

**Faculty of Arts  
Department of Philosophy**

**PH 8122: Kantian Approaches to Self-Consciousness  
Fall 2017  
Wed 4:00pm-7:00pm, JOR 440**

**Instructor:** Dr. Thomas Land

**Office Location:** JOR 422

**Office Hours:** Mon 1:30-2:30, Tue 2:00-3:00 and by appointment

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**Course Description**

The main topic to be explored in this seminar is the idea, first articulated by Kant, that some form of self-consciousness is essential to what it is to be a subject of thought and action – that is (in this context), to what it is to possess the ability to reason, to represent an objective world, and to act intentionally and be subject to moral norms. This idea had a considerable impact historically, as it drove the development of German Idealism as well as various reactions to it throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries (including, for instance, Heidegger), and it is enjoying something of a renaissance in current analytic philosophy of mind and action.

Central to this idea is the thought that the way in which we know what we think and do is special in some respects – different from the way in which we know the world around us and also, perhaps, from the way in which we know other aspects of ourselves (e.g. our feelings or bodily states). For this reason, we will begin with the more general topic of self-knowledge: What is it? What is distinctive about it? What varieties (if any) does it take? This will set us up for considering the Kantian claim that we know our own thoughts and actions in a special way, namely (as Kant put it) through ‘spontaneity’; as well as the related claim that spontaneity is connected to a special kind of self-consciousness.

In approaching this idea, we will partly consider contemporary philosophers and partly look to Kant as well as some of his recent commentators. In addition to Kant, authors to be discussed include Matthew Boyle, Patricia Kitcher, Béatrice Longuenesse, Richard Moran, Sebastian Rödl, Sidney Shoemaker and, possibly, Jean-Paul Sartre. Students can expect to acquire familiarity with some of the analytic literature on self-knowledge and first-person reference; with selected parts of Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason*; and with some exciting recent literature seeking to introduce ideas deriving from Kant and German Idealism into contemporary philosophy. Prior knowledge of Kant is helpful, but not required.

**Course Format**

This course will be a combination of lecture and discussion. Students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the material and to participate actively in class discussion.

**Texts**

There are two required books for this course, which are available for purchase at the Ryerson Campus Store:

Richard Moran, *Authority and Estrangement: An Essay on Self-Knowledge*, Princeton: Princeton UP, 2001

Jay Rosenberg, *Accessing Kant*, Oxford: Oxford UP, 2005

In addition, students are encouraged to purchase the following edition of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, which is also available at the Ryerson Campus Store.

Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, transl. Paul Guyer and Allen Wood, New York: Cambridge UP, 1998

All other readings will be posted on the D2L site for this course. Students are expected to bring the readings to class each week, in either paper or electronic form.

## Evaluation

There are four requirements for this course, which are as follows:

<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Due Date</i>	<i>Weight</i>
Weekly Seminar Prep	Wednesdays at noon	See below
Seminar Presentation	N/A	10%
Midterm paper	October 23 at 5:00pm	30%
Final Paper	December 13 at 5:00pm	60%

### *Weekly Seminar Prep*

A summary of one of the readings for that week, to be submitted *in advance of the class meeting*. Max. length 300 words (= one double-spaced page). You **must** hand in 8 seminar preps. If you hand in 4 or fewer, then you lose a full grade point on your final grade: e.g., from A to B. If you hand in 5-7, then you lose 1/3 grade point: e.g., from A to A-. Late submissions will not be counted, and you may only hand in ONE seminar prep per week. I do not provide marks or comments on them. Their purpose is to show me that you prepared for the seminar by carefully studying one of the readings. For the week you are doing a presentation (see below), submit your presentation handout as your seminar prep.

### *Presentation*

You must do one presentation in class, in which you summarize one of the readings for that week. Your presentation should be a *slightly* more detailed version of your seminar prep. It needs to (i) clearly state the main thesis of the reading and explain what it says (and doesn't say); (ii) give the main argument for the thesis; and (iii) raise at least one question or objection. Please prepare a handout, which covers the main points in summary form. Please do not use slides. Aim for a 10 min. presentation (with 15 mins. the absolute maximum). Submit your presentation handout as your weekly seminar prep for that week.

### *Midterm Paper*

1200-1600 words, on a topic of your choosing (I will also suggest some topics). The function of this assignment is for you to start thinking about a topic for the final course paper. In this assignment you do not need to argue for a claim (though you may). You should simply take a first crack at a question that interests you. Your paper should do three things: (i) include an exegetical component; that is, a detailed summary of one or more of the readings; (ii) articulate one or more questions or objections; (iii) point the way forward; that is, explain what one would need to do in order to answer your question(s) or respond to your objection.

### *Final Paper*

You need to write a final paper on a topic relating to the course content. Length: 3000-3500 words. The recommended (but not mandatory) route is to expand and revise your midterm paper. If you choose a different topic, you must get it approved by me no later than November 24.

### **Course Schedule (preliminary)**

<b>Week</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Reading</b>
1	Sep 6	<b><i>Introduction</i></b>
2	Sep 13	<b><i>Rationality and Self-Blindness</i></b> <u>Required:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sidney Shoemaker, “Self-Reference and Self-Awareness”</li><li>• Sidney Shoemaker, “On Knowing One’s Own Mind.”</li></ul> <u>Recommended:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Richard Moran, <i>Authority and Estrangement</i>, Chp. 1</li></ul> <i>Presentation: Corey</i>
3	Sep 20	<b><i>Epistemic Agency and the Transparency of Belief</i></b> <u>Required:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Richard Moran, <i>Authority and Estrangement</i>, Chp. 2</li><li>• Richard Moran, <i>Authority and Estrangement</i>, Chp. 4</li></ul> <u>Recommended:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Richard Moran, <i>Authority and Estrangement</i>, Chp. 3</li></ul> <i>Presentation: Sam</i>
4	Sep 27	<b><i>Epistemic Agency and the Transparency of Belief cont’d</i></b> <u>Required:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Matthew Boyle, “Two Kinds of Self-Knowledge”</li><li>• Matthew Boyle, “‘Making Up Your Mind’ and the Activity of Reason”</li></ul> <u>Recommended:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Matthew Boyle, “‘Active Belief”</li></ul> <i>Presentation: Cailin</i>
5	Oct 4	<b><i>Kant: Introduction</i></b> <u>Required:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Kant, <i>Critique of Pure Reason</i><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- A-Preface (Avii-Axxii)</li><li>- B-Introduction (B1-B29)</li><li>- Transcendental Aesthetic, §1 (A19/B33-A22/B36)</li><li>- Introduction to the Transcendental Logic, sections I, II, and IV (A50/B74-A57/B82 and A62/B87A64/B88)</li></ul></li></ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Transcendental Analytic up to the end of §10 (A64/B89-A83/B109)</li> <li>• Jay Rosenberg, <i>Accessing Kant</i>, Chp. 1-2</li> </ul> <p><u>Recommended:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jay Rosenberg, <i>Accessing Kant</i>, Chp. 4</li> </ul> <p><i>Presentation: Hedieh</i></p>
<b>Reading Week – no class on Oct 11</b>		
6	Oct 18	<p><b><i>Kant: The Transcendental Deduction</i></b></p> <p><u>Required:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kant, <i>Critique of Pure Reason</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- §14 (A92/B124-B129)</li> <li>- B-Deduction, §§15-20 (B129-43)</li> <li>- A-Deduction, A98-A114</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Jay Rosenberg, <i>Accessing Kant</i>, Chp.5</li> </ul> <p><u>Recommended:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kant, <i>Critique of Pure Reason</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A-Deduction, A115-30</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><i>Presentation: Mitchell</i></p>
7	Oct 25	<p><b><i>Kitcher on Kant on Apperception and Spontaneity</i></b></p> <p><u>Required:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Patricia Kitcher, <i>Kant's Thinker</i>, Chp. 9</li> </ul> <p><u>Recommended:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jay Rosenberg, <i>Accessing Kant</i>, Chp. 5</li> </ul> <p><i>Presentation: Zack</i></p>
8	Nov 1	<p><b><i>Engstrom on Kant on Apperception and Spontaneity</i></b></p> <p><u>Required:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stephen Engstrom, “Unity of Apperception”</li> <li>• Stephen Engstrom, “Self-Consciousness and the Unity of Knowledge”</li> </ul> <p><u>Recommended:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stephen Engstrom, “Understanding and Sensibility”</li> </ul> <p><i>Presentation: Jordan</i></p>
9	Nov 8	<p><b><i>Spontaneity and the First Person</i></b></p> <p><u>Required:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sebastian Rödl, “The Single Act of Combination”</li> <li>• Sebastian Rödl, <i>Self-Consciousness</i>, pp. 1-13 and 65-104.</li> </ul>

		<u>Recommended:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Patricia Kitcher, <i>Kant's Thinker</i>, pp. 253-268, 281-284.</li> </ul> <p><i>Presentation: Christina</i></p>
10	Nov 15	<p><b><i>The Objection from Over-Intellectualizing</i></b></p> <u>Required:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hilary Kornblith, <i>On Reflection</i>, pp. 45-72 and 85-106</li> </ul> <u>Recommended:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brie Gertler, "Self-Knowledge and Rational Agency: A Defense of Empiricism"</li> </ul> <p><i>Presentation: Martin</i></p>
11	Nov 22	<p><b><i>Transparency Revisited</i></b></p> <u>Required:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alex Byrne, "Transparency, Belief, Intention."</li> <li>Matthew Boyle, "Transparency and Reflection"</li> </ul> <u>Recommended:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brie Gertler, "Self-Knowledge and the Transparency of Belief"</li> <li>Richard Moran, "Self-Knowledge, 'Transparency', and the Forms of Activity"</li> </ul>
12	Nov 29	TBD

### Course Website

This course has a website on D2L Brightspace, which you can access through <http://my.ryerson.ca>. The website has all course readings other than the required books, and it will be used for posting announcements as well as to submit assignments. Please note that the authoritative version of the class schedule will be the one on the Brightspace page, and if you miss class you should check it for updates.<sup>[1]</sup>

### Email Policy

In accordance with Ryerson University policy, I will only respond to emails that come from an [@ryerson.ca](mailto:my.ryerson.ca) account.

### Course Policies

#### Late Penalty

- Assignments submitted late without sufficient justification will be penalized at the rate of 10% per day, including weekends.

#### Alternate Arrangements

- Students shall inform the instructor, in advance, when they will miss a deadline for (1) medical

reasons; (2) compassionate reasons; or (3) reasons covered under Ryerson's policy concerning accommodation of student religious, aboriginal, and spiritual observance. When circumstances do not permit informing the instructor in advance (e.g. in an emergency), the student must inform the instructor as soon as possible. Students who fail to abide by this requirement will be assigned a late penalty. Alternate arrangements may include the setting of a make-up test or assignment; transferring the weight of a missed test or assignment to another test or assignment, or extending a deadline. Ryerson's policy concerning alternate arrangements for medical and compassionate reasons may be found at [www.ryerson.ca/senate/policies/pol134.pdf](http://www.ryerson.ca/senate/policies/pol134.pdf). Ryerson's policy concerning accommodation of student religious, aboriginal, and spiritual observance may be found at [www.ryerson.ca/senate/policies/pol150.pdf](http://www.ryerson.ca/senate/policies/pol150.pdf).

- (1) *Medical Considerations*: In order for alternate arrangements to be made on medical grounds, the student must supply the instructor with a *Ryerson Medical Certificate*, or a letter on letterhead from a physician with the student declaration portion of the Ryerson Medical Certificate attached. The *Ryerson Medical Certificate* may be found at [www.ryerson.ca/senate/forms/medical.pdf](http://www.ryerson.ca/senate/forms/medical.pdf).
  - (2) *Compassionate Considerations*: In order for alternate arrangements to be made on compassionate grounds, the student must supply the instructor with documentation supporting the claim, where possible.
  - (3) *Religious, Aboriginal, and Spiritual Observance*: Students are strongly encouraged to notify instructors of an observance accommodation issue within the first two weeks of classes. Requests for accommodation of observance can be made informally or formally to the instructor. Informal requests will be made verbally through private discussion or through an email between the student and instructor. For formal requests, student must submit a clear explanation of the observance and requested accommodation along with a copy of the Accommodation of Student Religious, Aboriginal and Spiritual Observance form, which may be found at [www.ryerson.ca/senate/forms/reobservforminstr.pdf](http://www.ryerson.ca/senate/forms/reobservforminstr.pdf).
- Alternate arrangements will *only* be made on the basis of circumstances that are both (1) legitimate and (2) unforeseeable. Some examples of circumstances that typically fail to meet one or both of these conditions are: extra-curricular activities, employment obligations, multiple deadlines, and computer malfunctions.

#### Academic Misconduct

- For detailed information concerning academic misconduct and the relevant penalties, see Ryerson University's *Student Code of Academic Conduct* at [www.ryerson.ca/senate/policies/pol60.pdf](http://www.ryerson.ca/senate/policies/pol60.pdf).
- Students should be aware that the instructor reserves the right to conduct an oral examination on the contents of any submitted assignment.