Metaphysics PHI225
Spring Semester 2015

Lectures: Thursday 12-1 Mappin LT4 / Thursday 3-4 HICKS LT5

Seminars: Thursday 4-5, Jessops 116 / Friday 2-3, Hicks Room F41

Module convenor: Jessica Leech  jessica.leech@sheffield.ac.uk

Office Hours: Friday 10-12

Course MOLE site:
Copies of the Powerpoint lecture slides, this booklet – in fact a lot of what you need for the module – are available from the course MOLE site. Follow the links from your MUSE page.

Outline of the Course
This course will focus on issues concerning the metaphysics of properties. What is a property? Why should we think there are any such things? What work do properties do in our understanding of the world? We will examine and assess some of the main accounts of the nature of properties, such as realism about universals and varieties of nominalism. We will see how the idea of a property permeates throughout all sorts of different issues. Along the way key ideas and methods in metaphysics will be introduced, including possible worlds and truthmaking.

How the module will be taught
The module will consist of lectures and seminars. Students will be expected to prepare for seminars by critically reading a set text. Students should be ready to voice questions they have about the text to start discussion in the seminars. As with all philosophy courses, the lectures are intended to serve as an introduction and guide to the various topics. Students should make sure they read the “essential readings” on the reading list as a necessary component of the course.
### Module Timetable

Week 1 (from 9/2): Introduction to metaphysics and properties

Week 2: Universals and particulars

Week 3: Universals and particulars

Week 4: Introduction to possible worlds.

Week 5: David Lewis and possible worlds.

Week 6: Lewis on properties and universals.

Mid-term Coursework: due Week 6 – 12 noon Wed 18th March 2015

EASTER BREAK

Week 7 (from 13/4): Intrinsic properties / introduction to nominalism

Week 8: More nominalism

Week 9: Universals and particulars so far

Week 10: Truthmaking

Week 11: Overflow and revision

End-term Coursework: - due Week 12 – 12 noon Wed 20th May 2015

EXAM PERIOD

### Seminar Timetable & Readings

Seminars start in week 3. Further details of the reading can be found on the reading list later in this course outline. Most seminar reading should be available in the e-offprints for this course.


- **Week 4:** Chapter 11: “Particulars and Universals” of Armstrong’s *Nominalism and Realism: Universals and Scientific Realism Volume I.*


- **Week 6:** Lewis, D. 1986: *On the Plurality of Worlds.* [§§ 1.1, 1.5, 2.8]

EASTER BREAK

- **Week 7:** Cameron, P. Ross (2009), “Intrinsic and Extrinsic Properties”, *The Routledge Companion to Metaphysics*.

- **Week 8:** Tropes reading: TBC


- **Week 10:** NO SEMINAR (History of Metaphysics Workshop)

- **Week 11:** Mulligan, K., Simons, P., and Smith, B. 1984: "Truth-Makers" [Sections 1-3]
Lecture Powerpoint Slides

Lectures will be accompanied by Powerpoint slides. These help the lecturer remember what they want to say; make the structure of the lecture explicit; and make quotations, precise claims, and the like clearly visible to you. They will be posted on the course MOLE page after the lecture. Please note that these are not intended to be a substitute for your own notes. The slides will make little sense if you read them without coming to the lecture, and will make little more if you have only them to read at exam time.

Assessment

Assessment is by two coursework essays and one exam.

No topic will be the central subject of both an essay question and a question in the exam. It may nonetheless be possible to repeat essay work in the exam, but you should not do this.

Coursework Essays

You write two essays, of 1500-2000 words.

A list of coursework questions to choose from, with suggested readings, will be available on the MOLE course page.

The deadlines are:
Mid-term Coursework: 12 noon, Wed 18th March 2015 (week 6)
End-term Coursework: 12 noon Wed 20th May 2015 (week 12)

The essays must be submitted both electronically and in paper form. Electronic submission is done through MOLE, which you can access through your MUSE web-page. Go to the Assignments link of the relevant module, and upload your essay there. Be sure to press the submit button.

The paper copy may be submitted in either of the following ways:

- by handing them in to the Departmental Office (45 Victoria St)
- by putting them in the Essay Deposit Box at reception, Dept of Philosophy, (45 Victoria St)

Exam

This is two hours long. Topics to be covered in the exam will be pre-released on MOLE. Questions will be unseen. You answer two questions from a selection. See the module MOLE page for past papers and advice on how to prepare for the exam.
Plagiarism: READ THIS

The following are serious academic offences and may result in penalties that could have a lasting effect on your career, both at University and beyond.

Plagiarism (either intentional or unintentional) is the stealing of ideas or work of another person (including experts and fellow or former students) and is considered dishonest and unprofessional. Plagiarism may take the form of cutting and pasting, taking or closely paraphrasing ideas, passages, sections, sentences, paragraphs, drawings, graphs and other graphical material from books, articles, internet sites or any other source and submitting them for assessment without appropriate acknowledgement.

Submitting bought or commissioned work (for example from internet sites, essay "banks" or "mills") is an extremely serious form of plagiarism. This may take the form of buying or commissioning either the whole assignment or part of it and implies a clear intention to deceive the examiners. The University also takes an extremely serious view of any student who sells, offers to sell or passes on their own assignments to other students.

Double submission (or self-plagiarism) is resubmitting previously submitted work on one or more occasions (without proper acknowledgement). This may take the form of copying either the whole assignment or part of it. Normally credit will already have been given for this work.

Collusion is where two or more people work together to produce a piece of work, all or part of which is then submitted by each of them as their own individual work. This includes passing on work in any format to another student. Collusion does not occur where students involved in group work are encouraged to work together to produce a single piece of work as part of the assessment process.

More on plagiarism in particular: In any essay or exam answer submitted for assessment, all passages taken from other people's work, either word for word, or with small changes, must be placed within quotation marks, with specific reference to author, title and page. No excuse can be accepted for any failure to do so, nor will inclusion of the source in a bibliography be considered an adequate acknowledgement.

If the marker decides that plagiarism has occurred, it becomes a matter of report to a University Committee. The student may be judged to have failed the essay and/or exam and/or module (depending on the degree of severity). The plagiarism will also be recorded on the student's record.

Plagiarism from handouts and related material: The department has agreed that a distinction needs to be drawn between use of ideas or arguments expounded in lectures, on the one hand (which is legitimate without citation), and verbatim or near-verbatim reproduction of material from lecture handouts or lecture notes/transcripts, on the other hand (which is not). Any essay that is judged to rely too heavily on course handouts and the like—even when it is considered to fall short of plagiarism — will be penalised.
Reading

(1) If you need a book, reserve it. The library is now running a system that adjusts the time for which a volume can be borrowed to the number of people who’ve put in a reservation.

(2) The library keeps some photocopies of hard-to-get papers. Increasingly, these are being replaced by e-offprints. See ‘My Resource Lists’ under ‘Library’ in MUSE (where the reading lists to follow are available online).

(3) Remember that more and more journals are available electronically. Always check whether this is so before giving up in despair because the hard copy is on loan.

(4) Plan ahead. If you leave researching your essay to the last minute, you are more likely not to get the reading you need in time.

(5) Be resourceful. Perhaps the paper you want is in an anthology. Have a look. (Google Scholar can sometimes help with such matters.)

(6) Be prepared to share resources. Perhaps someone in your seminar group, or next to you in a lecture, has what you need, or needs what you have.

Reading by Topic

Key: We have used italics for the names of books and journals, and quotation marks for the names of articles that appear in them.

Readings which are particularly recommended are in bold. The rest of the list is for you to explore. Feel free to ask the lecturer for advice on choosing what to read.

Douglas Edward’s new book, *Properties*, is a particularly helpful companion to all topics.

Metaphysics Reading List

Collections, readers, and general texts

Introduction to theories of properties


Quine, W. V.O. 1951: "Ontology and Ideology". Philosophical Studies 2 pp. 11-5.


Universals and Particulars


Plato: Phaedo 73c – 76c; 78c – 79a
--- Parmenedes 128e – 135c


Russell, B. (1912) *The Problems of Philosophy* chapters 9 & 10


**Armstrong on Universals**


**Possible worlds**

Divers, J (2002) *Possible Worlds* (Routledge) [Parts I and II]


Lewis on properties and universals


Taylor, B. 1993: "On Natural Properties in Metaphysics". *Mind*, 102, 405, pp. 81-100.

Intrinsic properties


Concept Nominalism

Armstrong, D. 1978,Chapters 2 & 3 of *Nominalism and Realism (Universals and Scientific Realism Volume I)*. Cambridge University Press.

Resemblance Nominalism


Trope theory


Ostrich Nominalism


**Truthmakers**


Maurin, Anna-Sofia (2002) If Tropes (Dordrecht: Kluwer)


