

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF THE FRASER VALLEY

COURSE INFORMATION

DISCIPLINE/DEPARTMENT: Philosophy & Politics **IMPLEMENTATION DATE:** Jan. 2001

PHIL 325	Contemporary Philosophy: The Problem of Truth	Revised: _____
SUBJECT/NUMBER OF COURSE	DESCRIPTIVE TITLE	UCFV CREDITS
		3

CALENDAR DESCRIPTION: "The truth is out there." "Truth is stranger than fiction." "The truth will set you free." Clichés concerning the truth abound. However, in contemporary academic circles, these commonplace assertions are actively questioned. Hence it is not unusual to find philosophers who argue that the truth is nowhere, that the truth is fiction or that the idea of truth is a weapon of oppression. In this course we examine such radical positions as well as recent attempts made to redeem the concept of truth. Topics to be examined may include the relationship between language and truth, the debate over the nature of texts, and the status of truth as a socially determined concept.

RATIONALE: The course serves two important functions. 1) It acquaints the students with a primary theme of philosophy, one so pervasive that its influence is visible anywhere there is reflection on the state of the discipline. 2) It intersects with broad discussions carried out in other fields, such as the emphasis placed on text and interpretation in literary criticism and certain feminist positions concerned with undoing historical biases. In this respect, the course is relevant to the contemporary preoccupation with the nature of the academic curriculum and what it has to offer.

COURSE PREREQUISITES: PHIL 120 and six additional credits of Philosophy

COURSE CO-REQUISITES: None

HOURS PER TERM FOR EACH STUDENT	Lecture		hrs	Student Directed Learning		hrs
	Laboratory		hrs	Other - specify:		
	Seminar	45	hrs			
	Field Experience		hrs			
				TOTAL	45	HRS

MAXIMUM ENROLMENT: 28

Is transfer credit requested? **9** Yes : No

AUTHORIZATION SIGNATURES:	
Course Designer(s): <u>Glen Baier</u>	Chairperson: <u>Curriculum Committee (E. Davis)</u>
Department Head: <u>Jeffrey Morgan</u>	Dean: <u>J.D. Tunstall</u>
PAC: Approval in Principle _____ (Date)	PAC: Final Approval: <u>December 16, 1998</u> (Date)

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SYNONYMOUS COURSES:

(a) replaces _____ N/A _____
(course #)

(b) cannot take _____ N/A _____ for further credit
(course #)

SUPPLIES/MATERIALS:

TEXTBOOKS, REFERENCES, MATERIALS (List reading resources elsewhere)

Readings will vary from section to section, but will include a variety of contemporary works.

Allen, Barry (1993). Truth in Philosophy. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Alston, W. (1996). A Realist Conception of Truth. Cornell University Press.

Dews, Peter (1987). Logics of Disintegration: Post-Structuralist Thought and the Claims of Critical Theory. London: Verso.

Farrell, Frank B. (1996). Subjectivity, Realism and Postmodernism: The Recovery of the World in Recent Philosophy. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kirkham, Richard L. (1997). Theories of Truth: A Critical Introduction. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.

Macdonell, Diane (1986). Theories of Discourse: An Introduction. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To acquaint students with important thinkers and trends in contemporary philosophy.
2. To acquaint students with the principal strengths and weaknesses of major contemporary theories.
3. To allow students the opportunity to respond to contemporary ideas.
4. To enable students to see the sources of ideas and positions they encounter in other areas of academic study.
5. To give students an opportunity to engage in the critical analysis of influential texts.

STUDENT EVALUATION PROCESS:

The evaluation procedure will vary from section to section, but will always include a variety of assignments, including formal essays and projects, exams, journals, classroom participation and in-class work. A typical marking distribution would be 20% for exams, 60% for essays and/or formal assignments, 20% for seminars and in-class work.

METHODS:

Will vary by instructor and section. Typically, seminar methods will be employed. Students will often take a lead role in the discussion.

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COURSE CONTENT

Course content will vary from section to section, but will include examination of important or influential contemporary philosophers.

A typical course may include reference to the works of such individuals as Donald Davidson, Michael Dummett, Hilary Putnam, Nelson Goodman, Judith Butler, Mulia Kristeva, Jacques Derrida, Stanley Fish, Richard Rorty, Michel Foucault and Jean Baudrillard.