

# 20<sup>th</sup>-Century Philosophy (Day 1 syllabus)

Philosophy 315  
Spring 2022, Course #9584, 3 credits  
Room HUM 109  
MW 11:40am-1:00pm

Prof. Ron McClamrock (HUM 314)  
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Zoom: [albany.zoom.us/my/rmclamrock](https://albany.zoom.us/j/9123456789)  
OHs: Mon 1:30-2:30 & Fri 11-12, HUM 314

**NOTE ON HEALTH & SAFETY:** As of late January, this is scheduled as an in-person course, and can't be taken online. Things could change. In the short run, I'll plan to make the lecture parts of this course available as overheads and audio or video for those who can't or shouldn't come to class. We'll adjust as we go; so the method of delivery for classes and exams/quizzes may need to be changed, Stay tuned.

## Readings/Materials:

**E-Reserves:** Readings will be available on the Blackboard e-reserves page as PDF files.

**Books:** None ordered at this time; addition(s) possible

## Requirements:

**Papers:** Topics for quite short (1000 words) papers will be handed out three times during the semester, and will be due about a week after being assigned. You must do two of these, including the first one. (See the *Addenda* page for the rules on late papers.) Each short paper is worth 20% of the final course grade.

**Exams:** There will be three 80-minute in class closed-book tests, spaced relatively equally throughout the semester. Tests are mostly short-answer format, and will be non-comprehensive. (See the *Addenda* page for the rules on makeup exams.) Your two best exam scores are each worth 20% of the final course grade

**Participation, etc.:** Class participation, quizzes, "thoughts of the week", and maybe other stuff will total 20% of your course grade. This will include the following, and perhaps more: Every several classes, I will likely hold a "Chat Day", in which we devote a class to a discussion and Q&A session. You'll be expected to come prepared and to participate. There will also be an online discussion board for the course (linked from the course web page); students will regularly be asked to post to the online discussion as part of the participation grade. And I may occasionally ask for other small bits of work (e.g., a pop quiz in class, a paragraph on some very particular question, a group activity in class, etc.). Note that if you don't attend class, that's clearly non-participation, and will be graded accordingly.

**Summary:** Grades will be 20% for each of two short papers, 20% for each of your two best exam grades, and 20% for class (and online) participation/etc.

**Course topic outline:** (Very loose, incomplete, and tentative; expect additions/changes)

### Part I: Early Themes: (wks 1-7)

- Intro: Logic, Science, and the 20<sup>th</sup> Century
- Beginning Analytic philosophy -- Logic & Descriptions: Russell, "On Denoting" and "Descriptions", and Frege, "On Sense and Reference"
- Epistemic themes: Acquaintance, descriptions, foundations: Russell, from *Logical Atomism* and *Basic Problems of Philosophy*
- Phenomenology's parallels and divergences: Husserl, from *The idea of Phenomenology*
- Positivism and verificationism: Schlick, "The Turning Point in Philosophy", and Ayer, from *Language, Truth, and Logic*

### Part II: Transitions from analyticity (wks 8-12)

- Quine and anti-positivism: Quine, "Two Dogmas of Empiricism"
- Heidegger, Sartre and existential phenomenology: Heidegger, from *Being and Time*, and Sartre, from "Being and Nothingness"
- Wittgenstein, behavior, and meaning as use: Wittgenstein, from *Philosophical Investigations*, and Ryle, from *The Concept of Mind*

### Part III: Toward the present (wks 13-14)

- Descriptions and reference revisited: Donnellan, "Reference and Descriptions", Kripke, from *Naming and Necessity*, and Putnam, from *The Meaning of Meaning*
- Language and mind: Burge, "Philosophy of Language and Mind, 1950-1990"

# APHI 315 Syllabus Addenda (Spring 2022 – McClamrock)

## Paper Submission Guidelines:

- All papers must be submitted as “docx” format documents attached to a piece of e-mail addressed to me at [rmccclamrock@albany.edu](mailto:rmccclamrock@albany.edu). Please, do not send PDFs, and do not send links to cloud storage.
- Please format papers simply, single-spaced, with your name, the assignment and question number, and any title you might give to the paper at the top of the first page (don’t use a separate title page). The text font should be 12pt Times-Roman or similar; the left margin should be 1” and the right margin 2.5”.
- Name the file Q1A1\_Lastname\_Firstname\_PHI315.docx, substituting your name, and the assignment and question numbers in place of “Q1” and “A1”. So, e.g., the file for assignment #2 written on question 3 from undergrad student Eric Cartman should be named Q3A2\_Cartman\_Eric\_PHI315.docx. The subject line of the email should likewise be Q3A2\_Cartman\_Eric\_PHI315. The message body should not be left empty; include a line saying “Here is Eric Cartman’s assignment #2 on question #3 for PHI 315” (substituting as above with your own details). You may also include a joke in the message body. No extra credit, but good brownie points.
- When you send papers to me, please cc: yourself to make sure everything worked OK

## Missed Exams:

Makeup exams & quizzes are given only under conditions the conditions specified by UAAlbany: see the rules for medical excuse and religious practice excuse rules at [https://www.albany.edu/health\\_center/medicalexcuse.shtml](https://www.albany.edu/health_center/medicalexcuse.shtml) and <https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/laws/EDN/224-A> for details. To be given a makeup exam/quiz in this course, you must give me a written (e-mail) request for a makeup exam along with copies of documentation showing it was impossible for you to take the scheduled exam. This request must be given to me no more than 24 hours after the end of the period for which your absence is to excused. Be forewarned that even if you do, I reserve the right to judge that the excuse is inadequate, in which case I may decline to give the makeup.

## Late papers:

Late papers are marked down by one grade notch (e.g. B to B- or B- to C+) for every hour or portion thereof I receive them after the due date and time. The only exception is the one noted under “Missed exams”: If there are such extreme circumstances, and a paper is due during an excused absence, you may get an extension until the first day not covered by the excused absence. In such a case, the paper is due on that day, at the same time of day it was originally due.

## In-class technology use ban:

Use of laptops, phones, tablets, and other such technology during class is not allowed. Repeated violation of this rule will result in a grade reduction.

## Grade Calculation Rules:

1. Every graded piece of work (exam, paper, whatever) is given a letter grade. These letter grades range from A+ (the best) to F (the worst).
2. Each of these letter grades has a numerical equivalent. Here are the possible letter grades and numerical equivalents:

A+ = 15	C- = 7
A = 14	D+ = 6
A- = 13	D = 5
B+ = 12	D- = 4
B = 11	E+ = 3
B- = 10	E = 2
C+ = 9	E- = 1
C = 8	F = 0

“Slash” grades like “A-/B+” are equivalent to the midpoint between the two grades; e.g., a grade of A-/B+ is calculated as a 12.5.

3. Once this assignment of letter grades is made for, say, a given exam, nothing else matters. In calculating your final grade, all that matters is (the numerical equivalents of) your various letter grades for the various graded pieces of work.
4. I use the numerical equivalents of the letter grades to calculate a composite numerical grade using whatever procedure I've specified for the particular class.
5. I round the composite numerical grade to the nearest integer (.5 and above go up, below go down).
6. I convert back to letter grades using the chart above. You get the letter grade determined by the chart, except if (i) you got an A+, in which case your official grade is an A (the University doesn't use A+), or (ii) you got lower than a D-, in which case your official grade is E.

## Disabilities and accommodation:

Reasonable accommodations will be provided for students with documented physical, sensory, systemic, medical, cognitive, learning and mental health (psychiatric) disabilities. Contact the *Disability Access and Inclusion Student Services* (DAISS) office (518-442-5490; [daiss@albany.edu](mailto:daiss@albany.edu); <https://www.albany.edu/disability/>) for more information.

## On getting a grade of “I”:

The grade of “I” (Incomplete) will be given only if you have an excused absence of the sort described under “Missed Exams” prevents you from either taking the last of the exams or turning in the last of the papers. In addition to following the procedures describe under “Missed Exams”, you must also ask me in writing (email is best) to assign you an “I” for the course.

## Cheating:

Cheating, including but not confined to plagiarizing (i.e. using the words or content of others as your own), will result in being *failed for the course* and reported to the Dean’s office.