PHIL 5373.30209 Spring 2018 Seminar on Belief

Dr. Brian Kim, Instructor

There will be three parts to the course. During the first part (roughly weeks 1-11) we will cover some current debates about the nature and epistemology of belief. Tentatively, we shall focus on metaphysical questions for the first few weeks, then turn to epistemological questions. During the second, each of you will be picking a paper that you will be responsible for presenting. The final two weeks will be spent presenting our research.

Readings:
Readings will all be posted online.

Grading Criteria:
See the next page for course requirements.

I’m going to adopt a different approach for this seminar. The goal of the seminar is to go through the process of writing a journal article. We shall be doing this collectively by sharing all of the work that you produce on the course website.

As for your grades, I’m not so interested in grading everything. Rather, since there’s a ton of small assignments, so long as you clearly put in effort in completing each assignment, I’ll give you an A. But officially, each of the course requirements will be equally weighted.

1. Online discussions responses, class prep and participation
2. Launching your research (Due 1/31)

Course requirements and tentative due dates

a. Identify a research topic
   i. You need to be able to describe a problem or question in a few (one to three) sentences.
   ii. The question or problem must be well-formed. Well-formed questions are those in which you know what would constitute a satisfactory answer.

b. Summary of your initial intuitions
   i. You will be asked to provide a short initial summary of your intuitions regarding the problem or question that you have identified.

3. Annotated Bibliography (Due 2/14)
   a. Your bibliography should be split into three parts:
      i. A few (2-4) primary papers that you will be engaging with. A research paper cannot fully engage with more than a few papers.
      ii. A host of secondary papers that should either exhaust the literature or at least fully represent the views present in the literature.
iii. There are usually a number of miscellaneous papers that can function as:
   1. Inspiration for your own view, but are not directly related to the question at hand.
   2. Related work that show you understand or are aware of such work. For example, we often have to bracket issues in order to deal with a question or problem in depth. These papers often indicate that you are explicitly aware of the nature of these bracketing assumptions.

4. Exposition of the literature (Due 3/7)
   a. This will be a short paper that will accomplish two tasks:
      i. Introduce the question at hand.
      ii. Summarize the views that are currently on the table.

5. Paper Draft: (Due 3/23)

6. Paper presentation (TBD): You'll also be responsible for picking and presenting a paper for us to read sometime during the last month of class, prior to the paper presentations.

7. Research Presentation (TBD): Last two weeks of class

8. Final Paper: (Due 5/8)