Course description

At the beginning of the twentieth century, a handful of British and German philosophers broke with conventional approaches in their discipline and established a philosophical movement, united by a distinctive style and a set of common concerns, which would set the terms for debate in Britain and America for much of the rest of the century. Though members of the resulting “analytic” tradition would disagree on a great many issues, they were united by a respect for the authority of natural science, an insistence on clarity and logical rigor in philosophical argumentation, and (for the most part) an interest in the role of language in generating and solving philosophical problems.

In this course we will examine broad trends in the development of the analytic tradition, beginning with the originators of the approach (Moore, Frege, and Russell), moving on to the two major mid-century movements paradigmatic of the analytic approach (logical positivist and ordinary language philosophy), and concluding with the two contemporary movements that have inherited the legacy of analysis (the naturalistic pragmatism of Quine, and the new modal metaphysics of Kripke and Putnam). Some have argued that each of these movements represent the dissolution of analytic philosophy, but this course will emphasize how they represent more consistent versions of earlier approaches (Quine is more consistently empiricist than his positivist predecessors, while Kripke represents a somewhat unwitting return to the ideas of Frege).

Throughout the course, we will focus on the topics that were of central concern to each of the traditions we’ll examine—usually topics related to the nature of reference, meaning, and knowledge. Though these are usually topics classified under the heading of the philosophy of language, I will also make a case that there are often deeper questions about the nature of human consciousness which undergird many traditional problems in analytic philosophy.

Required texts

- Additional readings on Blackboard

Lecture and reading schedule (tentative)

*Introduction and early figures*

**Monday, January 10**
Introduction and background

**Wednesday, January 12**
Analytic vs. continental
- “Preface,” Baillie, pp. ix-xii.
- “Is Justified True Belief Knowledge?,” Edmund Gettier (Blackboard)
- “The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge,” Jean-François Lyotard (Blackboard)

**Friday, January 14**
Background on skepticism
- Descartes, from the *Meditations* (Blackboard)
- Kant, from the *Critique of Pure Reason* and the *Prolegomena to any Future Metaphysics* (Blackboard)

**Monday, January 17—NO CLASS—MLK DAY HOLIDAY**

**Wednesday, January 19**
Moore
- “Introduction to G.E. Moore,” Baillie, pp. 56-60.
- “Proof of an External World,” Moore, pp. 61-76.
**Friday, January 21**
Moore (continued)

**Monday, January 24**
Frege
- “Introduction to Gottlob Frege,” Baillie, pp. 1-7
- “Sense and Reference,” Frege, pp. 8-22.

**Wednesday, January 26**
Frege (continued)

**Friday, January 28**
Frege (continued)

**Monday, January 31**
Russell
- “Introduction to Bertrand Russell,” Baillie, pp. 24-31
- Russell, “Knowledge by Acquaintance and Knowledge by Description” (Blackboard)
- Begin “On Denoting,” Russell, pp. 31-41 (but skip pp. 36-37, from “We, say, to begin with…” until “That the meaning is relevant…”)

**Wednesday, February 2**
Russell (continued)
- Russell, “On Denoting,” pp. 31-41 (but skip pp. 36-37, from “We, say, to begin with…” until “That the meaning is relevant…”)

**Friday, February 4**
Russell (continued)
- Russell, “On Denoting” (continued)

**Monday, February 7**
- EXAM #1

**Wednesday, February 9**
Early Wittgenstein
- “Introduction to Ludwig Wittgenstein,” Baillie, pp. 77-81

**Friday, February 11**
Early Wittgenstein (continued)

**Monday, February 14**
Early Wittgenstein (continued)

**The climax of 20th century analysis**

**Wednesday, February 16**
Logical empiricism
- “Introduction to Logical Empiricism,” Baillie, pp. 131-140.
Friday, February 18
Logical empiricism (continued)
- Schlick (continued)

Monday, February 21
Logical empiricism (continued)

Wednesday, February 23
Logical empiricism (continued)
- Carnap (continued)

Friday, February 25
Logical empiricism (continued)
- Ayer, “The A priori” (Blackboard)

Monday, February 28
Logical empiricism (continued)
- Ayer, “Critique of Ethics and Theology” (Blackboard)

Wednesday, March 2
Later Wittgenstein against logical empiricism
- “Introduction to Ludwig Wittgenstein,” Baillie, pp. 82-88.

Friday, March 4
NO CLASS
- PAPER #1 DUE (just before noon, 11:59am)

Monday, March 7—11—NO CLASS—MARDI GRAS HOLIDAYS

Monday, March 14
Later Wittgenstein against logical empiricism (continued)

Wednesday, March 16
Ordinary language philosophy
- Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations, §1-23 (Blackboard)

Friday, March 18
Ordinary language philosophy (continued)
- “Introduction to Gilbert Ryle,” Baillie, pp. 186-190

Monday, March 21
Ordinary language philosophy (continued)
- “Introduction to J.L. Austin,” Baillie, pp. 201-206.
- “Selections from Sense and Sensibilia,” Austin, pp. 207-225.

Wednesday, March 23
Ordinary language philosophy (continued)
- Austin (continued)

Friday, March 25
Ordinary language philosophy

Monday, March 28
Ordinary language philosophy (continued)
• Strawson (continued)

Reactions to analysis and retrenchment

Wednesday, March 30
Naturalistic pragmatism
• “Introduction to W.V. Quine,” Baillie, pp. 262-267.
• “Two Dogmas of Empiricism,” Quine, pp. 272-289.

Friday, April 1
NO CLASS

Monday, April 4
➢ EXAM #2

Wednesday, April 6
Naturalistic pragmatism (continued)
• Quine, “Two Dogmas of Empiricism” (continued)

Friday, April 8
Naturalistic pragmatism (continued)
• “Introduction to W.V. Quine,” Baillie, pp. 267-270.
• Quine, “Epistemology Naturalized” (Blackboard)

Monday, April 11
Naturalistic pragmatism (continued)
• Quine, “Epistemology Naturalized” (continued)

Wednesday, April 13
The return to metaphysics
• “Introduction to Saul Kripke,” Baillie, pp. 381-387.

Friday, April 15
The return to metaphysics (continued)
• Kripke (continued)

Monday, April 18—Monday, April 25—NO CLASSES—EASTER HOLIDAY

Wednesday, April 27
The return to metaphysics (continued)
• Kripke (continued)

Friday, April 29
The return to metaphysics (continued)
• “Introduction to Externalism,” Baillie, pp. 412-418.
Monday, May 2
The return to metaphysics (continued)
  • Putnam (continued)

Wednesday, May 4
To be determined.

Friday, May 6th
  - PAPER #1 DUE (just before noon, 11:59am): Friday, May 6th, 11:00am