

Phil 480: Philosophy of Language

Class meeting time: M W 12:40 – 2:20 PM

Class location: KH-B2007

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Instructor: JeeLoo Liu

Office hours: M W 11:00-12:30am

or by appointment

Office: E & T 424

- Text:**
1. A Packet of Readings. (Ed.) JeeLoo Liu [Required]
 2. Saul Kripke. *Naming and Necessity*. [Required]
 3. Scott Soames. *Reference and Description*. [Recommended]

Course Description: In this course we will do an in-depth study of one central problem in the philosophy of language: the meaning and reference of proper names. We will look at the debate between the description theory and the direct reference theory concerning the use of proper names. We will be studying the most up-to-date development of the philosophy of language: Two-Dimensionalism, championed by Jackson, Stalnaker and Chalmers. Students are expected to do all readings thoroughly and write six homework essays. Class participation is strongly emphasized.

Course Objectives: The goals of this course are: (1) to introduce students to one of the main topics and theories in 20th century Anglo-American philosophy; (2) to assist students in developing their own stance on the debated issues; (3) to teach students some important philosophical techniques of argumentation; and (4) to improve students' ability to read critically and to write clearly and precisely.

Grading:

Mid-term	30 %
Final	30 %
6 Homework essays (2-3 pages each)	20 %
Class participation	20 %

*** Graduate students will have the option of working on a (presentable) paper with me for 10 extra points. See me for details.**

General Policies:

1. To succeed in this course, you should keep pace with the syllabus. **Your regular attendance is strongly emphasized and you are expected to finish the reading assignment prior to each class. In case you have a legitimate reason for not coming to class, you'll need to send e-mail to me with your explanation.**
2. All written assignments must be typed, double-spaced. Homework essays will be in the essay question format (sometimes after lecture on the essay topic as a way to help you review; sometimes prior to lecture on the topic as a way to help you focus on the key issue in the reading). All essays must be handed in **on the assigned date and in person**. A tentative grade of 80 points (B-) will be assigned to the essays handed in on time, with more points allotted to high quality essays, and points deducted for incomplete essays or essays written in

haste. 10 points will be deducted for each class date delay. **Topics will be assigned in class. If you are absent during the essay topics announcement, it is your responsibility to find out about the topics either from me or from your classmates. Not knowing the topic DOES NOT constitute an acceptable reason for delay.**

3. No make up exam will be given unless you can validate your absence through documentation.
4. Final grades for graduate students and for undergraduates will be curved separately.
5. To receive a final grade for the course, all assignments must be completed. If you miss any homework for any reason, you need to come see me to discuss possible remedies.

Syllabus

<u>Date</u>	<u>Content of discussion</u>	<u>Assignments for this class</u>
M 3/28	Introductory Remarks: Frege's Puzzle	None
I. The Description Theory of Names		
W 3/30	Frege: On Sense and Reference	[Packet]
M 4/4	Russell: On Denoting Essay #1 due in class	[Packet]
W 4/6	Searle: Proper Names	[Packet]
M 4/11	Burge: Reference and Proper Names Essay #2 due in class	[Packet]
II. Interlude: Necessity, Possibility and Conceivability		
W 4/13	Kripke: <i>Naming and Necessity</i>	Lecture I, Pp. 30-60
M 4/18	Kripke: <i>Naming and Necessity</i>	Lecture III, P. 106-55
W 4/20	Yablo: Coulda, Woulda, Shoulda Essay #3 due in class	[Packet]
W 4/20	[4:20-6:00 PM] Guest Speaker Steve Yablo: Imagination and Its Limits	

III. The Direct Reference Theory of Names

M 4/25	Kripke: <i>Naming and Necessity</i>	Lecture II, Pp. 64-105
W 4/27 II	Mid-term Exam	Review Topics I &
M 5/2	Evans: The Causal Theory of Names	[Packet]
W 5/4	Kaplan: Demonstratives Essay #4 due in class	[Packet] – Selections

IV. The Revival of the Description Theory – Two-Dimensionalism

M 5/9	Katz: Has the Description Theory of Names Been Refuted?	[Packet]
W 5/11	Jackson: Reference and Description Revisited Essay #5 due in class	[Packet]
M 5/16	Stalnaker: Assertions	[Packet]
W 5/18	Chalmers: On Sense and Intension	[Packet]
M 5/23	Chalmers: Epistemic Two-Dimensional Semantics Essay #6 due in class	[Packet]: Selections

V. Counterview

W 5/25	Soames: Naming and Asserting	[Packet]
M 5/30	No Class [Memorial Day Holiday]	
W 6/1	Last day: Review	

Final Exam: June 8 (Wednesday)

10:45 AM – 1:15 PM