

COURSE DESCRIPTION

PHIL 428 “Logic and Language”

PHIL 526 “Philosophy of Language”

Mondays 2:00-4:50, AssHall 1-30

Professor: F.J. Pelletier (Jeff.Pelletier@ualberta.ca)

<http://www.ualberta.ca/~francisp>

General: This class will be an investigation of a number of different topics in Philosophical Logic. Most of them will have something to do with the relationship between logic and natural language, wondering what sorts of things in classical logic might need to be altered in order to give an adequate account of the “meaning” and legitimate inferences of natural language constructions. Some topics that I intend to cover are vagueness, conditionals, “empty” names, and claims about knowledge/belief. To this end we will study the phenomena as they occur in natural language, and look to some logical innovations that have been proposed to accommodate these phenomena. Vagueness, for example, has seen many-valued logics, modal logics, and supervaluations; “empty” names have given rise to free logics; and issues concerning knowledge and belief have seen the rise of epistemic logic.

The course is intended as an introduction to these issues and the formal considerations that are involved. We will start with a review of the elementary logic that you already know, and I’ll introduce some slightly more advanced topics at this point.

Style: My style is to lecture. However you are free to break in with questions, comments, further observations, etc. (Indeed, part of your grade is on this).

Evaluation: This class will have two examinations: one around midterm exam week and the second very late, close to the end of classes. The exams will be a mix of “short essay” answers to questions and of “problems to be solved.” So far as the “short essay” portion goes, you will always be given choices of questions to answer. For Phil 428 students, each of these exams will count for a third of your grade in the class. The other third will be divided between class participation (which includes attendance) and some “homework”, homework getting the majority of the value.

Students taking this course as Phil 526 are in addition required to turn in a final paper of medium length (10 - 15 pp) on a topic relevant to the class: either bringing forward some natural language phenomenon not discussed and showing how some novel logical technique can [or can't] deal with it, or presenting a more detailed examination of the pros and cons of some application discussed in class. For these graduate students, the two exams, the homework/participation, and the paper will each count for one-quarter of their grade. This paper is **due a week after the end of classes** electronically to me by email before midnight that day.

Phil 428 students are also able to write a paper, if they wish. The paper is due the same date as the graduate students’ papers. If you choose to write such a paper, I will use it to replace the worse of your two exams in computing your grade. (Well, if it is worse than either of your exams, then I won’t count it at all!) Since this is an optional paper, **no late papers will be accepted no matter what the reason.**

⇒ There is no final examination in this class. ⇐

Required Textbook:

G. Priest *An Introduction to Non-Classical Logic: From If to Is*. 2008 (Cambridge UP) ISBN-13: 978-0521670265. Paperback available from amazon.ca for C\$39.35 and the Kindle edition for C\$18.42.

[Note: 2nd edition!!]

Recommended as relevant and interesting, but not necessarily to be assigned:

Lou Gobel (ed) *The Blackwell Guide to Philosophical Logic*. 2001 (pb) ISBN-10: 0-631-20693-0 (Blackwell Publishers) Available from amazon.ca for C\$48.97. Available electronically from UA Library: <http://www.library.ualberta.ca/permalink/opac/3865179/WUAARCHIVE>