

PL 275
WITTGENSTEIN
Spring 2021

Seminar Leader: Robert Martin
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Office Hours: by appointment

The class meets on Wednesdays and Fridays from 10:45 to 12:15. Spring classes start on Monday, February 1 and run until Friday, May 14 with spring break planned from March 29 – April 5. Completion week is from May 17 through May 21. Students are required to be on campus during completion week.

Course Description

The Austrian-British philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951) is considered by some to be the greatest philosopher of the 20th century. Our study of him will begin with discussion of his life and the context of his work, followed by careful study of his *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (1921) and *Philosophical Investigations* (published posthumously in 1953). In the concluding part of the course we will consider aspects of his legacy,

Requirements

1. Reading questions posted for every class – brief response due by 10 p.m. the day before the class. Students should keep a running file of these questions and responses, with revisions as needed. Here's the format:
 - RQ1 for 10.2.21:
Response, submitted 9.2.21:
Revised response, submitted 11.2.21:

 - RQ2 (for 12.2.21):
Response, submitted 11.2.21:
Revised response: submitted 13.2.21:

 - RQ3 etc.
2. Two term papers
 - One on *Tractatus*: approx. 5 pages
 - Topic proposal due: end of Week 6
 - Draft due: end of Week 7
 - Final version due: end of Week 8
 - One on topic of choice (subject to approval) approx. 10 pages
 - Topic proposal due: end of Week 11
 - Draft due: end of Week 13
 - Final version due: end of Week 15

Academic Integrity

Bard College Berlin maintains the staunchest regard for academic integrity and expects good academic practice from students in their studies. Instances in which students fail to meet the expected standards of academic integrity will be dealt with under the Code of Student Conduct, Section 14.3 (Academic Misconduct) in the Student Handbook.

Attendance

Attendance at all classes is a crucial part of the education offered by Bard College Berlin. To account for minor circumstances, two absences from twice-per-week courses or the equivalent (e.g. one absence from a once-per-week course) should not affect the participation grade or require documentation.

Bard College Berlin does not offer credit for any course in which a student has missed more than 30% of classes, regardless of the reasons for the absences, whether excused or unexcused.

The full Bard College Berlin attendance policy can be found in the Student Handbook, Section 2.8.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR SPRING 2021: Some students might need to begin the semester remotely due to travel restrictions caused by the pandemic. In addition, all students and instructors must refrain from in-person attendance if they are feeling ill. Instructors should make efforts to offer alternatives to in-person attendance where needed, including remote participation or asynchronous options.

Policy on Late Submission of Papers

Essays that are up to 24 hours late can be downgraded up to one full grade (from B+ to C+, for example). Instructors are not obliged to accept essays that are more than 24 hours late. Where an instructor agrees to accept a late essay, it must be submitted within four weeks of the deadline. Thereafter, the student will receive a failing grade for the assignment. Grades and comments will be returned to students in a timely fashion. Students are also entitled to make an appointment to discuss essay assignments and feedback during instructors' office hours..

Grade breakdown

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|-------------------------------|-----|
| Reading Question responses: | 20% |
| Participation in discussions: | 20% |
| Paper 1 | 20% |
| Paper 2 | 40% |

Schedule

Weeks:

- 1 Read Monk, pp. 3-136. (RM presentation of background material)
- 2 Read Monk, pp. 137-251. (RM presentation of background material)
- 3 Tractatus, esp. 1 to 3.05 (Fogelin Chs I, II)
- 4 Tractatus, esp. 3.1 to 5.153 (Fogelin Chs III, IV)
- 5 Tractatus, esp. 3.31 to 6.211 (Fogelin Chs V, VI)
- 6 Tractatus, esp. 6.1 to 7 (Fogelin Chs VII, VIII)
- 7 Read Monk, Ch. 3
- 8 PI – Critique of the Tractatus (Fogelin Ch IX)
- 9 SPRING BREAK
- 10 PI - Understanding (Fogelin Ch X)
- 11 PI – Sceptical Doubt (Fogelin Ch XI)
- 12 PI – Private Language Argument (Fogelin Ch XII)
- 13 PI, Zettel - Philosophical Psychology (Fogelin Ch XIII)
- 14 RFM- Philosophy of Mathematics (Fogelin Ch XIV)
- 15 Completion week – papers due

Books to be purchased:

Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, trans. D. F. Pears and B.F.McGuinness (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1961).

Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, trans. G.E.M. Anscombe, P.M.S. Hacker, and Joachim Schulte (Wiley Blackwell, rev. fourth edition). German and English facing pages.

Ray Monk, *Wittgenstein: The Duty of Genius* (Vintage Books, 1990)

Optional:

Robert J. Fogelin, *Wittgenstein*, 2nd ed. (Routledge, 1987)

Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics*, ed. G.H. von Wright, R. Rhees, and G.E.M. Anscombe, trans. by G.E.M. Anscombe, revised edition (MIT Press, 1978)

Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Zettel*, edited by G.E.M. Anscombe and G.H. von Wright (40th Anniversary Edition, bilingual)

Note: a side-by-side edition containing the original German alongside both the Ogden/Ramsey, and Pears/McGuinness English translation, is available at:
<http://people.umass.edu/klement/tlp/>