SYLLABUS

Philosophy of language:
• Understanding and truth-conditions; realism and anti-realism.
• Indeterminacy of meaning, rule-following.

Topics in logic:
• Conditionals.
• The logic of plurals

The nature of logic and mathematics:
• Logic: analytic versus empirical.
• Conventionalism about logic and mathematics.
• Logicism: traditional and contemporary.
• Intuitionism: traditional and contemporary.
• Structuralism and fictionalism.

COURSE OUTLINE

The course covers questions in (i) the philosophy of language (ii) logic (iii) the nature of logic and mathematics. These include: (i) Whether there could even be any such thing as linguistic meaning; (ii) Whether the standard logical apparatus can accommodate conditionals or plurals; (iii) What makes logical and mathematical statements both true and sometimes also knowable: are they products of human convention or descriptions of a wholly abstract world?—or something else?

Prerequisites

Some topics presuppose Part IA and/or Part IB Logic. Candidates who have not covered these may find it helpful to consult:


Objectives

Students taking this paper will be expected to:

1. Study issues in philosophical logic and philosophy of language at an advanced level.

2. Acquire a sophisticated understanding of the scope, purpose and nature of logic.


4. Refine their powers of philosophical analysis and argument through study of these ideas.

Preliminary Reading

HOOKWAY, Christopher, Quine (Cambridge: Polity, 1988), chs. 8-10.

READING LIST

An asterisk * indicates a classic item or one which provides a good route into a topic.

PHILOSOPHY OF LANGUAGE

Understanding and Truth-Conditions

*DAVIDSON, Donald, Inquiries into Truth and Interpretation (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), ch. 9 'Radical interpretation'. Also available online at: http://doi.org/10.1093/0199246297.003.0009.


Realism and Anti-Realism

(i) Dummett and His Critics


*DUMMETT, Michael, Truth and Other Enigmas (London: Duckworth, 1978), ch. 10 'Realism'.


PEACOCKE, Christopher, Thoughts: An Essay on Content (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986), Parts I & II.


(ii) Putnam's Internal Realism


(iii) Relativism

*DAVIDSON, Donald, Inquiries into Truth and Interpretation (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), ch. 16 'The inscrutability of reference'. Also available online at: http://doi.org/10.1093/0199246297.003.0016.


Indeterminacy of Meaning

*HOOKWAY, Christopher, Quine: Language, Experience and Reality (Cambridge: Polity, 1988), chs. 8-10.

*QUINE, W.V., Word and Object (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1960), ch. 2 'Translation and meaning'.

DAVIDSON, Donald, Inquiries into Truth and Interpretation (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), ch. 16 'The inscrutability of reference'. Also available online at: http://doi.org/10.1093/0199246297.003.0016.


Rule-Following


AHMED, Anf, Saul Kripke (London: Continuum, 2007), ch. 4 'Rule-following'. Also available online at: http://lib.mylibrary.com/?id=327232.

TOPICS IN LOGIC

Conditionals

(i) Indicatives

*BENNETT, Jonathan, A Philosophical Guide to Conditionals (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2003), chs. 2 & 3. Also available online at: http://lib.myllibrary.com/?id=200722. [Also see chs. 4 & 5 for an introduction to Lewis's triviality result]


JACKSON, Frank, Conditionals (Oxford: Blackwell, 1987), chs. 1, 2 & 5. [This book is other than the collection Conditionals, which he edited]


(ii) Counterfactuals


*LEWIS, David, Counterfactuals (Oxford: Blackwell, 1973; revised printing 1986), chs. 1 & 3. [Possible worlds semantics]


The distinction assumed here between indicative and counterfactual conditional has itself provoked criticism, see e.g.:


And, for an overview:


The Logic of Plurals

*OLIVER, Alex, and Timothy SMILEY, Plural Logic (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), ch. 1 (introductory), chs. 3-4 (singularist analyses), chs. 5-10 (pluralism developed), chs. 11-14 (formal systems).


(iv) Neo-Fregean Logicism


WRIGHT, Crispin, Frege's Conception of Numbers as Objects (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1983).

(v) Russellian Logicism


POTTER, Michael, Reason's Nearest Kin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), chs. 5-8. Also available online at: http://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199252619.001.0001


Intuitionism: Traditional and Contemporary

(i) The Nature of Mathematical Intuition


(ii) Kant

*KANT, Immanuel, Critique of Pure Reason. [Consult index for sections on 'arithmetic', 'geometry' or 'mathematics']


POTTER, Michael, Reason's Nearest Kin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), ch. 1 'Kant'. Also available online at: http://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199252619.003.0002

(iii) Brouwerian Intuitionism

*GEORGE, Alexander, and Daniel J. VELLEMAN, Philosophies of Mathematics (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002), ch. 4 'Intuitionism'.


(iv) Dummettian Intuitionism

*DUMMETT, Michael, Truth and Other Enigmas (London: Duckworth, 1978), ch. 14 'The


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**Structuralism**

(i) General


(ii) Modal Structuralism


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**Fictionalism**

(i) Benacerraf's Problem


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(ii) The Indispensability Argument


(iii) The Dispensability Argument

