

BASED AND BASELESS TRUTHS

PHIL450/552 (AO1)

This seminar focuses on a novel distinction between truths “based” in the circumstances and “baseless” truths. The first part contrasts it with more familiar distinctions from semantics (analytic/synthetic), epistemology (apriori/aposteriori), and metaphysics (necessary/contingent). The second part develops its applications to logic, social metaphysics, and physicalism.

PREREQUISITES PHIL203 + 3 units of philosophy, or permission.

INSTRUCTOR Professor Mike Raven (✉ raven@uvic.ca • raven.site)
OFFICE HOURS • Wednesdays 1:00-3:00^{PM} in CLE B323 or weekdays by appointment.

INSTRUCTION On campus: Wednesdays 3:30-6:20^{PM} in CLE D275.

LMS bright.uvic.ca/d2l/home/147689 (Consult for updates and current course documents.)

TEXTS NONE (all readings provided on [LMS](#))

EVALUATION

RUBRIC Grades ([UVic's scale](#)) you earn are determined by the philosophical craftsmanship of your work for this course according to the **RUBRIC**: raven.site/teaching/Rubric.pdf

WORK

- **INTEGRITY MATTERS** Short online course on academic integrity.
- **ESSAY** [1/2] On an approved topic (see **SCHEDULE** for due date).
- **PROBLEM SETS** [1/4] Sporadic problem sets on various topics.
- **ENGAGEMENT** [1/4] In-class, office hours, or forum: raven.site/teaching/Engagement.pdf

A failing **N** grade will be earned if any essential work (•) is not completed.

GRACE POINTS A **grace point** delays the due date of an essential work (•) by 1 day. 5 are allotted and may be used in any combination without justification, but cannot be reused, traded, or earned. To use # grace points, write ‘# grace points’ at the beginning of your submission.

LATENESS Work submitted after a due date will *not* be accepted (see **ACCESSIBILITY** for exceptions).

POLICIES

CONDUCT Enrolling binds you to a social contract with your instructor and classmates:

- **Be prepared.** Consult course documents. Read assigned text before class.
- **Be engaged.** Attend class. Use office hours and tutorials.
- **Be respectful.** Don't bully or distract others.
- **Be professional.** Check sources first. Follow etiquette. Allow ≥1 day for replies.
- **Demonstrate academic integrity:** www.uvic.ca/current-students/home/academics/academic-integrity/

REQUESTS Accessibility arrangements must be made with **CAL** (see **RESOURCES**). Other requests (extra credit, extensions, alternate/makeup work) will *not* be considered, except by for extraordinary cases (instructor's discretion; e.g. *not* technical/wifi issues) and when the request (and documents, if any are required) is received within 3 days of the due date.

GUESTS Guests permitted only with instructor's prior consent.

RESOURCES

INDIGENOUS SUPPORT We acknowledge and respect the ɫəkʷəŋən peoples on whose traditional territory the university stands and the Songhees, Esquimalt and W̱SANEĆ peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day. For more information and support: www.uvic.ca/services/indigenous/

ACCESSIBILITY For accessibility support, consult the Centre for Accessible Learning (**CAL**): www.uvic.ca/services/cal/

WELLNESS Take care of your mental and physical well-being! If your symptoms are related to this course, then please speak with the instructor. For cost-free, confidential support: www.uvic.ca/student-wellness/

LEARN ANYWHERE For student and academic support services: onlineacademiccommunity.uvic.ca/LearnAnywhere/

COPYRIGHT Course content/materials are protected by copyright law: www.uvic.ca/library/research-teaching/copyright

SCHEDULE

Consult www.uvic.ca/calendar/dates/ for important dates (including last add/drop dates).
 Required texts (•) must be read *before* each class (including SEP 8); optional texts (○) are also encouraged.
 Dates are tentative; consult [LMS](#) for updates.

INTRO

- SEP 8
- [Hume, *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, section 4](#) (paragraphs 1-2)
 - [Kant, *Prolegomena to any Future Metaphysic*, preamble](#)
 - Frege, *The Foundations of Arithmetic*, sections 1-4
 - Ayer, *Language, Truth, and Logic*, chapter 4

ANALYTIC, APRIORI, NECESSARY

- SEP 15
- [Carroll, "What the Tortoise said to Achilles"](#)
 - [Quine, "Carnap and Logical Truth", selections 1-6](#)
 - [Quine, "Two Dogmas of Empiricism"](#)
 - Quine, "Truth by Convention"
 - [Russell, "The Analytic/Synthetic Distinction"](#)
 - [Russell, "Quine on the Analytic/Synthetic Distinction"](#)
- SEP 22
- Kripke, *Naming and Necessity*, 34-58, 97-109
 - Burgess, "Kripke Models"
 - Burgess, "Kripke on Modality"
 - Burgess, "Modal Logic in the Modal Sense of Modality"
- SEP 26
- ✦ **DUE: INTEGRITY MATTERS**
- SEP 29
- [Boghossian, "Analyticity Reconsidered"](#)
- OCT 6
- [Russell, "Analyticity in Externalist Languages"](#)
 - [Russell, "Metaphysical Analyticity and the Epistemology of Logic"](#)
- OCT 13
- Williamson, "How Deep is the Distinction between A Priori and A Posteriori Knowledge?"
 - Boghossian, "Do We Have Reason to Doubt the Importance of the Distinction between A Priori and A Posteriori Knowledge?"
 - Williamson, "Rely to Boghossian on the Distinction between the A Priori and the A Posteriori"
 - Boghossian, "Williamson on the Distinction between the A Priori and the A Posteriori Once Again"
- OCT 20
- [Fine, "Essence and Modality"](#)
 - Mackie, "Essentialism and Modality"

BASALITY

- OCT 27
- Fine, "Necessity and Non-existence"
- NOV 3
- Raven, "The Bases of Truths"
- NOV 17
- McSweeney, "Logic"
 - [McSweeney, "Logical Realism and the Metaphysics of Logic"](#)
 - [Raven, "Is Logic Out of this World?"](#)
- NOV 22
- [Mason, "Against Social Kind Anti-Realism"](#)
 - [Raven, "A Puzzle for Social Essences"](#)
 - [Robertson Ishii & Atkins, "Essential vs. Accidental Properties"](#)
- DEC 1
- [Dasgupta, "The Possibility of Physicalism"](#)
 - Raven, "The Physical Basis"
- DEC 12
- ✦ **DUE: ESSAY**