

Achille Varzi • 713 Philosophy Hall • tel. 4-3531 • email: av72 • url: ~av72 • Office hours: R 12–2pm

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- **DESCRIPTION.** This course is designed as an advanced introduction to some major topics in metaphysics: existence, identity, persistence through time, the problem of universals, the nature of particulars, modality, causation, free will.
- **FORMAT.** Two weekly lectures (UN3601: TR 11:40am–12:55pm, 717 Ham) and a mandatory weekly discussion session, (UN3611: either T 10:10-11:00am, 716 Phil; or T 6:10–7:00pm, 301M Fay; or F 12:10–1:00pm, 303 Ham).
- **REQUIREMENTS.** The final grade will be determined by participation in the recitation sessions (10%), two take-home assignments (25% each), and a final examination (40%).
- **TEXT.** The textbook for the course is M. J. Loux & Thomas M. Crisp, *Metaphysics: A Contemporary Introduction*, 4th Edition, Routledge, 2017 (available at Book Culture). In addition, we shall be reading texts from contemporary authors, most of which are collected in a companion anthology: M. J. Loux (ed.), *Metaphysics: Contemporary Readings*, 2nd Edition, Routledge, 2008 (also at Book Culture). Further readings are posted on *CourseWorks* (section *Files*).
- **SCHEDULE.** The following is a tentative (and ambitious) schedule. In the “Readings” column, part/section numbers refer to articles in the Loux anthology, whereas ‘pdf’ stands for material posted on *CourseWorks*.

Week	Date	Topic	Textbook	Readings
1.	T 9/4 R 9/6	Introduction and overview Existence (1): What is there?	1–15	Quine (I/3, pp. 42–49), Moore (pdf)
2.	T 9/11 R 9/13	Existence (2): Truth and the world Existence (3): Beware of the traps		Lewis & Lewis (pdf) Varzi (pdf)
3.	T 9/18 R 9/20	Universals (1): Introduction Universals (2): Realism	17–29 29–42	Russell (I/1)
4.	T 9/25 R 9/27	Universals (3): Nominalism Universals (4): Trope theory	45–69 70–79	Quine (I/3, pp. 49–56) Williams (I/4), Maurin (pdf)
5.	T 10/2 R 10/4	Particulars (1): Introduction; the bundle theory Particulars (2): The substratum theory	82–99 99–104	Black (II/6) Allaire (II/7)
6.	T 10/9 R 10/11	Particulars (3): Substance theory Particulars (4): Conventionalism	104–114	Quine (pdf), Haslanger (pdf)
<i>Take-home assignment (assigned on R 10/11; to be returned on T 10/16)</i>				
7.	T 10/16 R 10/18	Persistence (1): Introduction Persistence (2): Endurantism	223–230	Merricks (VI/26)
8.	T 10/23 R 10/25	Persistence (3): Perdurantism Persistence (4): The stage view; entia successiva	231–248	Heller (VI/25) Sider (pdf), Chisholm (pdf), Hawley1 (pdf)
9.	T 10/30 R 11/1	Indeterminacy (1): Are there vague objects? Indeterminacy (2): Semantics vs. ontology	279–303	Tye (pdf, pp. 535–542), Evans (pdf) Hawley2 (pdf)
10.	T 11/6 R 11/8	<i>Election Day – University Holiday</i> Modality (1): Introduction	149–154	
<i>Take-home assignment (assigned on R 11/8; to be returned on T 11/13)</i>				
11.	T 11/13 R 11/15	Modality (2): Possible worlds Modality (3): Counterparts vs. identity	154–162 162–179	Lewis (III/10) Lewis (III/12), Kripke (III/13)
12.	T 11/20 R 11/22	Causation (1): The idea of necessary connection <i>Thanksgiving Day - University Holiday</i>	181–189	Hume (IV/14), Russell (pdf)
13.	T 11/27 R 11/29	Causation (2): The counterfactual theory Causation (3): The paradoxes of time travel	189–196	Lewis (IV/18), Beebe (pdf) Lewis (pdf), Casati & Varzi (pdf)
14.	T 12/4 R 12/6	Determinism, freedom, and responsibility Conclusion: Realism vs. anti-realism	304–337	Frankfurt (pdf)
TBA		<i>Final examination (TBA)</i>		