

**Metaphysics**  
**PHIL3600**

Fall Semester, 2007

Raymond Woller

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**You are responsible for knowing everything contained in this Syllabus/Description.**

**Texts:** *Metaphysics: Contemporary Readings*, ed by Michael J. Loux.

**Goals & Methods of the Course:** The goal of the course is expose you to the treatment some metaphysical issues by more or less contemporary philosophers. Those issues are ontology (specifically the issues of nominalism versus realism or the issues of universals and particulars), possible worlds (as an account of possibility), time, persistence through time, and realism and anti-realism.

**Grading:**

- There will be seven (7) one-to-two page papers, each counting 10% of your course grade.
  - Potential topics for these papers will be posted on WebCT as we take up the reading and the philosophers to which the topics pertain. **You should make sure that your reading of the text, my lectures, and class discussion enable you to write a paper on ANY of the topics. Ask questions if you do not understand how you would go about responding to the topics. I will select a topic for you to write on about every two weeks. I will only select topics that have been discussed in class.**
  - I will announce the topic and the due-date in class and post the topic, due date, and specific instructions on the course website homepage under the Assignment icon. You will always have one week to complete the assignment.
  - You may discuss assigned paper topics with your classmates, but what you write **must be in your own words**. To do otherwise is to be in violation of the Academic Honesty Policy.
  - All papers must be submitted electronically as attachments to the WebCT Intraclass mail system. **Papers e-mailed to me via my regular e-mail address will not be accepted.**
  - Papers must be double-spaced with and conform to the word-limit specified in the assignment of each paper.
    - I stop reading when the word count exceeds the stated limit..
  - **Late papers will not be accepted without a bonafide excuse.**
  - An optional take-home final will consist in your writing two additional papers.
    - Three topics from the list of topics that have not been previously assigned will be available from which you must choose two: **you cannot choose to do just one.**
    - The grades on these papers will replace the two lowest paper grades that you previously received **even if the new grades are lower than the previously received grades.**
  - **You must complete a total of seven (7) papers to pass the course.**
    - **If you fail to turn in more than two of the assigned papers, you will fail the course,** since there is no way that you can complete all seven papers.
- The remaining 30% of your course grade will be based on quizzes on the readings.
  - There is no fixed number of such quizzes.
  - Quizzes are intended to demonstrate that you have completed the reading assignment and will be factual rather than interpretative in nature.
  - The lowest grade for a quiz that you take will be 50%. But a missed quiz will receive a grade of 0%.
  - There are no makeups for quizzes.
  - The lowest two quiz grades will be dropped when determining your quiz grade.
- **Keep copies of all graded material returned to you in case there is a question about whether your grades have been correctly recorded.**
- Your grades are available on the course website under the My Grades icon on the homepage.

- The university now uses a plus-minus system for recording grades. You should check the following website for answers to some frequently asked questions about this system: <http://www.bulletin.uga.edu/PlusMinusGradingFAQ.html#Q9>.
- I use numbers from 0 to 100 in grading. To see how they relate to plus and minus letter grades, click on the +/- Grades icon on the Course Website Homepage. N.B., that while I round up in calculating quiz and paper grade averages, I do not round up in calculating your letter grade for the course.

**The course web site on WebCT:**

- **Syllabus/Description**, which is this document.
- **Syllabus/Calendar**: contains readings assignments. Readings are listed on the day they are to be completed. The Syllabus/Calendar is subject to change. **You are responsible for checking the website regularly to keep up to date on the assignments.**
  - When there is a change in the Syllabus/Calendar that you have not seen, a calendar-icon appears on the WebCt welcome page where this course is listed, and the Syllabus/Calendar icon also appears with green lines radiating around it.
- **Paper Topics**: A list of paper topics from which I will selected assignments.
- **Assignment**: The currently assigned paper topic, some specific instructions, and the due date.
- **Discussions** is a bulletin board restricted to members of the class. It is a place where you can pose questions or comments and respond to other students' questions and comments.
  - I post information of general interest here.
    - **You are responsible for knowing any such information that I post there, so check the website often.**
  - I check the bulletin board regularly and reply when appropriate.
  - Using this feature is entirely optional and has no effect on your grade. For personal matters, use intra-class mail, or, better, my regular e-mail given above.
  - If there is a posting that you have not read, a posting-icon appears on the WebCT welcome page and the Discussions icon appears with green radiating lines.
- **Intra-class Mail**: This is an email-system restricted to members of the class and the instructor.
  - Use this or my regular e-mail, listed above, to contact me concerning something that is not of general interest to the class.
    - I move questions of general interest to Discussions.
  - I use this feature if I have to contact you about a class matter that pertains to you.
    - **You are responsible for knowing the contents of any e-mail I send to you using this system.**
    - **Forward your Intra-class mail to a e-mail box that you frequent very often.** You can do this by clicking on Message Settings.
  - If you have unread mail, an mail-icon appears on the WebCT welcome page where this course is listed and the Intra-class Mail icon on the home page also appears with radiating green lines.
  - If you use this feature to pose general questions or comments about the course material, I will move the questions and comments to the bulletin board.
- **Links**: Links to a philosophical dictionary and a philosophical encyclopedia are to be found here. If you find any interesting relevant links, let me know and I'll add them.
- **Academic Honesty**: All students are responsible for maintaining the highest standards of honesty and integrity in every phase of their academic work in this class. The penalties for academic dishonesty are severe and ignorance is not an acceptable defense. More information is under the Academic Honesty Policy icon on the Homepage of the Course Website.
- **My Grades** is where you can see your grades. Only you can see your grades.
- +/- **Grading** explains how my grading system connects with the +/- grading system used by the university.
- **Chat Room** is a real-time discussion area; you can type to each other in real time. To use this --feature, chatters have to be logged onto the website at the same time.

**Compiled Calendar Entries**[Download](#)[Done](#)**Public entries:****August 2007**

Date	Event
Thursday, August 16	Introduction - Course Mechanics & Introduction to Metaphysics
Tuesday, August 21	Russell - Have read: 1. Syllabus-Description. 2. "The Problem of Universals," pp. 3ff. 3. Russell, pp. 14ff.
Thursday, August 23	H.H. Price - Have Read "Universals and Resemblances," pp. 14ff.
Tuesday, August 28	Quine - Have read "On What There Is," pp. 42ff.
Thursday, August 30	Williams - Have read "The Elements of Being," pp. 57ff.

**September 2007**

Date	Event
Tuesday, September 4	Armstrong - Have read "Universals as Attributes," pp. 65ff.
Thursday, September 6	Black - Have read 1. "The Ontological Structure of Concrete Particulars," pp. 95ff. 2. "The Identity of Indiscernibles," pp. 104ff.
Tuesday, September 11	Allaire - Have read "Bare Particulars," pp. 114.
Thursday, September 13	Van Cleve - Have read "Three Versions of the Bundle Theory," pp. 121ff.
Tuesday, September 18	Casullo - Have read "A Fourth Version of the Bundle Theory," pp. 134ff.
Thursday, September 20	Lewis - Have read 1. "Modality and Possible Worlds' pp. 151ff.. 2. "Possible Worlds," pp. 160ff.
Tuesday, September 25	Plantinga - Have read "Actualism and Possible Worlds," pp. 168ff.
Thursday, September 27	No Class

**October 2007**

Date	Event
Tuesday, October 2	Lewis - Have read "Counterparts or Double Lives," pp. 188ff.
Thursday, October 4	Kripke - Have read "Identity and Necessity," pp. 218ff.

Tuesday, October 9	McTaggart - Have read 1. "Time The A-theory and the B-Theory," pp. 251ff, 2. "Time," pp. 260ff.
Thursday, October 11	Broad - Have read "Ostensible Temporality," p. 272ff.
Friday, October 12	Withdrawal Deadline - Last chance to withdraw from the class with the grade of W is today at 5pm.
Tuesday, October 16	Taylor - Have read "Time and Eternity," pp. 279ff.
Thursday, October 18	Prior - Have read "The Notion of the Present," pp. 289ff.
Tuesday, October 23	Smart - Have read "The Space-Time World," pp. 294ff.
Thursday, October 25	Fall Break
Tuesday, October 30	Mellor - Have read "The Need for Tense," 304ff.
<b>November 2007</b>	
Date	Event
Thursday, November 1	Heller - Have read 1. "Endurantism and Perdurantism," pp. 321ff. 2. "Temporal Parts of Four-Dimensional Objects," pp. 328ff.
Tuesday, November 6	Merricks - Have read "Endurance and Indiscernibility," p. 353ff.
Thursday, November 8	Parfit - Have read "Personal Identity," pp. 374ff.
Tuesday, November 13	Lewis - Have read "Survival and Identity," pp. 395ff.
Thursday, November 15	Swinburne - Have read "Personal identity The Dualist Theory, " pp. 420ff.
Tuesday, November 20	Dummett - Have read 1. "Realism and Anti-realism," pp., 449ff. 2. "Realism," pp, 459ff.
Thursday, November 22	Thanksgiving Break
Tuesday, November 27	Quine - Have read "Ontological Relativity," pp, 479ff.
Thursday, November 29	Putnam - Have read, "A Problem of Reference," pp. 496ff.
<b>December 2007</b>	
Date	Event
Tuesday, December 4	No Class - Friday schedule operative today.
Thursday, December 6	Van Inwagen

- Have read, "A Problem of Reference," pp. 524ff.

Thursday, December 13

Optional Final Exam Papers Due

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