

### **Seminar Paper/Presentation Assignment**

During this semester, you will write and present two seminar papers, one in the first half of the course, and one in the second half. Many classes will run as discussions of the seminar paper for that day. Seminar papers should summarize important arguments and raise questions for discussion. In contrast to a standard, rhetorical philosophy paper, seminar papers may be mainly exegetical. You need not defend a thesis in a seminar paper, though some theme will be welcome. I expect some critical examination of the readings, though it need not be fully developed. Here are some general questions you might try to answer in your seminar papers.

- What is the big picture? What questions is the author attempting to answer?
- What thought experiments are relevant to the author's thesis?
- What experiments, or scientific research, if any, are relevant to the author's thesis?
- Is the author defending or criticizing the use of intuitions in philosophy? How?
- How does this philosopher's approach to a particular question relate to or differ from others we have already seen?
- Is the argument in the article convincing?
- Would further analysis or experimental research support or refute the author's thesis?

Your seminar papers must demonstrate attempts to grapple with the primary reading for class. You may also consider secondary readings, or background readings. You are stimulating class discussion, focusing our thoughts on the central theses, and raising questions. It is good practice to end seminar papers with a few questions you believe will be useful for the class to discuss.

You will lead the class on the day we discuss your seminar paper. You may be creative with your presentation. You may focus on the content of your paper. You may also discuss any particular difficulties in the material or topics that you were unable to cover in the paper. Your grade for the seminar paper will depend on both the paper and your presentation of it.

Each seminar paper is due at noon the day before the class in which it will be discussed (i.e. Monday or Wednesday). This deadline is necessary for all participants in the seminar to be able to read the paper and prepare comments and questions for class. You may email the paper to me first, or you may email the paper to all the members of the class directly.

All students are expected to come to class having read the seminar paper or papers for that day. Every one should be prepared to ask questions, or make comments, on the paper for that day. Comments on the paper should be constructive.

#### **Presentation Resources:**

Please feel free to meet with me before your presentations. I will try to have notes for each class available in time for you to use them in your preparation.

Many students find the [Oral Communications Center](#), 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](mailto:oralcomm@hamilton.edu).

## Sign-ups

We will sign up for both seminar papers by email after the second day of class. The following dates and topics are available for seminar papers and presentations.

Date	Topic
Tuesday 9/6	The Myth of the Given
Thursday 9/8	Reflective Equilibrium in Science
Tuesday 9/13	The Scientific Method
Thursday 9/15	Reflective Equilibrium in Ethics
Tuesday 9/20	Reflective Equilibrium in Linguistics
Tuesday 9/27	Rationality and Experimentation
Thursday 9/29	Against Intuitions
Tuesday 10/4	Epistemic Relativism
Thursday 10/6	Descriptivism and Direct Reference
Tuesday 10/11	Free Will and Moral Responsibility I
Tuesday 10/18	Free Will and Moral Responsibility II
Thursday 10/20	Free Will and Moral Responsibility III
Tuesday 10/25	Intentionality
Thursday 10/27	Intuitions and Cognitive Equilibrium
Tuesday 11/1	Gender Differences I
Tuesday 11/8	Gender Differences II
Tuesday 11/15	Sources of Intuitions
Thursday 11/17	Defending Intuition I
Tuesday 12/6	Intuitions and X-Phi