

Senior Literature Review

Philosophy 190, Fall 2018

SCHEDULE

1. Tuesday, September 4 *First day.* How the class will work and possible topics.
2. Thursday, September 6 *Research.* How to put a reading list together. You might want to bring a laptop.
3. Tuesday, September 11 *What is a literature review?* We discuss an example and talk about what we would like or dislike in a literature review.

Read Andrew Valls, "Introduction," in *Race and Racism in Modern Philosophy*, ed. Andrew Valls (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2005).
4. Thursday, September 13 *How to read a philosophy article.* What to look for when you're reading professional philosophical writing.

Read Thomas Nagel, "The Absurd," *Journal of Philosophy* 68 (1971): 716-27.

Due: whoever is doing the presentation on the 20th should distribute the reading before Monday, September 17.
5. Tuesday, September 18 *What is your topic?* Come with a list of readings and prepared to describe your topic. If you are still unsettled at this point, you should describe where you are starting and what you will read.

Due: bring a signed reader sheet *and* eight copies of a reading list to class.
6. Thursday, September 20 *Russell presentation 1.* A presentation of one of the readings on someone's list. You can present any item on your reading list; it does not have to be the one you are writing a précis on at the time. Presenting means identifying the items in a précis and, perhaps, raising questions or requests for help that the class can discuss. Presentations should be about ten to fifteen minutes long.

Due: everyone upload précis *and* reading lists to Sakai by 10pm on Saturday. Next week's presenters should give me the readings today.

7. Tuesday, September 25 *Paskalina presentation 1*. See the instructions for September 20.

8. Thursday, September 27 *Bay presentation 1*. See the instructions for September 20.

Due: everyone upload précis to Sakai by 10pm on Saturday. Next week's presenters should give me the readings today.

9. Tuesday, October 2 *Oscar presentation 1*. See the instructions for September 20.

10. Thursday, October 4 *James presentation 1*. See the instructions for September 20.

Due: everyone upload précis to Sakai by 10pm on Saturday. Next week's presenters should give me the readings today.

11. Tuesday, October 9 *Adrian presentation 1*. See the instructions for September 20.

12. Thursday, October 11 *Coleman presentation 1*. See the instructions for September 20.

Due: everyone upload précis to Sakai by 10pm on Saturday. Next week's presenters should give me the readings today.

13. Tuesday, October 16 *Russell presentation 2*. See the instructions for September 20.

14. Thursday, October 18 *Paskalina presentation 2*. See the instructions for September 20.

Due: everyone upload précis to Sakai by 10pm on Saturday. Next week's presenters should give me the readings today.

Note: next Tuesday is fall break.

15. Thursday, October 25 *Bay presentation 2*. See the instructions for September 20.

Due: everyone upload précis to Sakai by 10pm on Saturday. Next week's presenters should give me the readings today.

16. Tuesday, October 30 *Oscar presentation 2*. See the instructions for September 20.

17. Thursday, November 1 *James presentation 2*. See the instructions for September 20.

Due: everyone upload précis to Sakai by 10pm on Saturday. Next week's presenters should give me the readings today.

18. Tuesday, November 6 *Adrian presentation 2.* See the instructions for September 20.

19. Thursday, November 8 *Coleman presentation 2.* See the instructions for September 20.

Due: everyone upload précis to Sakai by 10pm on Saturday. Next week's presenters should give me their draft reports today.

20. Tuesday, November 13 *Russell research presentation.* Present a draft of your final paper. The goal is to describe the literature on your topic. Show how the different elements of the literature are related to one another and offer some evaluation of the various positions taken in the literature.

21. Thursday, November 15 *Paskalina research presentation.* See instructions for November 13.

Due: everyone upload précis to Sakai by 10pm on Saturday. Next week's presenter should give me a draft report today.

22. Tuesday, November 20 *Bay research presentation.* See instructions for November 13.

23. Tuesday, November 27 *Oscar research presentation.* See instructions for November 13.

24. Thursday, November 29 *James research presentation.* See instructions for November 13.

25. Tuesday, December 4 *Adrian research presentation.* See instructions for November 13.

26. Thursday, December 6 *Coleman research presentation.* See instructions for November 13.

27. Tuesday, December 11 Final papers due by 10 pm.

GOALS

The centerpiece of this course is a literature review on a topic of your choosing. A literature review summarizes and evaluates the scholarly literature on a topic. The summary should identify what the major ideas in the literature are and how they are related to one another. A literature review involves evaluation in two ways. First, you have to exercise judgment in deciding which works are important enough to be included in the review. Second, you should seek to identify significant limitations in the works under review. At the end of the term, you

should be able to explain both the major positions taken by scholars writing on your topic and also the chief strengths and weaknesses of those positions.

Having completed the literature review, you will have done the senior project required to graduate as a philosophy major. You will *also* be in a position to write a senior thesis in the spring; having done a critical review of the scholarly literature, you will be able to forge ahead with a contribution of your own.

GRADES

Grades will be based on the final paper (50%), three oral presentations (35%), and the précis and reading list (15%).

There are nine weekly précis. These should cover between one large or two smaller pieces of writing by a professional philosopher such as an article in a scholarly journal or a chapter in a book published by a university press.

Attendance is mandatory. You aren't getting the value of the seminar unless you attend the sessions. Of course, reasonable accommodations will be made.

All written work should be posted to your dropbox on Sakai. Late work will be penalized at the rate of .25 points per day late. If you turn in four précis one day late, for example, that part of the final grade will be reduced by one point. The point of weekly writing assignments is to keep you on track to finish your research report comfortably by the end of the term. That aim would be defeated if we did not have meaningful due dates.