Philosophy 110W-03: Introduction to Philosophy — Hamilton College
Spring 2011 — Russell Marcus

Presentation Assignment

During this semester, you will choose an article from the syllabus to present to the class. You should plan to present for approximately ten to fifteen minutes, though the ensuing discussion may prolong your presentation.

Your presentation should demonstrate your attempts to grapple with some portion of the chosen reading. The central goal of your presentation is clarity. The presentation should summarize central theses, focus on arguments, and raise questions for discussion. In contrast to a standard, rhetorical philosophy paper, but like your first two paper assignments, your presentations may be mainly exegetical. Connect the various assertions in your presentations; avoid mere lists. I welcome some critical examination of the readings, though the criticism need not be fully developed.

Here are some general questions you might raise and try to answer in your presentation:

What is the big picture? What questions is the author attempting to answer?
What is the central claim you are examining?
Is the central claim epistemological, metaphysical, or methodological?
How does that claim differ from related claims we have already studied?
What is the philosopher's argument for the central claim?
With what premises would philosophers whose work we have already studied disagree? Why?
Is the central claim you are examining true?

Visual aids can enhance clarity. You may use presentation software, like PowerPoint. You may prepare a handout containing an outline of your talk. You may write a short paper on which you base your talk, and hand out that short paper. You may combine these aids. You might generate discussion by presenting a controversial position. You might ask interesting questions. Your presentation may be as creative or ambitious as you wish, as long as it fits reasonably within the time guidelines. You may act out a dialogue of your own design. You could have us break into groups for a short debate. If you want to do something inventive, I would be happy to help you think out the plan. I can facilitate the distribution of materials before class, if desired.

Most classes during which there are presentations will contain two or three presentations.

Resources:

Please feel free to meet with me before your presentations. Many students find the oral communications lab, located in KJ 222, helpful. They have a wealth of resources readily available, and are eager to help. The staff at the lab can assist you both with the content of your presentation, and with determining how best to present your material. When you have prepared a draft of your presentation, they can record you while you practice giving the presentation. You can watch the recording with a tutor, or by yourself. You can sign up for an appointment with a tutor on the door of the lab, or you can email them at: oralcomm@hamilton.edu. Their website offers valuable resources: http://www.hamilton.edu/OralCommunication

Sign-ups

We will sign up for presentations, by email, after the second day of class. Please send me at least three desired slots, in order of preference. The dates and topics are listed below.

Newton, from *Principia*
Leibniz, from *Lettes to Clarke*
Zimmerman, "The Privileged Present: Defending an "A-Theory" of Time
Smart, "The Tenseless Theory of Time"
Plato, from *Phaedo*
Locke, "The Prince and the Cobbler"
Reid, "Of Mr. Locke's Account of Our Personal Identity"
Reid, "Of Identity"
Kripke, from *Naming and Necessity*
Hume, "The Self"
Parfit, "Divided Minds and the Nature of Persons"
Descartes, "On the Nature of Mind"
Arnauld and Descartes, On the Mind
Skinner, from *Science and Human Behavior*
Hempel, "The Logical Analysis of Psychology"
Armstrong, "The Nature of Mind"
Fodor, "The Mind-Body Problem"
Jackson, "Epiphenomenal Qualia"
Plato, "Why Should I Be Moral"
Mill, from *Utilitarianism*
Nozick, "The Experience Machine"
Kant, from *Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Morals*
Noonan, "Abortion is Morally Wrong"
Warren, "The Personhood Argument in Favor of Abortion"

Presentation Sign-Up List

Date	Topics	Presenters Names
February 11	1. Newton, from *Principia* 2. Leibniz, from *Letters to Clarke*	1. 2.
February 16	Zimmerman, "The Privileged Present: Defending an "A-Theory" of Time	
February 18	Smart, "The Tenseless Theory of Time"	
February 25	Plato, from *Phaedo*	
March 2	1. Locke, "The Prince and the Cobbler" 2. Reid, "Of Mr. Locke's Account of Our Personal Identity"	1. 2.
March 4	1. Reid, "Of Identity" 2. Kripke, from *Naming and Necessity*	1. 2.
March 9	1. Hume, "The Self" 2. Parfit, "Divided Minds and the Nature of Persons"	1. 2.
April 1	1. Descartes, "On the Nature of Mind" 2. Arnauld and Descartes, On the Mind	1. 2.
April 6	1. Skinner, from *Science and Human Behavior* 2. Hempel, "The Logical Analysis of Psychology"	1. 2.
April 8	Armstrong, "The Nature of Mind"	

Date	Topics	Presenters Names
April 13	Fodor, “The Mind-Body Problem”	
April 15	Jackson, “Epiphenomenal Qualia”	
April 22	Plato, “Why Should I Be Moral”	
April 27	1. Mill, from *Utilitarianism* 2. Nozick, “The Experience Machine”	1. 2.
April 29	Kant, from *Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Morals*	
May 4	1. Noonan, “Abortion is Morally Wrong” 2. Warren, “The Personhood Argument in Favor of Abortion	1. 2.