Philosophy 313-2

Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason* (Dialectic)

Fall 2018

Zuckert

Kresge 3-425

Office hours: T 1-3

x.491-2556

r-zuckert@northwestern.edu

Susan Bencomo

Office hours: Th 2:30-4, in Kresge 3-430

Susanbencomo2011@u.northwestern.edu

Required texts:

* Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, Allen Wood and Paul Guyer trans. (Cambridge)

Note: You may use another translation of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, if it includes A/B numbers in the margins of the text.

* Reader **to be purchased at Quartet Copies (825 Clark Street)**, with selections from:

 René Descartes, *Meditations*

 Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*

 G.W. Leibniz, *Philosophical Papers*

 Christian Wolff, *Preliminary Discourse on Philosophy in General*

Recommended secondary texts (on reserve at the library):

\*Sebastian Gardner, *Routledge Guidebook to Kant and the Critique of Pure Reason* (Routledge).

Paul Guyer, *Kant* (Routledge).

\*Allen Wood, *Kant* (Blackwell).

\*These two texts have been ordered at the bookstore as **recommended** readings; you are not obliged to buy them.

Books are apparently easily ordered through these links:

|  |
| --- |
| <https://tinyurl.com/NW-F18-PHIL-313-2-20> |
| <https://tinyurl.com/NW-F18-PHIL-313-2-21>​ |

Course description:

In this course we will study the greatest work of Enlightenment philosopher, Immanuel Kant, the *Critique of Pure Reason*. We will focus on his attempts to limit the claims of reason, specifically to show that traditional, philosophical metaphysics is an enterprise bound to fail because it transcends human cognitive capacities. Specifically, we will read and discuss Kant’s arguments that we cannot rationally prove the existence of God or the immortality of the soul, that we cannot rationally establish the finitude (or not) of the world, the ultimate components of reality, or the reality (or not) of free will. These arguments are Kant’s most decisively influential and the most controversial in his time, earning him the title of the “great destroyer.” And yet Kant is not entirely critical of these aspirations of reason: we will also discuss Kant’s diagnosis of these metaphysical arguments as natural, inevitable temptations of human reason, and his suggestions concerning the positive uses of reason – despite these criticisms – in both science and morality. Our most general topic for discussion is, then, Kant’s conception of the nature of human reason: as striving beyond the fact of the matter, beyond us, beyond itself, both beneficially and problematically, and as capable of self-limitation.

Assignments:

**readings and course participation** You are expected to do all the readings carefully and critically and to participate in class discussion. It is **not required** to do the supplementary readings; these are listed in case they prove helpful. They all provide “Cliff Notes”-type overview of Kant’s arguments, and describe some common problems or objections. Graduate students will be required to do further reading for a graduate discussion section.

**five reflections,** short (1 page), ungraded writings on the readings. These reflections are opportunities for you to think “out loud,” raise questions that you think are important, point to parts of the readings you found particularly interesting, difficult, stupid, etc. I do not mind what you write, so long as it is thoughtful. You will receive full credit for them if they are submitted on time, in class or via e-mail before the class period. (Dates due as marked on the reading schedule below; you are allowed two “off.”)

**one writing assignment**: you will be asked to answer three or four essay questions, in responses of about one page per answer, about Kant’s general philosophical approach, methods, claims in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. This assignment will be graded high pass/pass/fail.

**two papers** (c. 6-7 pp.); due dates below. Appropriate citation and quotation format is required on all written work. If you are unsure of how to quote/cite appropriately, please consult the quotations/citations handout posted on Canvas. You are also encouraged, of course, to ask either or both of the instructors any questions you might have.

Grading policies:

Grades will be based on:

15% class participation

10% reflections

75% papers and writing assignment

Late paper policy: Late papers will be graded 1/3 grade lower for every day that they are late. For example, a B+ paper would receive a B if one day late; a B- if two days late, etc.

Attendance and Participation Policy: You are expected to attend every class and discussion section, and failure to attend will adversely affect your grade. Please note that participation in class and discussion section – like any other assignment – is a **positively or negatively** effective element of your grade. That is: if you participate well, this will positively affect your grade, and if you participate poorly or not at all, this will negatively affect your grade. If you have a legitimate reason to miss class or discussion section, please let us know as far in advance as possible.

Disabilities Policy: Any student with a verified disability requiring special accommodations in this course is encouraged to contact me after class or during office hours, and to contact the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities (847-467-5530) as early as possible in the quarter. All discussions will remain confidential.

Statement concerning Academic Integrity: Plagiarism is a serious violation of the trust, honesty, and openness of inquiry required for true intellectual community. To avoid any misunderstanding, here are a few remarks concerning appropriate usage of sources for written work in this course. All papers should include quotations from Kant’s texts, in appropriate format for textual quotation. It is not required to consult any secondary sources (even the recommended sources) for written work. Use of web sources, except the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, is strongly discouraged. However, if you do consult secondary sources, you should provide full bibliographical information for any/all of these sources at the end of your paper even if you do not quote directly from them. Any word-for-word reproduction of text from a secondary source in your paper should be marked as a quotation (by quotation marks or indentation, as relevant), and bibliographical information should be appended in parentheses or footnotes. Moreover, if you learn of an argument, point, or way of interpreting Kant from such a source, and make that point in your paper, you should cite that source, in a footnote appended to the part of the text in which you present the point, even if you do not quote that source word for word. A final note: if a paper includes very lengthy quotations from secondary sources – e.g., full paragraphs – or from Kant, this indicates that you are not articulating your own claims, arguments, interpretations, or explanations of Kant’s views sufficiently.

Reading Schedule

*Introductory: Kant’s Critical Project*

**September 27** Introduction.

**October 2** German rationalism, overview: Wolff, *Discourse*, #7, 55-62, 96-98;

Leibniz, “Monadology,” #1-14, 19-21, 29-39, 57-60, 78

Leibniz, “On the Radical Origination of Things”

All of these essays/selections are in the Quartet Copies Reader.

**Reflection due.**

**October 4** Critique: Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, Prefaces to First and Second Editions = Avii-xxii and Bvii-xxxvii = pp. 99-120; feel free to ignore discussion of objective and subjective deductions at Axvi-xvii.

*CPR*, Method, first chapter (“Discipline”) = A708/B746-A712/B740 = pp. 628-630.

Synthetic a priori judgments: *CPR*, Introduction, A6/B10-A10/B14 = pp. 141-143.

**October 9** Transcendental Idealism: *CPR*, “Phenomena and Noumena” = A235/B294- A260/B315= pp. 354-365.

 Overview of the Analytic: 1) *CPR*, Aesthetic selection = A19/B33-A28/B44 = pp. 172-77;

2) *CPR*, Introduction to Logic = A50/B74- A52/B76= pp. 193-194 (top);

3) *CPR*, §10 and §16 of B edition = A76/B102-A81/B107, B131-136 = pp. 210-213 (middle), 246-248.

Supplementary readings (Introductory):

 Gardner, *Guidebook*, pp. 2-9 (historical background); pp. 20-25, 27-30, 37-50 (critical philosophy in general); Chapter 3 (synthetic a priori judgments); pp. 198-205 (phenomena and noumena), pp. 269-298 (transcendental idealism).

 Wood, *Kant*, Chapters 1-3 (on Kant’s philosophy, and on the analytic); pp. 63-76 (on transcendental idealism).

**October 11** no class.

*Dialectic*

**October 16** The Dialectic of Reason (general): *CPR*, Transcendental Dialectic, Introduction and Book 1 = A293/B249-A338/B396 = pp. 384-408.

**Reflection due.**

Supplementary readings (Introductory to Dialectic):

 Gardner, *Guidebook*, pp. 209-221 (ideas of reason).

 Wood, *Kant*, pp. 76-79 (on ideas of reason); pp. 84-6 (on dialectic).

*The Soul (Paralogisms)*

### October 18 Leibniz, selection from *New Essays* (in Reader, the one paragraph stretching from p. 66 to 67)

### *CPR*, Paralogisms introductory section, and first two paralogisms in A edition = A341/B399-A348/B406; A348-361 = pp. 411-422.

**Writing assignment due.**

### October 23 Leibniz, selection from “Discourse on Metaphysics,” section 34 (pp. 37-38);

### *CPR*, second paralogism (review) =A351-361 = pp. 417-422;

### *CPR* third paralogism in A and observations = A361-6, A396-405 = pp. 422-425.

### October 25 Descartes, *Meditations*, selections from second and sixth meditations, marginal pp. 23-30, 33-4, 78, 120 [top of p. 86]-121. In reader.

### *CPR*, Transcendental Dialectic, A edition Fourth Paralogism; B refutation of Mendelssohn and following (stop at \*\*\*) = A366-380, B413-423 = pp. 425-431, 449-453.

 **Reflection due.**

Supplementary readings for the Paralogisms:

*CPR*, §16, §25 and “Refutation of Idealism” (all in B) = pp. 246-248, 259-260, 326-329.

*CPR*, B Paralogisms B406-413 = pp. 439-445.

 Gardner, pp. 225-231, 243-245.

 Wood, pp. 86-89.

*Freedom and the World Whole (Antinomies)*

**October 30** The Cosmological ideas and Antinomies in general: *CPR*, A409/B435-A425/B453, A462/B490-A476/B504 = pp. 460-469, 496-503.

**November 1** The Extent of the World: *CPR*, First Antinomy and Resolution = A426/B454-A433/B461, A490/B518-A507/B535, A517/B545-A523/B551 = pp. 470-475, 511-519, 525-528.

 The Composition of the World: *CPR*, Second Antinomy and Resolution (and regulative use of cosmological idea) = A434/B462-A443/B471, A508/B536-A515/B543, A524/B551-A528/B556 = pp. 475-483, 520-524, 528-530. Review: A490/B518-A507/B535 = pp. 511-519.

**First paper (opportunity #1) due.**

**November 6** Freedom: *CPR*, Third Antinomy and Resolution = A444/B472-A451-B479, A532/B560-A558/B586= pp. 484-489, 532-546.

 **Reflection due.**

Supplementary readings on the Antinomies:

 CPR, Second Analogy = B232-A211/B256 = pp. 304-316.

 Gardner, 231-237, 245-265.

 Wood, pp. 89-100.

*God (The Ideal)*

**November 8** The concept of God: Leibniz, “On the Ultimate Origin of Things” (review);

 *CPR*, Fourth Antinomy and Resolution = A452/B480-A461/B489, A559/B587-A567/B595 = pp. 490-495, 546-550.

 *CPR*, The Ideal (introductory) = A567/B595- A583/B661= pp. 551-559.

**November 13** The ontological argument: Descartes, *Meditations*, fifth meditation (in Reader);

 *CPR*, on proofs in general, and ontological proof = A583/B661- A602/B630 = pp. 559-569.

**Reflection due.**

**November 15** The cosmological argument, and the argument from design: *CPR*, Transcendental Dialectic, Book Two, Chapter Three, Section 5 = pp. 569-589.

 **First paper (opportunity #2) due.**

Supplementary reading on rational theology:

 Wood, *Kant*, pp. 100-106.

 Gardner, *Guidebook*, pp. 237-243, 264-266.

*The Positive Uses of Reason*

**November 20** *CPR*, Regulative use of the ideas and systematic unity = A642/B670-658/B686, A669/B697-A673-B701, A681/B709-A694/B722, A701/B729-A704/B732 = pp. 590-598 (bottom), 605-607 (middle), 611 (middle)-618 (top).

 **Reflection due.**

**November 22** No class (Thanksgiving).

**November 27** *CPR*, Canon, selections = A797/B824-A811/B839 = pp. 673-680.

Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, Dialectic, sections IV, V up to p. 243, and VI = marginal 5:122-129, 132-4. (In Reader)

*CPR*, Canon A828/B856-A831/B859 = pp. 688 (bottom)-690.

 **Reflection due.**

Supplementary reading:

 Guyer, *Kant*, “On Immortality and the Existence of God,” pp. 230-237.

Wood, *Kant*, pp. 80-82, 179-183.

Gardner, *Guidebook*, pp. 221-224, Chapter Nine.

**November 29** Final Reflections. **Final paper due**.