

Philosophy 500: Spring 2025
Scott Soames

The course covers classic selections in philosophical logic, philosophy of language, metaphysics and philosophy of mind from Gottlob Frege, Bertrand Russell, Alfred Tarski, Saul Kripke, Hilary Putnam, Lewis, David Kaplan and other contemporary figures including John Perry, Nathan Salmon, and me, plus brief pieces of David Chalmers, Michael Dummett, Robert Stalnaker.

The major topics are (i) the metaphysics and epistemology of numbers, minds, natural kinds, propositions, meanings and possible worlds, (ii) the difference between necessity and apriority, and between contingency and aposteriority, (iii) the variety of what are, essentially, Frege puzzle cases and strategies for solutions, (iv) semantic accounts of descriptions, quantifiers, names, general terms, predicates, indexicals, and operators -- including David Kaplan's actuality operator, and the *at world w* operator, (v) truth predicates for sentences and propositions, truth and normativity plus the role of deflationism in explaining our argumentative commitments, (vi) the nature of propositional attitudes, the puzzles they present, and their centrality to semantic and pragmatic theories, and (vii) the challenges posed by the gap between semantic and asserted content for philosophy of language and theoretical linguistics.

Books on Reserve in the Hoose Library

Joseph Almog, <i>et al</i>	<u>Themes From Kaplan (KAP)</u>
David Chalmers	<u>The Conscious Mind</u>
Gottlob Frege	<u>Foundations of Arithmetic</u> (translated by Austin)
Geach and Black, eds.	<u>Translations from the Philosophical Writings of Gottlob Frege</u>
Gomez-Torrente	<u>Roads to Reference, (RR)</u>
David Lewis	<u>Philosophical Papers Volume 1</u>
Saul Kripke	<u>Naming and Necessity (NN)</u>
_____	<u>Philosophical Troubles (PT)</u>
Hilary Putnam	<u>Mind, Language, and Reality: Philosophical Papers, Vol. 2</u>
Scott Soames	<u>The Analytic Tradition in Philosophy, Vol. 1 (ATP1)</u>
_____	<u>The Analytic Tradition in Philosophy, Vol. 2 (ATP2)</u>
_____	<u>The Analytic Tradition in Philosophy, Vol. 3 (ATP 3)</u>
_____	<u>Philosophical Essays, Vol. 2 (PE2)</u>
_____	<u>Philosophy of Language (PL)</u>
_____	<u>Analytic Philosophy in America (APA)</u>
_____	<u>Rethinking Language, Mind, and Meaning (RLMM)</u>
Stalnaker, Robert	<u>Context and Content</u>
Peter Ludlow, ed.	<u>Readings in the Philosophy of Language</u>

Course Requirements In addition to doing the readings and participating in class discussion there will be 14 assignments of 1,000-1500 words each, due 48 hours before the seminar. **Students are expected to turn in at least 10 during the term, which means 4 can be skipped.** In a typical week students select 1 of 3 topics, normally including 1 posing focused questions, 1 more open-ended topic, and 1 in between. Students receive comments 24 hours before the weekly seminar meeting in which each topic is discussed before introducing new material for the week. Except for week 1, seminar meetings are supplemented by an optional zoom meeting on Monday to discuss questions related to the work due that week. **Except for the first week, readings listed for week n are to be done before the class meeting for week n.** In the case of week 1, that is optional. **Assignments given out on week n are based on material listed for week n+1, which is introduced in week n and discussed further in week n+1 after the assignments given a week earlier have been returned.** No reading is listed for week 15 because no assignment will be given then, even though the reading introduced in week 14 will be discussed then.

Credit and Grading

Students will be graded on their written assignments and oral participation. Students completing the course will receive normal seminar credit.

Schedule of Topics and Reading

Weeks 1-3: Frege

Week 1: Frege, *The Foundations of Arithmetic*, sections 1-4, 45-57, 60-63, 68-69, and 70-83. Soames, pp1-11 of "What we know about propositions and numbers and how we know it." Personal Website.

Sections 2, 4, 5 of chapter 1 of *ATP1* may be consulted as needed.

Week 2: Frege "On Sense and Reference" plus sections 3 (truth), 4 (sense and reference), and Section 5 (Platonism and Frege's hierarchy) of Chapter 2 of *ATP 1*.

Week 3: Frege, "The Thought"; Perry, "Frege on Demonstratives," (available online), Kripke, "Frege's Theory of Sense and Reference" in *PT*; also section 7 of chapter 2 *ATP1*

Week 4: Russell

Bertrand Russell "On Denoting" (available online) plus sections 1, 2.3 of chapter 8 of *ATP 1* (Remainder of chap. 8 is optional).

Week 5: Truth and Meaning

Tarski "Truth and Proof" (PDF from instructor), Chapter 2 of *PL*, a brief selection from Dummett "Truth," (PDF from instructor) plus section 3 of chapter 9 of *ATP 2*.

Weeks 6-7: The Struggle for Modality

Week 6: Chapters 1, 2 of *Naming and Necessity*; Soames, Chap. 9 of *ATP 3*, Soames "Kripke on Epistemic and Metaphysical Possibility" website, Gomez-Torrente excerpt from *RR* 140-51, 168 – 183.

Week 7: Chapter 3 of *Naming and Necessity*, Soames, Draft of Chapter 10 of *ATP 3*, "Extending Kripke's Model to Natural Kind Terms" (from instructor)

Weeks 8-9: The Significance of the Necessary A Posteriori: Mind, Meaning, Belief, and Assertion

Week 8: Stalnaker, "Assertion, in *Context and Content*," Chalmers, section of *The Conscious Mind*, Sections 2-5 of chapter 12, "Meaning, Content, and Propositional Attitudes" of *ATP3*., and sections 1, 2, and 4 (section 3 optional) of "Reply to Critics of *Reference and Description*" (website).

Week 9: Putnam "The Nature of Mental States" in *Putnam*; Lewis, "An Argument for the Identity Theory" also "Mad Pain and Martian Pain," Vol 1 *Phil Papers*; Soames "Kripke on Mind-Body Identity" website.

Week 10-12: Propositional Attitudes

Week 10: Soames "Direct Reference, Propositional Attitudes and Semantic Content," in *PE2* (vol. 15 of *Philosophical Topics*), also available on Jstor;

Week 11: Soames, chapters 2 and 3 of *RLMM*

Week 12: Kripke "A Puzzle about Belief" in Kripke *PT*; Soames chapter 4 plus pp.97-105 of *RLMM*

Week 13-14: Context Sensitivity

Week 13: Kaplan "Demonstratives" in (*Almog*),

Week 14: Salmon "Demonstrating and Necessity; Phil Review 2002," Soames pp 147-151 and 163-168 of *PL*, Kripke "The First Person" in *PT*, Soames pp 201-207 of *RLMM*

Week 15: Lewis: Modality, Metaphysics, and Causation

Lewis, chap. 4 *Counterfactuals*, SS "David Lewis's Place in Analytic Philosophy" website & *APA*, SS *PL* pp. 56-62, Recommended: Kment "Counterfactuals and Explanation" *Mind*: 115, 2006.