secondary authors relevant to your topic. One or more of the secondary sources you use may be drawn from the commentaries we have discussed in class. At least two of the secondary sources you use in your paper, however, must be the result of your own independent research.

**Eres:** Most of the secondary literature we will read in this class is available on electronic reserve. To access these texts go to <http://eres.lmu.edu/eres/default.aspx> and click on "Electronic Reserves Course Pages." From there scroll for my last name under "Course Pages By Instructor." Click on PHIL 630. You will be directed to the seminar's Course Reserves Page. Find the text for the week, download it, and print it.

## Recommended Secondary Literature on Kant's Critique of Pure Reason

There is a slew of excellent work on Kant's Critical project. In the Anglo-American tradition of philosophical commentary on Kant, the secondary literature is generally divided into three distinct historical and systematic periods of analysis, and critique. This list contains representatives from these three periods of Kant scholarship. For those interested in Continental renderings and interpretations of Kant's theoretical philosophy, please see me for suggestions. For now, I can at least recommend Gilles Deleuze's *Kant's Critical Philosophy*, which consists of a solid analysis of Kant's critical project in less than 80 pages. Also, I've found aspects of Heidegger's *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics* helpful in understanding the key moves Kant makes in his reconceptualization of the tasks of metaphysics. Beatrice Longuenesse, a young and excellent Kant scholar and professor at NYU is one of the few commentators in the so-called "analytic" tradition (even though she's French) who dialogues with Heidegger. She does a great job of placing Heidegger's critique of Kant's theory of the categories among major Anglo-American critiques, like P.F. Strawson's. Nonetheless, because the motivating concern of the course is to just try to grasp the key movements of Kant's arguments for transcendental idealism, it will be important to focus our efforts in the direction of reading and understanding Kant and not reading and understanding phenomenological, post-structuralist, or Frankfurt School interpretations of Kant. Understanding Kant is a daunting task in and of itself.

You can find bibliographies similar to the one here online, many with far more extensive lists of scholarly works. So, this list is not meant to be exhaustive. There is an excellent bibliography on Kant's critical philosophy in the final pages of *The Cambridge Companion to Kant*

### **Introductory Commentaries:**

1. Jill Vance Buroker, *Kant's Critique of Pure Reason: An Introduction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006)
2. Gilles Deleuze, *Kant's Critical Philosophy: The Doctrine of the Faculties* (Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press, 1985)
3. Sebastian Gardner, *Routledge Philosophy Guidebook to Kant and the Critique of Pure Reason* (New York: Routledge, 1999)
4. Paul Guyer, *Kant* (London: Routledge, 2006)
5. Otfried Hoffe, *Kant* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1994)
6. Allen Wood, *Kant* (Malden: Blackwell, 2004)

### **Advanced Systematic Treatments of Kant's Theoretical Philosophy**

1. Henry Allison, *Kant's Transcendental Idealism: An Interpretation and Defense* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004) (Important defender of the methodological/epistemological reading (oftentimes called the "anodyne" reading) of Kant's transcendental idealism,
2. Karl Ameriks, *Interpreting Kant's Critiques* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003) (Defender of a n anodyne reading of Kant. Argues that the distinction between appearances and things in themselves is ontological)
3. Jonathan Bennett, *Kant's Analytic* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1966) (An important analytic reader of Kant. Bennett generally believes Kant's idealism is useless)
4. Michelle Grier, *Kant's Doctrine of Transcendental Illusion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001) (Student of Henry Allison. Offers an anodyne reading of Kant)
5. Paul Guyer, *Kant and the Claims of Knowledge* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987) (Guyer is an influential non-anodyne interpreter of Kant. He argues that Kant is a full-fledged idealist, but thinks that his idealism isn't worth endorsing)
6. Paul Guyer, *The Cambridge Companion to Kant* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992)
7. Martin Heidegger, *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997) (Heidegger offers a phenomenological reading of Kant, placing Kant within his project of laying down the foundations for a fundamental ontology)
8. Dieter Henrich, *The Unity of Reason: Essays on Kant's Philosophy* (Harvard University Press, 1994) (Henrich is an extremely influential German Kant scholar who has paved the way for the more recent *Kantstudien*, which takes analysis of Kant's arguments seriously, but does not extract them from Kant's immediate historical and philosophical concerns)
9. Rae Langton, *Kantian Humility: Our Ignorance of Things in Themselves* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998) (Offers a clear exposition of Kant's main arguments. Langton argues for a non-anodyne interpretation of Kant)
10. Beatrice Longuenesse, *Kant and the Capacity to Judge: Sensibility and Discursivity in the 'Transcendental Analytic' of the Critique of Pure Reason* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001)
11. Beatrice Longuenesse, *Kant on the Human Standpoint* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005)
12. P.F. Strawson, *The Bounds of Sense: An Essay on Kant's Critique of Pure Reason* (London: Methuen, 1966) (Early analytic reader of Kant)
13. James van Cleve, *Problems from Kant* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999) (Offers a strong n anodyne reading of Kant. For van Cleve, Kant is a genuine idealist, offering a positive metaphysical/ontological theory)

## Course Calendar

1/25 Introductions; the early-Modern background to Kant's project	<b>Primary Reading:</b> Selections from Kant's Inaugural Dissertation	
2/1 <b>Kant's Task</b>	<b>Primary Reading:</b> Motto (Bii), First Edition Preface (Aviii-Axxii), Second Edition Preface (Bvii-Bxliv), First Edition Introduction (A1-16), Second Edition Introduction (B1-30) [=Cambridge: pp. 91, 99-152];  <b>Secondary Reading:</b> Lewis White Beck "Kant's Strategy" (Eres)  <b>Recommended Reading:</b> Henry Allison, KTI, pp. 3-49	
2/8 <b>Space and Time</b>	<b>Primary Reading:</b> Transcendental Aesthetic (A19/B33-B73) as it appears in the Second Edition [=Cambridge pp. 172-192]  <b>Secondary Reading:</b> Henry Allison, "The Sensible Conditions of Human Cognition" (KTI, pp. 97-132)	Presentation 1
2/15 <b>Judgments and Categories: The Metaphysical Deduction</b>	<b>Primary Reading:</b> A50/B74-A94/B129 [=Cambridge 193-226]  <b>Secondary Reading:</b> Henry Allison, "The Intellectual Conditions of Human Cognition" (KTI, pp. 133-156)	Presentation 2
2/22 <b>The "A" Deduction</b>	<b>Primary Reading:</b> First Edition Transcendental Deduction, A95-A130 [=Cambridge 226-244]  <b>Secondary Reading:</b> Norman Kemp Smith, "The Objective Deduction as Given in the First Edition" (Eres)	Presentation 3
3/1 <b>The "B" Deduction</b>	<b>Primary Reading:</b> Second Edition Transcendental Deduction, B129-B169 [=Cambridge 245-266]  <b>Secondary Reading:</b> Paul Guyer, "The Transcendental Deduction of the Categories" (Eres)	Presentation 4: B129-B149  Presentation 5: B150-B169
3/8 <b>Schematism and Principles</b>	<b>Primary Reading:</b> A130/B169-A162/B202 [=Cambridge 267-286]; A189/B232-A211/B256 [=Cambridge 304-316]  <b>Secondary Reading:</b> Rudolf Makkreel, "The Figurative Synthesis of Imagination and the Meaning of Experience" (Eres); Arthur Melnick, "The Second Analogy" (Eres)	Presentation 6: A130/B169-A147/B187  Presentation 7: A148/B188-A162/B202 and A189/B232-A211/B256
3/15 <b>Refutation of Idealism; Phenomena and Noumena</b>	<b>Primary Reading:</b> B274-B294 [=Cambridge 326-337]; A235/B294-A260/B315 as in First and Second Editions [=Cambridge 338-365]  <b>Secondary Reading:</b> H. J. Paton, "Empirical Realism" (Eres); R. P. Wolff, "The Ground of the Distinction of All Objects in General into Phenomena and Noumena" (Eres)	Presentation 8: B274-B294  Presentation 9: A235/B294-A260/B315
3/22 <b>Transcendental Illusion and the Paralogisms: Critique of Rational Psychology</b>	<b>Primary Reading:</b> Introductory matter to the Transcendental Dialectic, A293/B349-A340/B398 [=Cambridge 384-410]; The Paralogisms of Pure Reason (Second Edition version only), A341/B399-A348/B406 [=Cambridge 411-415]; B406-B432	Presentation 10: A293/B349-A340/B398

	[=Cambridge 445-458] <b>Secondary Reading:</b> Henry Allison, “Reason and Illusion” and “The Paralogisms” (KTI, pp. 307-356)	Presentation 11: A341/B399-A348/B406 and B406-B432
4/5 <b>The Problem of the Antinomies</b>	<b>Primary Reading:</b> A405/B432-A490/B518 [=Cambridge 459-510] <b>Secondary Reading:</b> Henry Allison, “The Antimony of Pure Reason,” pp. 357-395 (KTI, pp. 357-395); Michelle Grier, “The Logic of Illusion and the Antinomies” (Eres)	Presentation 12: A444/B472-A451/B479  Presentation 13:A452/B480-A460-B488
4/12 <b>The Solution of the Antinomies</b>	<b>Primary Reading:</b> A490/B518-A567-595 [=Cambridge 511-550] <b>Secondary Reading:</b> Paul Guyer, “Transcendental Idealism and the ‘Antinomy of Pure Reason’ (Eres)	Presentation 14: A532/B560-A558/B586  Presentation 15:A559/B587-A567/B595
4/19 <b>The Ideal of Pure Reason</b>	<b>Primary Reading:</b> A567/B595-A642/B670 [=Cambridge 551-589] <b>Secondary Reading:</b> Nicholas Everitt, “Kant’s Discussion of the Ontological Argument” (Eres)	Presentation 16: particularly, A592/B620-A630/B658
4/26 <b>Practical Faith: On Opining, Knowing, and Believing</b>	<b>Primary Reading:</b> A738/B766-A855/B883 [=Cambridge 643-704] <b>Secondary Reading:</b> Allen Wood, “Rational Theology, Moral Faith, and Religion” (Eres)	
5/7	Final Papers Due	