

# PHIL 4351 — Ludwig Wittgenstein

Spring 2020, University of Texas, El Paso

Class Meets: M, W 12:00—1:20 p.m., Ed 309

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Office Wednesday, 12-2,  
Hours & by appointment

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I used to own a T-shirt that read, "Wittgenstein: Two of the Greatest Philosophers of All Time." The joke (such as it is) stems from the fact that Wittgenstein wrote two of the most influential philosophy books of the last century but they each had radically different and seemingly inconsistent influences within the field. The *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* came to be understood as the pre-eminent statement of Logical Atomism and influenced a very logically and scientifically rigorous picture of philosophy – culminating in the work of the Vienna Circle (the Logical Positivism of Carnap, Hempel, and others). The *Philosophical Investigations*, by contrast, seems to take a very expansive and more sociologically oriented view of language and its connection to the world. This work came to influence a second generation of philosophers – culminating in the ordinary language philosophy of Ryle, Anscombe, J. L. Austin and others.

In this class, we will read through these two classic texts. Wittgenstein's writing is both provocative and notoriously difficult to interpret. Rather than try to adjudicate the competing schools of "Wittgenstein interpretation", we will let the texts speak for themselves. However, I will be trying to establish one point: Wittgenstein's thought is far more unified than many scholars believe. I don't see the *Investigations* as repudiating Wittgenstein's earlier work, but rather providing a broader linguistic framework within which some outstanding difficulties of the *Tractatus* can be resolved.

**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 Wittgenstein's seminal works in philosophy.
- To develop an ability to clearly express and defend not only your own opinions on these matters.

**Materials:**

Required

- Wittgenstein, L. 2004 (1921). *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (Pears & McGuinness, trans.). New York: Routledge
- Wittgenstein, L. 1968 (1958). *Philosophical Investigations* 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed. (Anscombe, trans.). New York: McMillan
- Course Packet of readings, available on the course site.

## 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 on time. 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 (25% of total grade):** take home exam; short essay questions
- **Final exam (25% of total grade):** take home cumulative exam; short essay questions
- **Participation (25% of total grade):** Students are required to make substantive and informed comments and/or ask appropriately trenchant questions concerning the course material each class. I will keep track of classroom discussion and give marks for such contributions. There are approximately 25 days in class. Students will be able to receive a maximum of 20 points for their seminar contributions. Grade scale works like this: A – 18-20; B – 16-17; C – 14-15; D – 12-13; F - >12.
- **Critical Essay (25%):** 2,500 words

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.

W	Jan. 22	Introduction
M	Jan. 27	<i>TLP</i> Russell's Introduction, Preface, 1-2.063
W	Jan. 29	<i>TLP</i> 2.1-3.144
M	Feb. 03	<i>TLP</i> 3.2-3.5
W	Feb. 05	<i>TLP</i> 4-4.0641
M	Feb. 10	<i>TLP</i> 4.1-4.4661
W	Feb. 12	<i>TLP</i> 4.5-5.254
M	Feb. 17	<i>TLP</i> 5.3-5.476
W	Feb. 19	<i>TLP</i> 5.5-5.5571
M	Feb. 24	<i>TLP</i> 5.6-6.1224
W	Feb. 26	<i>TLP</i> 6.123-6.3432
M	Mar. 02	<i>TLP</i> 6.35-7
W	Mar. 04	Catch-up
M	Mar. 09	<i>PI</i> Editorial Preface, Preface, 1-27
W	Mar. 11	<i>PI</i> 28-49
M	Mar. 16	Spring Break
W	Mar. 18	Spring Break
M	Mar. 23	<i>PI</i> 50-88
W	Mar. 25	<i>PI</i> 89-133
M	Mar. 30	<i>PI</i> 134-184
W	Apr. 01	<i>PI</i> 185-219
M	Apr. 06	<i>PI</i> 220-315
W	Apr. 08	<i>PI</i> 316-362
M	Apr. 13	<i>PI</i> 363-411
W	Apr. 15	<i>PI</i> 412-465
M	Apr. 20	<i>PI</i> 466-546
W	Apr. 22	<i>PI</i> 547-610
M	Apr. 27	<i>PI</i> 611-693
W	Apr. 29	<i>PI</i> ( <i>PPF</i> , Part xi, 111-224)
M	May 04	Catch-up
W	May 06	Catch-up
F	May 15	Final Exam, 1:00 pm