



Division of Arts Law Psychology & Social Sciences

School of Social Sciences

Philosophy

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You can contact staff by:

- Calling +64 7 838 4466 select option 1, then enter the extension.
- Extensions starting with 4, 5, 9 or 3 can also be direct dialled:
 - For extensions starting with 4: dial +64 7 838 extension.
 - For extensions starting with 5: dial +64 7 858 extension.
 - For extensions starting with 9: dial +64 7 837 extension.
 - For extensions starting with 3: dial +64 7 2620 + the last 3 digits of the extension e.g. 3123 = +64 7 262 0123.



INTRODUCTION

The aim of this paper is to introduce students to major debates in philosophy about the nature of truth. We will explore a diverse range of responses to one of the most central questions in all of philosophy: what is truth?

PAPER DESCRIPTION

Thinkers across many traditions within philosophy have sought to identify the nature of truth. This isn't surprising, as a moment's reflection will reveal that one of our most basic projects as thinkers is to separate true claims, hypotheses, and theories from false ones. To do this, it would seem that we must first understand what it *is* for a claim, hypothesis, or theory to be true or false. That is, it would seem that to responsibly and effectively think about the world that we inhabit, we must understand the nature of truth.

The theories of truth that philosophers have defended over the years are multifarious, and this paper offers an overview of the major classic and contemporary theories. We will begin with the classic trifecta: correspondence, coherence, and pragmatist theories. We'll then move on to influential, if less popular, alternatives to these: primitivist and identity theories.

In the second half of the paper, we'll begin by covering Alfred Tarski's landmark semantic conception of truth, which among other things, served to safeguard the notion of truth during the anti-metaphysical campaigns of the logical positivists. We'll then move to what is now the dominant approach to truth, which was inspired by Tarski's work, as well as that of Frank Ramsey and Gottlob Frege: deflationism. We'll consider two deflationary theories, known as disquotationalism and minimalism. We'll also take up one of the main challenges to deflationism: that deflationists cannot account for the value of truth. Next, we'll look at two approaches that have been highly impactful in recent years: pluralism and relativism about truth. To close our discussion, we'll consider a pair of cutting-edge approaches that promise to transform the ways in which we study the nature of truth (and happen to have been respectively defended by the convenors): experimental and cross-linguistic truth theory.

PAPER STRUCTURE

The paper's content will be delivered in the style of a *flipped classroom*, which involves both online and in-person interaction. This will ensure that students who participate in person, as well as those who participate virtually, are able to deeply engage with the content.

TIMETABLE

The paper will involve one in-person meeting per week (Tuesdays from 1 to 3). The time allotted for the other meeting will be covered by video lectures that are recorded by the convenors and posted on Moodle.

WORKSHOPS

Name	Time	Room
Workshop 01	TUE, 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM	K.G.06
Workshop 02	THU, 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM	S.1.01

Before the start of semester, please check in the [Online Timetable](#) for any changes to workshop times or venues.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students who successfully complete the course should be able to:

- Identify a range of key theories of the nature of truth
- Identify pressing objections that have been raised against these theories
- Strengthen their competence with the methods of analytic philosophy
- Develop their ability to precisely and creatively evaluate philosophical positions and arguments, both in conversation and in writing

ASSESSMENT

This paper is wholly internally assessed. Each piece of assessment has been designed to enable students to demonstrate their grasp of essential concepts and techniques at progressive stages of the paper and for teaching staff to assess the progress they are making and to adjust lecture plans if necessary.

ASSESSMENT COMPONENTS

The internal assessment/exam ratio (as stated in the University Calendar) is 100:0. There is no final exam.



Component Description	Due Date	Time	Percentage of overall mark	Submission Method	Compulsory
1. Participation			10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Class: In Lecture Online: Moodle Forum Discussion 	
2. Final essay plan	2 Oct 2020	5:00 PM	15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online: Submit through Moodle 	
3. Weekly Assignments			20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online: Submit through Moodle 	
4. Midterm Essay	21 Aug 2020	5:00 PM	25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online: Submit through Moodle 	
5. Final essay	16 Oct 2020	5:00 PM	30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online: Submit through Moodle 	
Assessment Total:			100		
Failing to complete a compulsory assessment component of a paper will result in an IC grade					

PARTICIPATION

Philosophy depends upon extending a dialogue between scholars that began over two thousand years ago and continues today. Because of this, an integral part of the learning experience in PHIL0304 is student participation.

Each student's participation mark is determined by two main factors: (i) the regularity with which they participate and (ii) the quality of their contributions (where a high-quality contribution is one that indicates careful thought about the readings, effort to understand the relevant material, effort to offer original suggestions, and/or attention to the comments that other students have offered). Note, then, that regular attendance is *not* sufficient for a high participation mark.

Students will receive a participation mark for each week, and the convenors will then average these marks at the end of the trimester. Since this paper will be run as a flipped classroom, students can earn participation marks by participating in person, virtually via Zoom during the in-person meetings, or in Moodle forums.

FINAL ESSAY PLAN

Prior to writing the final essay, students should submit a plan for this essay, which will include outlines of the arguments that they plan to develop therein. The convenors will offer constructive feedback on the essay plan that students can then use to improve the quality of their final essays.

WEEKLY ASSIGNMENTS

In these assignments, students will be asked to analyze passages from the required readings with the aim of determining (i) whether they contain arguments and (ii) if they do, the structure of those arguments. Being able to detect and outline arguments is one of the core skills that a philosophical education can help students to develop--and it is a skill that should prove to be valuable not only at University, but throughout students' lives. Accordingly, we expect that the weekly assignments will be useful for all students, no matter their background or career ambitions.

During the trimester, the convenors will develop 11 weekly assignments, and students will be expected to complete 8 of these. Students will have the option of completing 9 of them, and if they do, then the convenors will drop their lowest score on these assignments.

MIDTERM ESSAY

This essay will cover topics discussed during the first half of the paper, and the convenors will provide detailed instructions that students should follow when preparing it.

FINAL ESSAY

This essay will cover topics discussed during the second half of the paper, and the convenors will provide detailed instructions that



students should follow when preparing it.

HOW ACHIEVEMENT WILL BE MEASURED

As mentioned above, this paper is entirely internally assessed. Each piece of assessment has been designed to enable students to demonstrate their command of essential concepts and techniques at progressive stages of the paper and for teaching staff to assess the progress they are making and to adjust lecture plans if necessary.

Late submission policy: If a student submits an assessment item after the time at which it is due, then their mark on that assessment item will be reduced accordingly. Marks on submissions that are between 5 minutes and 24 hours late will be reduced by 10%; marks on submissions that are between 24 hours and 48 hours late will be reduced by 20%; and so on.

ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSION AND COLLECTION PROCEDURE

The submission procedures for assessments are given above. Scores and feedback on weekly assignments, essay plans, and essays will be returned within one week.

PROCESS FOR REQUESTING EXTENSIONS, SPECIAL CONSIDERATION AND FOR APPEALING MARKS

An extension of time in which to complete an assessment may be granted if:

(i) You are prevented from meeting the deadline by circumstances outside your control (such as illness, injury, bereavement, or trauma)

and

(ii) You apply for the extension within *three days* of the deadline for the relevant assessment item.

You should apply for an extension via an email to one of the convenors, and your application should be accompanied by documentary evidence (e.g. a note from a physician or a parent) which shows that conditions (i) and (ii) have been satisfied.

If an extension is granted, a designated, later deadline will be set.

TOPICS

- Introductory discussion
- Correspondence theories
- Coherence theories
- Pragmatist theories
- Primitivist theories
- Identity theories
- Tarski's theory
- Deflationary theories
- Deflationary theories and the value of truth
- Pluralist theories
- Relativist theories
- Experimental and cross-linguistic truth theory

SCHEDULE



Week		Week Beginning	Topics	Additional Information
Paper	University			
1	29	Mon 13 Jul	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introductory discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lynch, Preface and Introduction to the 2nd edition of <i>The Nature of Truth</i> 'What is truth? Philosopher discusses theories of truth,' on the YouTube channel <i>Attic Philosophy</i> (operated by Dr. Mark Jago)
2	30	Mon 20 Jul	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Correspondence theories 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alston, 'A realist conception of truth'
3	31	Mon 27 Jul	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coherence theories 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walker, 'The coherence theory'
4	32	Mon 3 Aug	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pragmatist theories 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peirce, 'How to make our ideas clear' James, 'Pragmatism's conception of truth'
5	33	Mon 10 Aug	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primitivist theories 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asay, 'Primitivism about truth'
6	34	Mon 17 Aug	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identity theories 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hornsby, 'Truth: the identity theory'
7	35	Mon 24 Aug	Teaching Recess Week	
8	36	Mon 31 Aug	Teaching Recess Week	
9	37	Mon 7 Sep	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tarski's theory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tarski, 'The semantic conception of truth and the foundations of semantics'
10	38	Mon 14 Sep	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deflationary theories 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quine, 'Truth' Horwich, 'A defense of minimalism'
11	39	Mon 21 Sep	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deflationary theories and the value of truth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lynch, 'Minimalism and the value of truth'
12	40	Mon 28 Sep	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pluralist theories 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lynch, 'Three questions for truth pluralism'
13	41	Mon 5 Oct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relativist theories 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kölbel, 'Faultless disagreement'
14	42	Mon 12 Oct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experimental and cross-linguistic truth theory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Barnard and Ulatowski, 'Truth, correspondence, and gender' Wyatt, 'Truth in English and elsewhere: an empirically-informed functionalism,' §§ 1-4 (pp. 169-185)
15	43	Mon 19 Oct	Study Week	
16	44	Mon 26 Oct	Exam Week	
17	45	Mon 2 Nov	Exam Week	

Schedule can be subject to change.

REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDED READINGS

**REQUIRED READINGS**

The schedule above provides a list of the required readings for the trimester. Students should familiarise themselves with each reading prior to attending the in-person meeting for the relevant week and should come to the meeting ready to discuss its contents in depth.

Recommendations for how to approach reading in a philosophy paper are available [here \(https://www.josephulatoski.net/information-for-students\)](https://www.josephulatoski.net/information-for-students).

RECOMMENDED READINGS

The convenors will curate a list of recommended readings and YouTube videos that will be available via Moodle. Students are certainly not required to consult these sources. However, if they become interested in particular topics that we take up, these sources will be useful tools in their continued thought about those topics.

ONLINE SUPPORT

Should a student have difficulty accessing sources via Moodle, they should feel free to email one of the convenors. However, if the matter is related to a technical problem with Moodle, then it is best to contact the University's IT Help Desk at 07 838 4008.

WORKLOAD

Students should expect to spend an average of 10 hours per week on this paper, including class time.

LINKAGES TO OTHER PAPERS

Philosophy is the crucible from which all other disciplines have arisen, and truth is one of the most enduring interests of both philosophers and non-philosophers. Accordingly, this paper links with every other paper that is offered at the University.

PREREQUISITE(S)

Prerequisite papers: Students must have completed at least one philosophy paper at the 100 or 200 level.

RESTRICTION(S)

Restricted papers: PHIL350

PAPER EVALUATION

Students should feel free to email the convenors with feedback about the paper at any stage of the course.

UNIVERSITY REGULATIONS

Resources provided to students by the University are subject to copyright protection under the Copyright Act 1994. If you use, sell or share these resources without permission of the copyright holder, you may be subject to legal proceedings, or disciplinary action by the University. In particular, students are advised that uploading course materials and assignments to websites, whether or not any payment is received by the student, OR using such websites as an aid to completing assignments, whether or not any payment is made by the student, will result in disciplinary action which can lead to papers being disallowed, or the student's exclusion from the University.

Your attention is drawn to the following regulations and policies, which are published in the University Calendar:

- [Assessment Regulations 2016 \(http://calendar.waikato.ac.nz/assessment/assessment.html\)](http://calendar.waikato.ac.nz/assessment/assessment.html)
- [Change of Enrolment Regulations 2012 \(http://calendar.waikato.ac.nz/admission/changeofenrolment.html\)](http://calendar.waikato.ac.nz/admission/changeofenrolment.html)
- [Computer Systems Regulations 2005 \(http://calendar.waikato.ac.nz/policies/computersystems.html\)](http://calendar.waikato.ac.nz/policies/computersystems.html)
- [Policy on the Use of Maori for Assessment \(http://calendar.waikato.ac.nz/assessment/useofmaori.html\)](http://calendar.waikato.ac.nz/assessment/useofmaori.html)
- [Ethical Conduct in Human Research and Related Activities Regulations 2008 \(http://calendar.waikato.ac.nz/assessment/ethicalConduct.html\)](http://calendar.waikato.ac.nz/assessment/ethicalConduct.html)
- [Student Research Regulations 2008 \(http://calendar.waikato.ac.nz/assessment/studentresearch.html\)](http://calendar.waikato.ac.nz/assessment/studentresearch.html)
- [Code of Student Conduct \(https://www.waikato.ac.nz/official-info/index/docs/code-of-student-conduct\)](https://www.waikato.ac.nz/official-info/index/docs/code-of-student-conduct)

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Me tika. Me rite. Me pono.

The University of Waikato is committed to excellence, respect, and honesty in scholarship and to ethical professional conduct. Academic integrity is at the core of this commitment and requires all members of the University community (students, academic and general staff) to uphold academic integrity as a personal, academic, and professional responsibility.

Mā te Tangata! Mō te Tangata!



Plagiarism

Plagiarism means presenting as one's own work the work of another, and includes the copying or paraphrasing of another person's work in an assessment item without acknowledging it as the other person's work through full and accurate referencing; it applies to assessment (as defined in the Assessment Regulations presented through a written, spoken, electronic, broadcasting, visual, performance or other medium. The Student Discipline Regulations are found in the online [Calendar \(http://calendar.waikato.ac.nz/policies/discipline.html\)](http://calendar.waikato.ac.nz/policies/discipline.html) and further information at the [Student Discipline \(http://www.waikato.ac.nz/sasd/misconduct/\)](http://www.waikato.ac.nz/sasd/misconduct/) website. The [Library \(http://www.waikato.ac.nz/library/\)](http://www.waikato.ac.nz/library/) and [Student Learning \(http://www.waikato.ac.nz/students/student-learning/\)](http://www.waikato.ac.nz/students/student-learning/) are valuable resources to assist you with your studies at the University. There is also a [Moodle-based course \(https://elearn.waikato.ac.nz/course/view.php?id=38058\)](https://elearn.waikato.ac.nz/course/view.php?id=38058) on Academic Integrity, which is highly recommended.

The student is encouraged to adopt **any** reference style with which they may be familiar, such as APA, Chicago Style, or Harvard, but I do not necessarily expect the student to know of any reference style. I, therefore, provide here an example that a student may follow in preparing their essays.

The expectation is that when the student cites work in their essay assignment, there will appear at the end of the essay a list of references entitled "References." I will now provide example citations and a model reference list.

CITATIONS

When you are citing a text generally, cite references in the text by name and year in parentheses. Some examples:

- Negotiation research spans many disciplines (Thompson 1990).
- This result was later contradicted by Becker and Seligman (1996).
- This effect has been widely studied (Abbott 1991; Barakat et al. 1995; Kelso and Smith 1998; Medvec et al. 1999).

When you are citing a direct quotation, cite references in the text by name and year, plus page number(s) in parentheses. Some examples:

- "There are interdisciplinary means of negotiation (Thompson 1990, 165).
- "Two-thirds of the results contradicted other studies," according to Becker and Seligman (1996, 50).

REFERENCE LIST

The list of references should only include works that are cited in the text and that have been published or accepted for publication. Personal communications and unpublished works should only be mentioned in the text. Do not use footnotes or endnotes as a substitute for a reference list. Reference list entries should be alphabetized by the last names of the first author of each work.

- **Journal article:** Harris, M., Karper, E., Stacks, G., Hoffman, D., DeNiro, R., Cruz, P., et al. (2001). Writing labs and the Hollywood connection. *Journal of Film Writing*, 44(3), 213–245.
- **Article by DOI:** Slifka, M. K., & Whitton, J. L. (2000) Clinical implications of dysregulated cytokine production. *Journal of Molecular Medicine*, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s001090000086>
- **Book:** Calfee, R. C., & Valencia, R. R. (1991). APA guide to preparing manuscripts for journal publication. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- **Book chapter:** O'Neil, J. M., & Egan, J. (1992). Men's and women's gender role journeys: Metaphor for healing, transition, and transformation. In B. R. Wainrib (Ed.), *Gender issues across the life cycle* (pp. 107–123). New York: Springer.
- **Online document:** Abou-Allaban, Y., Dell, M. L., Greenberg, W., Lomax, J., Peteet, J., Torres, M., & Cowell, V. (2006). Religious/spiritual commitments and psychiatric practice. Resource document. *American Psychiatric Association*. http://www.psych.org/edu/other_res/lib_archives/archives/200604.pdf. Accessed 25 June 2017.

STUDENT SUPPORT

We provide a range of student support services for both our [Hamilton \(https://www.waikato.ac.nz/student-life/student-services\)](https://www.waikato.ac.nz/student-life/student-services) and [Tauranga \(https://uwt.waikato.ac.nz/student-links/learner-support/\)](https://uwt.waikato.ac.nz/student-links/learner-support/) based students. Service providers include [Accessibility Services \(https://www.waikato.ac.nz/students/accessibility-services/\)](https://www.waikato.ac.nz/students/accessibility-services/) staff, who are committed to supporting students with impairments in order for them to be successful in their studies, and the [Student Learning \(https://www.waikato.ac.nz/teaching-and-learning/student-learning\)](https://www.waikato.ac.nz/teaching-and-learning/student-learning) team, who help students acquire the skills, knowledge and attributes they need to be successful, independent, and self-directed learners.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

In the event of the continuous sounding of sirens or ringing of alarms, all occupants of the building must evacuate in an orderly and timely manner by the nearest exit to an area away from the building and clear of the roadway. They should not attempt to carry cumbersome equipment and personal belongings. The building cannot be re-entered until the all clear is signalled by the Fire Service or Building Warden. Lifts must not be used during an evacuation.



If the siren or alarm bells ring continuously, evacuate the building immediately or follow the voice activated instructions.

Sitting at your computer for long periods has the potential to impact on your physical wellbeing. Careful attention should be paid to seating and the height of your desk so that your feet are able to sit flat on the floor and your elbows, hips and knees are at right angles.

It is suggested that regular breaks are taken and activities are alternated to avoid staying in one position for too long.

CLASS REPRESENTATION

During the first week of the paper you will be given an opportunity to elect at least one fellow student as your Class Representative.

A Class Representative is a student who represents the views of his or her class on academic matters to the lecturer, School and/or Division. The types of issues a Class Rep would usually raise are things that impact on the quality of education and the ability of class members to study effectively, such as assessment, access to paper resources, the quality of tutorials, papers, materials and teaching facilities.

Further information can be found at the [Class Rep Website \(https://www.waikato.ac.nz/students/class-representatives/\)](https://www.waikato.ac.nz/students/class-representatives/).

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES

The [Student Complaints Procedures Website \(http://calendar.waikato.ac.nz/policies/studentcomplaints.html\)](http://calendar.waikato.ac.nz/policies/studentcomplaints.html) provides details of the