

Dissertation Workshop Seminar

Philosophy 680

Spring Term 2017 – Purdue University

Instructor: Daniel Kelly

Syllabus

1. Course Description

The aim of this course is to provide a constructive forum for the development of graduate students' dissertation projects, to help sustain progress on research and maintain participation in a supportive intellectual community. The course will also serve as a key component of students' preparation for the job market. Each student will present work of their own--e.g., an overview of their dissertation project, or a chapter or a part of a chapter from their dissertation, for discussion with the other graduate students in the seminar and the faculty instructor. Students will circulate the written version of the material they will present to the class one week before their presentation and discussion. All students are expected to read and come prepared to discuss the material presented. Regular attendance is expected of all participants. Prerequisite: 6 credit hours at the graduate level in Philosophy.

2. Class Meetings

Class lectures meet Tuesday and Thursday from 4:30pm – 5:45pm in Stewart G52 (aka **STEW 050B**, a high tech AV room in the basement of the Stewart Center that we'll use so that students not in residence can teleconference in.)

3. Office Hours and Contact Information

Professor Kelly

Office: 7126 Beering Hall

Office Phone: 765-494-4290

Email: drkelly@purdue.edu

Office Hours: 11:00am – 1:00pm Wednesdays and by appointment

4. The Plan

- For every session, we will read one paper/chapter/overview by one of us taking the seminar. The hope is to circulate it to everyone a week ahead of time.
- We're scheduled to meet 30 times, but the actual number is 25 because we will not have class on the following days:
 - Thursday February 2nd
 - Thursday March 2nd (Central APA)
 - Thursday March 9th (UC Irvine)
 - Week of March 13-17 Spring Break
 - Thursday March 23rd (Purdue Sustainability Workshop)

- Thursday April 6th (Duke)
 - The upshot being that since we've got 8 people registered, each person will be able to present 3 times. Start thinking about what you'd like to present, and when.
- I'll send around a sign up sheet. If you know what you'd like to present so much the better. Inevitably at this point you'll be picking dates, and I'm fine with people swapping once slots get filled in and we have a better idea of who will be presenting what and when, etc.
- We'll start each class with a designated commentator starting the discussion by giving 5-10 minute overview of that session's focal paper, laying out it's thesis, aim, a summary of the argument, and a couple of questions. These can be asking for clarity questions, or objection questions – but they should be the kind of questions you would ask at the Q&A of a conference or colloquium talk, since that's one of the skills this forum is meant to help us all hone. I see two options on how we can handle the commentator role, call them formal and informal.
 - **Informal option:** basically just trust the commentator to do what I've described above.
 - **Formal option:** the writer of the paper can give an overview at the beginning of class, and then the commentator's job will be to, to before class, produce one of these, and see how it matches to how the author described his/her work:
 - Write up a 1 page (no more, no less) outline of that paper, pulling out the “bird's eye view” structure of article – sections, main claims of sections, basic arguments for those claims
 - If you've never done outlines before, this may be helpful: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/544/1/>
 - I can also post to the website anonymized examples of ideal outlines once they start coming in
 - On the back of the page, separate from your outline:
 - Formulate **in your own words** the main or central question the paper is addressing
 - Identify one sentence from the paper (i.e. quoted verbatim from the text itself) that best states the answer the author gives to the paper's main question
 - Pose a couple of questions of your own, of the sort mentioned above to get the conversation started

A few other things:

- Since one of the points of this is to help everyone improve their written work, and one way to do that is to get more self conscious about your own writing and what you're trying to do with it, to become more audience aware and less solipsistic in general – if/when we have any down time or unclaimed days, we might read and talk about this: <http://web.ics.purdue.edu/~drkelley/DFWAuthorityAndAmericanUsage2005.pdf> which, also see: <https://www.brainpickings.org/2015/11/05/david-foster-wallace-dictionary-writing/>

- Another thing I think it'd be useful to come out on the other side of the semester with is a catalog of types of philosophy papers, typical organizational structures or ways to shape a discussion that recur in good philosophy, and maybe some paradigm examples of each.
 - Professor BigShit Studies: Describing and Criticizing an Influential Claim/Argument/View
 - Ox-goring: If X is right, then Y is wrong (Y being the gored ox)
 - Inconsistent triad: Showing three claims that are widely held in some literature, each of which is independently plausible, are incompatible with each other
 - Literature Review / Trendspotting / Option Space
 - Framework paper
 - Resurrecting an Old Fashioned Idea
- We can also talk about the process and day to day business of writing, finding a place and carving out a time to produce pages, how to most productively do journaling, and just generally keeping the ball rolling. This book has been recommended as excellent on this score: <http://www.wendybelcher.com/writing-advice/writing-your-journal-article-in-twelve/>



EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS SYLLABUS ATTACHMENT

EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES are based on a simple concept – if you hear a fire alarm inside, proceed outside. If you hear a siren outside, proceed inside.

- **Indoor Fire Alarms** mean to stop class or research and immediately **evacuate** the building.

Proceed to your Emergency Assembly Area away from building doors. **Remain outside** until police, fire, or other emergency response personnel provide additional guidance or tell you it is safe to leave.

- **All Hazards Outdoor Emergency Warning Sirens** mean to immediately seek shelter (**Shelter in Place**) in a safe location within the closest building.

“Shelter in place” means seeking immediate shelter inside a building or University residence. This course of action may need to be taken during a tornado, a civil disturbance including a shooting or release of hazardous materials in the outside air. Once safely inside, find out more details about the emergency*. **Remain in place** until police, fire, or other emergency response personnel provide additional guidance or tell you it is safe to leave.

**In both cases, you should seek additional clarifying information by all means possible...Purdue Home page, email alert, TV, radio, etc...review the Purdue Emergency Warning Notification System multi- communication layers at http://www.purdue.edu/ebps/emergency_preparedness/warning-system.html*

EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROCEDURES:

- Review the **Emergency Procedures Guidelines**
https://www.purdue.edu/emergency_preparedness/flipchart/index.html

- Review the **Building Emergency Plan** (available from the building deputy) for:

Evacuation routes, exit points, and emergency assembly area

when and how to evacuate the building

Shelter in place procedures and locations

Additional building specific procedures and requirements.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AWARENESS VIDEOS

- "Shots Fired on Campus: When Lightning Strikes," is a 20-minute active shooter awareness video that illustrates what to look for and how to prepare and react to this type of incident.

See: <http://www.purdue.edu/securePurdue/news/2010/emergency-preparedness-shots-fired-on-campus-video.cfm> (Link is also located on the EP website)

MORE INFORMATION

Reference the Emergency Preparedness web site for additional information:

http://www.purdue.edu/emergency_preparedness