

## PHH 4600 CONTEMPORARY PHILOSOPHY

Dr. Sally Ferguson

### Course Overview:

This is an introductory survey course of the roots of contemporary analytic philosophy. Analytic philosophy is more of a method or a technique, that is, an approach to doing philosophy, than it is a doctrine or a dogma. Analytic philosophers emphasize the use of logical and linguistic analysis as a means toward dissolving philosophical puzzles. In this course we will learn about the method by observing its practice in some seminal writings in the contemporary analytic tradition, and by practicing the method ourselves.

### Required Texts:

Bertrand Russell: *The Problems of Philosophy*, (Oxford University Press, 1959)  
Robert Ammerman, editor, *Classics of Analytic Philosophy*, (McGraw-Hill, 1965)  
Additional readings on reserve in library

### Homework and Exams:

Each of the four homework assignments will take the form of short (1-2 page) essays on an assigned question. The papers are not intended to be research papers so much as exercises on the part of the student in philosophical analysis. Feel free to do outside reading if you like, and be sure to cite it in footnotes and bibliographies if you do. However, points will be given to those who perform their own philosophical analysis, rather than rely on the authority of others. The two papers must be 6-8 pages in length. Those taking the course for graduate credit will be required to write 10-12 page papers rather than 6-8. They will also be required to attend an extra weekly session at a time to be arranged. Other members of the class are invited to attend these sessions as well. In addition, the reading material for graduate students is augmented. Please see me for details. Late written assignments will only be allowed in cases of legitimate need. Please make every effort to discuss any problems you might have with an assignment in advance of the due date.

Each student will be expected to have read the applicable material in advance of class, and to be prepared to contribute to the discussion of the material. In class we will be discussing the issues raised in the reading, and expanding on them.

### Grading Policy:

The grade in this course will be determined on the basis of four short homework assignments (worth 5% each or 20% of the total grade), and two 6-8 page papers (worth 40% each or 80% of the total grade). Each student should retain all of his or her written work for the course until after receipt of the final grade.

### Attendance:

Class attendance is mandatory. Those who are chronically absent can expect to see their final grade diminished accordingly.