

Undergraduate Metaphysics Course

course number here

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<u>Assignments</u>		<u>Grade Scale</u>												
Exam #1:	30%	F	D-	D	D+	C-	C	C+	B-	B	B+	A-	A	A+
Exam #2:	30%	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Exam #3:	30%													
Participation:	10%													

Required Text

Michael J. Loux, ed., *Metaphysics: Contemporary Readings*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2002).
Gary Watson, ed., *Free Will*, 2nd ed. (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2003).

Recommended Text

Jaegwon Kim and Ernest Sosa, eds., *A Companion to Metaphysics* (Malden, Mass: Blackwell, 1995).

Course Description

This course will focus on several central issues in contemporary philosophical debates in metaphysics. Some of these issues will include the nature of substances and properties, how to understand the metaphysics of the modalities of necessity and possibility, how things persist across time, the realism/anti-realism debate, and various topics related to free will.

Exams

This course will have three take-home exams. These exams will consist in essay questions that intend to test how well students have understood the content of the class readings and lectures. More information concerning the exact nature of the exams will be given in class. Each exam is worth 30% of the student's overall grade.

Attendance & Participation

Given the difficult nature of many of the readings and topics covered in this course, students are expected to attend class regularly. Students will receive 10% of their overall grade based on their attendance and participation in the course.

Minimal Passing Requirement

In order to pass the course students must meet three basic requirements: (1) they must take all the exams; (2) they must attend three-fourths of classes. *Those who do not meet these conditions are subject to fail the course regardless of their overall average.*

Tentative Reading Schedule

Week 1: Universals

Russell, "The World of Universals"

Week 2: Universals

Quine, "On What There Is"

Armstrong, "Universals as Attributes"

Week 3: Particulars

Black, "The Identity of Indiscernibles"

Van Cleve, "Three Versions of the Bundle Theory"

Week 4: Possible Worlds

Lewis, "Possible Worlds"

Week 5: Possible Worlds

Plantinga, "Actualism and Possible Worlds"

Lewis, "Counterparts or Double Lives?"

Exam #1

Week 6: Persistence through Time

Heller, "Temporal Parts of Four-Dimensional Objects"

Merricks, "Endurance and Indiscernibility"

Week 7: Persistence through Time

Parfit, "Personal Identity"

Swinburne, "Personal Identity: The Dualist Theory"

Week 8: Realism/Anti-Realism

Quine, "Ontological Relativity"

Week 9: Realism/Anti-Realism

Putnam, "A Problem about Reference"

Van Inwagen, "Objectivity"

Exam #2

Week 10: Free Will

Chisholm, "Human Freedom and the Self"

Week 11: Free Will

Van Inwagen, "An Argument for Incompatibilism"

Lewis, "Are We Free to Break the Laws?"

Week 12: Free Will

Frankfurt, "Alternative Possibilities and Moral Responsibility"

Week 13: Free Will

Widerker, "Libertarianism and Frankfurt's Attack on the Principle of Alternate Possibilities"

Fischer, "Frankfurt-Style Compatibilism"

Week 14: Free Will

O'Connor, "Agent Causation"

Clarke, "Toward a Credible Agent-Causal Account of Free Will"

Week 15: Free Will

Kane, "Responsibility, Luck, and Chance: Reflections on Free Will and Indeterminism"

Exam #3