
TOPICS: PHILOSOPHY OF LANGUAGE in Fall 2019 (LI2091A)

Course Code	LI2091A	Professor(s)	Jula Wildberger
Prerequisites	None	Office Number	G-106
Class Schedule	MR: 13:45-15:05 in G-002	Office Hours	Wed 17:00 or by appointment
Credits	4	Email	jwildberger@aup.edu
Semester	Fall 2019	Office Tel. Ext.	681

Course Description

Philosophy of Language asks questions like these here: “What is language?”, “What does language do and how does it work?”, “Can we really understand each other, and if so, why is that possible?”, “What is the role of language in constituting societies and selves?”, “Is there a connection between language and social inequality?”

Combining and contrasting approaches from both the analytic and the continental tradition, this course provides an overview of the field from the 19th to the 21st century.

With the help of the textbook and selected original readings, we will try to get a grip on a wide range of complex approaches in the field. We will see that even apparently dry and outlandish theories can be quite mind blowing once you connect them to things that matter in your own life.

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

(This is a new course run as a topics course, and so the learning outcomes are not yet hardwired into the system. That's why they occur here within the course description.)

1. Comprehensive overview of main theories and approaches of modern Philosophy of Language of both the analytic and the continental tradition.
2. Acquisition of a good working terminology to discuss problems of language from a philosophical point of view (this involves a basic technical vocabulary; the ability to define or explain such terms; an understanding of what is at stake with them).
3. Slow philosophical reading: ability to follow a complex train of thought, to grasp and dissect the presented key issues, concepts, and arguments.

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4. Ability to analyze and critique an original paper or book chapter on the Philosophy of Language, both orally and in writing.
 5. Ability to use abstract philosophical thought to frame important real life issues, such as: the relation between language, knowledge, truth, and reality; self and identities and the interplay of institutions and language in constituting these; social difference and power structures; the ethical implications of theories of language; the challenges of language learning, translation and intercultural understanding; linguistic creativity and poetics.
 6. Ability to apply philosophy of language to one's own experiences and concerns.

Course Learning Outcomes

General Education

Course Outline

This course is cross listed as PL2091 and LI2091. In order to avoid confusion and errors as a result of incomplete updates, the day-to-day schedule will be given only in the syllabus for PL2091 (<https://my.aup.edu/course/40043/syllabus/view>). Please consult the latest version online to find out about readings and homework.

Textbooks

Title	Author	Publisher	ISBN	Required
Language (Series: Key Concepts in Philosophy)	Jose Medina	Continuum	9780826471673	Yes

Attendance Policy

All assignments must be submitted by the due date. Late assignments will be graded with F. If you have a valid reason, you can ask for an extension BEFORE the due date.

The last day on which written work (e.g. rewrites) will be accepted is Friday 13 December 2019.

Punctual and regular attendance of all classes is obligatory and counts toward the continuous contribution grade.

In case of absence for which you think you have a valid excuse:

- Please notify me immediately, ideally before the class in question.
- Absence because of health issues: for one week's absence, just notify me. If you have already missed more than two class sessions, I need a doctor's note or equivalent.
- Absence because of a study trip: automatically excused. I get a notification, but it would be nice if you could remind me, just to make sure.
- Absence for other reasons: please present your case, so that we can discuss it and see what can be done about it.

Please keep in mind that many absences may affect your grade even if they are excused.

Students studying at The American University of Paris are expected to attend ALL scheduled classes, and in case of absence, should contact their professors to explain the situation. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of any specific attendance policy that a faculty member might have set in the course syllabus. The French Department, for example, has its own attendance policy, and students are responsible for compliance. Academic Affairs will excuse an absence for students' participation in study trips related to their courses.

Attendance at all exams is mandatory.

IN ALL CASES OF MISSED COURSE MEETINGS, THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR COMMUNICATION WITH THE PROFESSOR, AND FOR ARRANGING TO MAKE UP MISSED WORK, RESTS SOLELY WITH THE STUDENT.

Whether an absence is excused or not is ALWAYS up to the discretion of the professor or the department. Unexcused absences can result in a low or failing participation grade. In the case of excessive absences, it is up to the professor or the department to decide if the student will receive an "F" for the course. An instructor may recommend that a student withdraw, if absences have made it impossible to continue in the course at a satisfactory level.

Students must be mindful of this policy when making their travel arrangements, and especially during the Drop/Add and Exam Periods.

Grading Policy

25 % Continuous contribution grade

Regular, punctual, well-prepared attendance of all classes *with* the necessary materials (books and readings, e.g.); constructive engagement in our shared efforts during class; diligent and complete performance of all prescribed tasks and homework assignments.

25 % Written assignment: philosophical reading task

Summary of key points, detailed explicatory paraphrase of selected important passages, analysis of concepts and arguments; *after* this, critical assessment. Most important for a good grade: that you demonstrate your understanding by rendering the author's key ideas and arguments without distorting omission or gross misrepresentation (saying that the author says something which clearly isn't said in the text).

Option 1: Discussion of one of the prescribed original readings (paper or book chapter); first version due by **Monday 14 October 2019**. Make it as long as it takes, but I do not require more than 2500 words required. You have rewrite options; the rewrite grade replaces the original grade if better.

Option 2 (for students who wish to build their reading skills gradually with the help of regular feedback): "Ten paragraphs" – written discussion of ten paragraphs of your choice from the textbook or from an original paper, one every week, always due by Thursday (no paper due in Fall Break week, and you can take one week off). The homework given to the whole class for week counts for this assignment. Grading criteria: quality, completeness and diligence of work; learning curve and how well you improve on issues flagged in the feedback.

50 % Personal project (individual or teamwork, as you prefer)

15 %: Portfolio of notes reflecting your research and thoughts about the project in relation to the

ongoing coursework in class. Grading criteria: completeness of portfolio. Regular weekly submissions are recommended; required: submission of already completed portion **by Monday 14 October**.

5 %: Formal project proposal to be submitted three working days before the second one-on-one meeting. The proposal should contain:

- a description or, if possible, already an abstract of the project
- information about modes and media of presentation
- a working bibliography
- an outline and/or a realistic roadmap indicating what has been achieved so far and what will be done in the second half of the semester, to see whether the project can be completed in a timely fashion (in case of teamwork also indicate the distribution of tasks among team members)
- grading criteria for your project, indicating both what exactly is to be graded and how the grade level is to be justified (i.e. what should be achieved for an A, a B, etc.); your grading criteria should be meaningfully aligned with the project outcomes you have defined for yourself, and they should give me the opportunity to acknowledge your dedication and good work.

25 % Final project paper (your project may involve other media than academic writing; in such a case, requirements and grading criteria for this part will be defined on the basis of your project proposal); **due date: Friday 13 Dec** (so that you can take account of feedback during the presentation). Rewrite option if you submit early enough before that date (new grades replace old ones if better). You are also welcome to show me drafts and seek help at any time during the writing or production process.

5 % Presentation of your project during the final exam period class, Thursday 12 Dec, 12:00-14:30.

Other
