

Jason Potter

Phone: (303)402-9465; Cell: 720-252-0643

E-Mail: jason.potter@colorado.edu

Web Site: <http://philophizer.com/index.html> (Please note: all handouts, along with lecture notes, reading and lecture schedule/plan, and this syllabus are available at this web site or on the Canvas site.)

Office Hours: 3:00 P.M.–4:30 P.M. M-W-F; Hellems 164B.

II. Texts

- A. Critique of Pure Reason (CPR), by Immanuel Kant; tr. Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood, Cambridge University Press
- B. Prolegomena to any Future Metaphysics (PFM), by Immanuel Kant; tr. by Paul Carus, rev. by J. Ellington (available on the internet via course homepage)
- C. A Companion to Kant's Critique of Pure Reason (CCPR) by Matthew C. Altman, Westview Press. (available for download as a scanned document soon from the course webpage)
- D. Selections from Wayne Waxman's *Kant's Anatomy of the Intelligent Mind*.

III. Assignments and Grading

- A. Kant is a thinker of extreme difficulty, and comprehension is attainable only after several readings. To benefit from the lectures, students should read and analyze the assigned texts beforehand.
- B. Class participation is welcome and can only benefit your grade. You can miss 3 classes without penalty, but classes missed thereafter will reduce your grade.
- C. A 10-page paper worth 50% of your grade will be due at the beginning of the 12th week of classes (November 14). Topics will be distributed before the end of the 4th week. You will be permitted to rewrite this paper, incorporating my suggestions on the first go-round, on Wednesday, May 10 at 1:30 p.m. in HLMS 177 (the final exam meeting).
- D. A series of reading reaction papers will be due at regular intervals (see lecture/reading topics schedule below) over the course of the semester and combine for the other 50% of your grade.

IV. Background

- A. Familiarity with such major early modern thinkers as Descartes, Leibniz, Locke, Berkeley, and Hume will be a substantial advantage.
- B. Secondary literature on Kant is generally as difficult as Kant himself. See me for recommendations if you have special needs or interests. Two good general introductions you might wish to consult are: Lewis W. Beck, *Early German Philosophy*, and Ernst Cassirer, *Kant's Life and Work*.

V. Immanuel Kant

- generally acknowledged to be the most important and influential philosopher since ancient Greece, and considered by many the greatest of philosopher of all time.
- wrote primarily in German, occasionally in Latin
- made significant contributions in virtually every area of philosophy, including: metaphysics and epistemology; ethics and morality; politics, society, and law; aesthetics; rational theology; philosophy of physics; philosophy of education; philosophy of history
- was expert in the physical sciences and mathematics; among the most learned men of his time
- 1724-1804; spent entire life in Königsberg, the capital of the province of East Prussia (a detached eastern outpost of the Kingdom of Prussia, later part of Germany, presently in Russia); was physically slight of stature and sickly; shy and solitary, not given to emotional display, but personally agreeable; widely admired and respected even before he published the Critique of Pure Reason; a true man of the Age of Enlightenment (Aufklärung)
- born poor, lost parents while still young, educated under the auspices of the Pietist religious sect (a passionate protestant movement which Kant soon turned against; he never thereafter practiced a religion)
- after study at the university in Königsberg, did brief stints as a live-in tutor, then held a series of posts at the Königsberg university, becoming professor only in 1770 (having turned down several offers because they would have obliged him to move from Königsberg)
- lived a very secluded life: never married, never traveled, avoided controversy and publicity, restricted his social activities to a small circle of friends, fame (which came late in life) rarely intruded on his peace

- (Königsberg was very out of the way); amused himself with reading, walks, card-playing, and conversation
- Prussia then ruled by Frederick the Great (d. 1786), whose less tolerant successors pressured Kant to be less outspoken on politically and religiously sensitive matters during the 1790s; during the Seven Years War (1756-63), Königsberg was briefly occupied by Russian troops
- Kant’s masterpiece is the *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781; rev. 1787); other major writings include: *Inaugural Dissertation on the Sensible and Intelligible World* (1770); *Prolegomena to any Future Metaphysics* (1783); *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals* (1785); *Metaphysical First Principles of Natural Science* (1786); *Critique of Practical Reason* (1788); *Critique of Judgement* (1790); *Religion within the limits of mere Reason* (1792); *Metaphysics of Morals* (1797)

VI. Lecture topics and related readings (schedule tentative)

- Weeks 1-3: Introduction to Kant’s transcendental philosophy, Prefaces to CPR and PFM and Introduction to CPR and Preamble to PFM (Reaction Paper [RP] #1 accepted up through December 9 by 11:59 pm in Canvas) (**Note: for first week, read only A-Edition of the CPR’s Preface and Introduction; read the B Edition version of the Preface and Introduction for next week!!**)
- Weeks 4-5: Transcendental aesthetic including transcendental idealism, CPR A19-49/B33-73, A367-A380, A712-38/B740-66, and PFM, part I (RP #2 accepted up through December 9)
- Weeks 6-7: First, read the handout “Kant’s Theory of Perception and Appearance” available under Lectures and Handouts page of the course website; next read Chapter 3 of Waxman “Anatomy of the Intelligent Mind”; then read my Lecture #4 (RP #3 accepted up through December 9)
- Weeks 8-9: Transcendental logic through the metaphysical deduction of the categories, CPR A50-83/B74-116, and PFM §21 and §39; then read my Lecture #5 (Lecture #5bis is optional) (RP #4 accepted up through December 9)
- Weeks 10-11: The A-edition transcendental deduction of the categories + critique of rational psychology, CPR A84-130, A339-366, A381-405; then read my Lecture #6 (RP #5 accepted up through December 9)
- Week 12: The B-edition revision of the transcendental deduction and the paralogisms, CPR B129-69, B406-31, PFM §§14-20 (RP #6 accepted up through December 9)
- Week 13: Transcendental judgment –the schematism of the categories, CPR A130-147/B169-87 (RP #7 due December 9)
- Week 14: The system of principles of pure understanding through the Anticipations of Perception, CPR A148-76/B187-218, PFM §§21a-24 (RP #8 **NOT APPLICABLE [we won’t get this far, unfortunately]**)
- Week 15: The Analogies of Experience – the refutation of Hume, CPR A176-218/B218-65, A758-69/B786-97, PFM §§25-38 (RP #9 **NOT APPLICABLE [we won’t get this far, unfortunately]**)
- If possible: The Refutation of Idealism in Detail—the refutation of Descartes' *problematic idealism*, CPR A218-235/B265-294 and A367-380 (4th Paralogism A-Ed.). (RP #10 (optional) **NOT APPLICABLE [we won’t get this far, unfortunately]**)

Disability Statement

If you have specific physical, psychiatric, or learning disabilities and require accommodations, please let me know early in the semester so that your learning needs may be appropriately met. You will need to provide documentation of your disability to the Disability Services Office in Willard 322 (phone 303-492-8671).