

Puzzles of Vagueness

PHIL490 (A02)/561 (A02)

Vagueness is common in thought, language, and the world. But it is also at the core of various puzzles and paradoxes. This seminar will explore some implications of these puzzles to morality and metaphysics, as well as focusing on the nature of vagueness itself.

OUTCOMES	Improve philosophical skills (RUBRIC) with training on topics on vagueness. ↳ Fulfills unit requirement for the Philosophy Major Program .
PREREQUISITES	3 units of 300- or 400-level philosophy, or permission.
INSTRUCTION	Tuesday 4:30-7:20 ^{PM} TBA 🏠 FACE-TO-FACE
INSTRUCTOR	Professor Mike Raven (raven@uvic.ca raven.site) OFFICE HOURS Tuesday 1:00-2:30 ^{PM} CLE B323 (or by appointment)
LMS	📖 bright.uvic.ca/d2l/home/502778 (Consult for updates and current course documents.)
TEXTS	REQUIRED + Fine, <i>Vagueness: A Global Approach</i> OPTIONAL ○ Keefe & Smith, <i>Vagueness: A Reader</i>

EVALUATION

GRADES	Completing all assignments completes the course. Incomplete assignments earn a failing N course grade. Grades earned are assessed for craftsmanship (RUBRIC).				
	%	ASSIGNMENT	COMPLETION	GRACE	MODE
	1	🏠 Integrity in Practice	Submission	+	📖
	50	📖 Essays	Submission	+	📖
	33	☑ Checkpoints	Submitting any 6 (of 11)	×	🏠
	16	🗣 Engagement	Submitting ≥6 posts and ≥6 replies	×	📖
GRACE POINTS	A grace point delays the due date of a +-assignment by 24 hours. Each student begins with 5 grace points. These may be used in any combination without justification, but cannot be reused or traded. To use, state the number used on your submitted work.				
LATENESS	Submissions are penalized 5% per day past the due date. Submissions received after 5 days after the original due date become pass(50)/fail(49) and are not entitled to feedback.				

POLICIES

RESPECT	Enrolling binds you to a social contract with your instructor and classmates. Create a respectful, inclusive, and productive learning environment . Don't bully or distract others. Use devices only for class purposes. No guests without instructor's permission.
PREPARE	Know course documents. Read required texts <i>before</i> class. Allow time for email replies.
DATES	Be aware of important dates. Consult LMS and calendar (for last add/drop dates).
ENGAGE	Class attendance is expected . Use office hours and tutorials.
INTEGRITY	Know UVic's academic integrity policies.
AI	The use of AI is prohibited for all evaluated work (unless explicitly allowed).
PLANS	Academic concessions must be by official request. Accommodation of religious observance must be in advance. Inform instructor of CAL plans (these are not blanket extensions and do not replace grace points, concessions, or other accommodations).
PRIVACY	Classes are not recorded/streamed. No unauthorized recording/streaming.
COPYRIGHT	Course content/materials are protected by copyright law .
INFO	Student conduct Equity Discrimination and harassment Sexualized violence
RESOURCES	Learn Anywhere Student Wellness IACE Ombudsperson

SCHEDULE

DATE	READINGS	DUE	MODE
Vagueness and the Sorites Paradox			
SEP 15	+ Unger, "There Are No Ordinary Things" + Fine, <i>Vagueness: A Global Approach</i>, pp.1-17 - o Keefe & Smith, "Introduction: Theories of Vagueness"	☑01	👤👤👤
SEP 21		👤👤IP	📱📱
Vagueness in Objects, Persons, and Value			
SEP 22	+ Sider, <i>Four-Dimensionalism: An Ontology of Persistence and Time</i> , §4.9	☑02	👤👤👤
SEP 29	+ Parfit, "Personal Identity" + Simon, "Vagueness and Zombies: Why 'Phenomenally Conscious' has No Borderline Cases"	☑03	👤👤👤
OCT 6	+ Broome, "Is Incommensurability Vagueness?" + Chang, "Are Hard Cases Vague Cases?" - o Broome, "Incommensurateness is Vagueness" - o Rabinowicz, "Incommensurability and Vagueness" - o Chang, "The Possibility of Parity"	☑04	👤👤👤
OCT 13	+ Schoenfield, "Moral Vagueness is Ontic Vagueness" - o Dougherty, "Vagueness and Indeterminacy in Ethics"	☑05	👤👤👤
Theories of Vagueness			
OCT 20	+ Edgington, "Vagueness by Degrees"	☑06	👤👤👤
OCT 27	+ Fine, "Vagueness, Truth, and Logic"	☑07	👤👤👤
NOV 3	+ Williamson, "Vagueness and Ignorance"	☑08	👤👤👤
NOV 17	+ Fine, <i>Vagueness: A Global Approach</i> , chapters 1-2	☑09	👤👤👤
NOV 24	+ Fine, <i>Vagueness: A Global Approach</i> , chapter 3	☑10	👤👤👤
Side Quests			
DEC 1	to be determined	☑11	👤👤👤