

# PHIL 4351/5351 — W. V. O. QUINE

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Office Wednesday, 12-2,  
Hours & by appointment

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***Free and open discussion is the life-blood of philosophy. Consequently, no student shall be discriminated against on the basis of race, gender, disability, place of national origin, sexual orientation, religious affiliation, political affiliation or any other similar factor. I expect all members of the class to be equally tolerant of differing perspectives and ideologies. Critique, evaluate and analyze the ideas put forward by me and others; do not demean or belittle them.***

W. V. O. Quine is one of the most important and provocative philosophers of the last hundred years. In this class, we will explore both what he calls the doctrinal and the conceptual side of contemporary empiricism with an eye toward understanding their relationship.

Because of the intellectual centrality of Quine's work, a close study of his ideas will provide the student not only with an appreciation of his work, but of the broader depth and importance of 20<sup>th</sup> C analytic philosophy.

**Course Objectives:** First and foremost the goal is to explore some new intellectual terrain. That's it. Why else would you take a course? But if you want specifics:

- To develop a critical understanding of Quine's seminal works in philosophy.
- To develop an ability to clearly express and defend not only your own opinions on these matters, but also the views and arguments of others, *particularly those with whom you disagree.*

## **Materials:**

Required

- Course Packet of readings, available on the course site.

Optional

- A good stiff cup of java!

## **Requirements and Expectations**

This course is an advanced philosophy course. Students will be expected to have academic skills commensurate with its level including: the ability to read complex primary source material, the ability to write clear, well-constructed critical essays, and the ability to engage in articulate and respectful discourse. In addition, I expect all students to be prepared and attentive in class. This means coming to class having done reading assignments and having thought about their significance, and while in class being an active listener and contributor. Although I will not take attendance, I do expect you to attend every class meeting. You are responsible for all material

and announcements made in class, whether you are present or not. No late assignments will be allowed without a University excuse.

PLEASE NOTE: If you have or suspect you have a physical, learning, or psychological disability and require accommodations, please contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services located in the Union Bldg East, room 106 (747-5148).

**Evaluation Undergraduate:**

- **Midterm exam (20% of total grade):** take home exam
- **Final exam (25% of total grade):** take home cumulative exam.
- **Short Expository Essay (15% of total grade):** 1,000 words
- **Rough Draft of Critical Essay (10%)**
- **Critical Essay (25%):** 2,500 words
- **Class Participation (5%)**

**Evaluation Graduate:**

- **Rough Draft of Short Essay (10%):**
- **Short Essay (25% of total grade):** 1,500 words
- **Rough Draft of Long Essay (15%)**
- **Critical Essay (45%):** 3,000 words
- **Class Participation (5%)**

The grading scale for this class is given below:

A	B	C	D	F
>89.5%	>79.5%	>69.5%	>59.5%	≤59.5%

## **Academic Integrity**

Academic integrity is a concern for everyone. By joining the UTEP community every student agrees to abide by the Scholastic Dishonesty Policy. Any student who commits an act of scholastic dishonesty is subject to discipline. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, and the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable to another person.

### **Cheating**

- Copying from the test paper of another student
- Communicating with another student during a test
- Giving or seeking aid from another student during a test
- Possession and/or use of unauthorized materials during tests (i.e. Crib notes, class notes, books, etc)
- Substituting for another person to take a test
- Falsifying research data, reports, academic work offered for credit

### **Plagiarism**

- Using someone's work in your assignments without the proper citations
- Submitting the same paper or assignment from a different course, without direct permission of instructors

### **Collusion**

- Unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing academic assignments

**Course Schedule:**

This is a tentative schedule of classes for the semester. It is a virtual certainty that we will not follow it exactly, so please make sure you know what material we are covering – particularly if you happen to miss class. \* Suggested, material.

Date	Topic	Readings
Section 1	Background	Carnap, Empiricism, Semantics and Ontology Ayer, Language, Truth and Logic, Ch. 1-3 *Descartes, Meditation 1 *Hume, Of Human Understanding, Book 1
Section 2	Analytic/Synthetic Distinction	Quine, Truth by Convention Quine, Two Dogmas of Empiricism Grice and Strawson, In Defense of a Dogma Putnam, The Analytic and the Synthetic *Carnap, Meaning Postulates
Section 3	Radical Translation, Indeterminacy, Truth	Quine, <i>Word and Object</i> Chapters 1-2 *Quine, Speaking of Objects *Tarski, The Semantic Conception of Truth Davidson, Truth and Meaning Davidson, Radical Interpretation Davidson, On the Very Idea of a Conceptual Scheme Rorty, Pragmatism, Davidson, and Truth
Section 4	Ontology	Quine, On What There Is *Russell, On Denoting Quine, Identity, Ostension and Hypostasis Quine, Ontological Relativity Putnam, Models and Reality
Section 5	Normativity	Quine, Epistemology Naturalized *Jaegwon Kim, What is Epistemology Naturalized? Quine, On the Nature of Moral Values Owen Flanagan, Quinean Ethics