

## PHZ247 Introduction to Analytic Philosophy (Fall 2024)

Instructor: Charlie Siu

Email: xiaohj25@mail.sysu.edu.cn

### Course Description

The aim of this course is to provide students with a gentle introduction to analytic philosophy and encourage students to do philosophy actively. Readings are mainly drawn from metaphysics, epistemic, and ethics. We will be focusing on four questions: How do we determine what exists in our world? What is knowledge? Do we know that the external world exists? What are the reasons for and against eating meat? Do we know that we are not living in a computer stimulation? This course assumes no prerequisites. But students should be prepared to engage seriously with the readings, participate in class discussions, and ask a lot of questions.

### Course Requirements

1. Participation (20%): Students are required to turn in two short responses to questions about the readings. The first is due by the middle of the semester. The second is due in the second half of the semester.
2. Mid-term assignment (20%)
3. Final take-home exam (60%)

### Course schedule

- Week 1: Course introduction
- Weeks 2 and 3: Do holes exist? Lewis, David, and Stephanie Lewis. "Holes." *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 48.2 (1970): 206-212. Weeks 4 and 5: What exists? W. V. Quine, "On what there is" In Willard Van Orman Quine (ed.), *From a Logical Point of View*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. pp. 1-19 (1953)
- Week 6: Is knowledge justified true belief? Gettier Edmund L, "Is Justified True Belief Knowledge?". *Analysis*, Volume 23, Issue 6, June 1963, Pages 121–123
- Week 7: Class exercise: Create your own Gettier cases!
- Weeks 8 and 9: Do we know that the external world exists? Putnam, Hilary. (1992), "Brains in a Vat", in K. DeRose and T.A. Warfield (eds.), *Skepticism: a Contemporary Reader* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).
- Weeks 10 and 11: Is eating meat morally permissible? Norcross, Alastair. "Puppies, pigs, and people: Eating meat and marginal cases." *Philosophical perspectives* 18 (2004): 229-245.
- Weeks 12 and 13: David Lewis. Is eating meat morally permissible? Podgorski, Abelard. "The Diner's Defence: Producers, Consumers, and the Benefits of Existence." *Australasian Journal of Philosophy* 98.1 (2020): 64-77.

- Weeks 14 and 15: Are things as they appear? Berkeley, George. "Three Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous" (1713) in Rosen, Gideon, et al., eds. *The Norton introduction to philosophy*. WW Norton & Company, 2015.
- Weeks 16 and 17: Are things as they appear? Bostrom, Nick. "Are we living in a computer simulation?." *The Philosophical Quarterly* 53.211 (2003): 243-255.