

PHILOSOPHY 597: PROSEMINAR
Fall 2014
Fridays 10–12:30, in 1303 Mason Hall

Professor Eric Swanson
ericsw@umich.edu
2259 Angell Hall
Office hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 10–11, and by appointment.

People sometimes think of the areas in contemporary philosophy as resembling a far flung scattering of isolated islands. I prefer to think of them as a dense archipelago, affording great—though not always obvious—opportunities for communication, cooperation, and collaboration. In that spirit, we will take one possible voyage through the archipelago. Each week's readings are closely related to the neighboring weeks', and yet we'll manage to discuss philosophical questions about laws of nature, modality, morality, causation, rationality, belief, pragmatics, the dynamics of conversation, slurs, meaning, and reference.

In each week we'll have two student presentations: one on the 'a' reading and one on the 'b' reading. Please email me your preferences over the four readings in 1a-2b, the four in 3a-4b, the four in 5a-6b, etc. This will make it easier for me to distribute presentation topics equitably. Please write up a two to three page handout for your presentations. These readings are rich, so be judicious in what you include on your handout. Aim to give an adequate lay of the land and also to advance the conversation in an interesting way. Please feel free to discuss the readings with me and with each other before your presentations! But note that I don't expect you to consult secondary sources. In fact I think you'll learn much more by focusing your attention and energy on the assigned reading.

The final paper should be a development of one of your presentations, and about 11–14 pages long. Your distribution unit will be a function of the final paper's topic, and may be in epistemology, ethics, metaphysics, philosophy of language, or philosophy of mind. The paper is due on December 15. Please discuss your plans for your paper with me by November 21. Also, I encourage you to submit a draft to me by December 5.

You might want to own your own copy of Kripke's *Naming and Necessity* and Lewis's *Counterfactuals*. But you certainly could go without, since I'll post electronic copies of all readings to CTools (<http://ctools.umich.edu>).

We'll sometimes have to reschedule class, due to scheduling conflicts with department events, conferences, etc.

| | |
|-------|---|
| 9/5 | Organizational meeting, advice |
| 9/12 | a. Lewis, <i>Counterfactuals</i> , chapter 1 (Jesse) b. Lewis, <i>Counterfactuals</i> , chapter 2 (please focus on 2.3–2.5 and 2.7–2.8), chapter 3 (Kevin) |
| 9/19 | a. Marcus, “Moral Dilemmas and Consistency” (Caroline) b. Kratzer, “Modality” and “Conditionals” (Joe) |
| 9/26 | a. Anscombe, “Modern Moral Philosophy” (Jesse) b. Thomson, “The Right and the Good” (Caroline) |
| 10/3 | a. Driver, “Attributions of Causation and Moral Responsibility” (Joe) b. Hitchcock and Knobe, “Cause and Norm” (Kevin) |
| 10/10 | a. Lewis, “Causation” (Joe) b. Paul, “Aspect Causation” (Caroline) |
| 10/17 | a. Lewis, “Causal Decision Theory” (Kevin) b. Briggs, “Decision-Theoretic Paradoxes as Voting Paradoxes” (Jesse) |
| 10/24 | a. Buchak “Belief, Credence, and Norms” (Caroline) b. Gendler, “Alief and Belief” (Joe) |
| 10/31 | a. Grice, “Logic and Conversation” (Kevin) b. Stalnaker, “Indicative Conditionals” (Jesse) |
| 11/7 | a. Richard, “Epithets and Attitudes” (Kevin) b. Anderson and Lepore, “Slurring Words” (Caroline) |
| 11/14 | a. Kripke, <i>Naming and Necessity</i> , chapters 1 and 2 (Jesse) b. Fara, “Names as Predicates” (Joe) |
| 11/21 | a. Stalnaker, “Assertion” (Joe) b. Partee, “Possible Worlds in Model-Theoretic Semantics” (Caroline) |
| 11/28 | No class, Thanksgiving break |
| 12/5 | a. Chalmers, “Epistemic Two-Dimensional Semantics” (Kevin) b. Schroeter, “The Rationalist Foundations of Chalmers’s 2-D Semantics” (Jesse) |