

# PHIL 309 (A01): Kant

CRN# 1268

MTh 13:00-14:20, HHB 110

Instructor: Dr. Thomas Land

Office: CLE B 331

Office Hours: Tue 1:00-2:30 and by appointment

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## Course Description

This course provides an introduction to *Critique of Pure Reason*, one of the central texts in the history of philosophy. Its guiding theme is Kant's attempt to vindicate the idea that metaphysics provides us with a special kind of non-empirical knowledge. Kant is convinced that (i) any genuinely philosophical knowledge is metaphysical knowledge; (ii) the very possibility of such knowledge is called into doubt by prevalent conceptions of the human mind (such as those of Descartes, Locke, Leibniz, and Hume); and (iii) assuaging this doubt (and thus vindicating metaphysical knowledge) requires a careful analysis of human cognitive capacities. In this course we study the account of our cognitive capacities that Kant proposes and ask whether he succeeds in vindicating metaphysical knowledge. In particular, we consider Kant's claim that the two most basic capacities, *sensation* and *conceptual thought*, are distinct in nature and yet are required to cooperate in a particular way if there is to be any knowledge at all. In considering this claim we will discuss the following topics: spatial representation; concepts; the relation between empirical knowledge and a priori knowledge; *self-consciousness*; causality; idealism; and free will. The focus will be on a close study of Kant's text.

## Learning Outcomes

This course has four main objectives. By successfully completing this course you will

- (i) acquire knowledge of Kant's central views in metaphysics, epistemology, and philosophy of mind;
  - (ii) come to understand some of the considerations motivating these views as well as some of the problems they face;
  - (iii) learn to assess the cogency of different interpretations of a single text; and
  - (iv) hone important analytical skills. These include reading and analyzing difficult philosophical texts; constructing and assessing arguments; articulating and communicating complex ideas; and composing philosophical papers.
- Brightspace page, sign in to UVic and click on Online Tools. You should see Brightspace as an option. If you are unable to access Brightspace please contact me.

## Texts

There are two required books. The first is available in hard copy at the UVic Bookstore:

Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, transl. Paul Guyer and Allen Wood, New York: Cambridge UP, 1998

The second required book is available in electronic form through the UVic Library:

James O'Shea, Kant's Critique of Pure Reason: An Introduction and Interpretation, Durham: Acumen, 2012

Link: <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.library.uvic.ca/lib/uvic/detail.action?docID=2036416&query=James+O'Shea%2C+Kant's+Critique+of+Pure+Reason%3A+An+Introduction+and+Interpretation%2C>

Additional readings are available in Brightspace.

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⇒ *Class does not meet this week (instructor abroad). Instead, watch two lectures on Brightspace.*

Framing the question: synthetic a priori judgments, concepts and intuitions

Required:

- B-Preface
- B-Introduction
- O'Shea, 1449

Recommended:

- Lanier Anderson, "The Introduction to the Critique Framing the Question"

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7	Oct 21, 24	<p><u>Recommended:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lucy Allais, excerpt from Manifest Reality</li> </ul> <p>Analytic of Concepts: The Metaphysical Deduction</p>
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Required:

- Introduction to the Transcendental Logic (A50/B74-A66/B91)
- Clue to the Discovery of All Pure Concepts (A66/B91-A83/B109)
- On the Principles of a Tran( )10.9t3 (r)-4 (a)9.2 (n( )1):6n-4.6 (he)-1.7 ( P3 ( )]8d

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>O'Shea, 196204</li> </ul>
11	Nov 21, 25	<p>Transcendental Dialectic: First, Second, and Third Antinomy</p> <p>Conflict</p> <p><u>Required:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A293/B349-A309/B366, A321/B377-A332/B389, A405/B432-A451/B479</li> <li>O'Shea, 50-62</li> </ul>
12	Nov 28, Dec 2	<p>Transcendental Dialectic: First, Second, and Third Antinomy</p> <p>Resolution</p> <p><u>Required:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A490/B518-A558/B586</li> <li>O'Shea, 62-77</li> </ul> <p><u>Recommended:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Markus Kohl, "Kant on Idealism, Freedom, and Standpoints"</li> </ul>
<p>Paper #2 due on December 1</p>		

#### Attendance and Notes

You are expected to attend class and come prepared to discuss the assigned readings. Handouts I use for lecturing will be made available on the course website. However, I elaborate on these in class, so downloading the handouts is no substitute for attending class.

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If you contact me via email, I will make every effort to respond in a timely manner, which generally will be within 48 hours (longer on weekends). To make sure your email does not end up in my spam folder, I encourage you to put the course number in the subject line (i.e. PHIL 309) and use your UVic email address. If you have a question about assignments, due dates, or other course policies, the syllabus should be your first resource. I will not respond to any emails that ask questions which are answered in the syllabus. Your second resource should be the discussion board, which is accessible through the course website. You are encouraged to use this feature to discuss questions about course mechanics as well as course content.

### Student Conduct

The University of Victoria is committed to providing a respectful and productive learning environment. All members of our community, including students, have both the right to experience and the responsibility to help create such an environment. For detail the rights and responsibilities this involves please read through [the Faculty Standards of Professional Behaviour for Students](#). This document also contains links to applicable university policies. It is part of your responsibility as a student in this course to know your responsibilities as outlined in the code of professional behaviour (which covers, among other things, attendance and classroom behavior, online conduct in university learning systems, and academic integrity).

### Intellectual property of materials on *D2L Brightspace*

Please note that all assignments for this course and all materials posted to the [Brightspace](#) site or distributed in class are the intellectual property of myself and the University of Victoria. Do not circulate this material or post it to note-sharing sites without my permission. Posting course materials to note-sharing sites or otherwise circulating course materials without the permission of your instructor violates the [Policy on Academic Integrity](#). Any evidence you are circulating materials without permission will be

academic accommodations you need to register with the Centre for Accessible Learning  
(<https://www.uvic.ca/services/ca>) Please do so as early as possible. You can find information about  
academic accommodations through the Centre for Accessible Learning's website  
(<https://www.uvic.ca/services/cal/programs/academic/index.php>)

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family tragedy. The University provides free counselling services, and I encourage you to make use of these in this type of situation. ([See www.uvic.ca/services/counselling/](http://www.uvic.ca/services/counselling/) for more information).

#### Course Experience Surveys (CES)

I value your feedback on this course. Towards the end of term, as in all other courses at UVic, you will have the opportunity to complete an anonymous survey regarding your learning experience (CES). The survey is vital to providing feedback to me regarding the course and my teaching, as well as to help the department improve the overall program for students in the future. The survey is accessed via MyPage and can be done on your laptop, tablet, or mobile device. I will remind you and provide you with more