

overall course handout for **M.A. Seminar in LOGIC AND METAPHYSICS '01-02**

Thursdays: 2p.m, Senate House

Convenor: term 1: J.Hornsby, term 2: B.Lee (both Birkbeck).

Aim: to acquaint M.A. students with some fundamental topics in philosophical logic and in metaphysics.

Objectives: Students who complete the course satisfactorily will:

£ understand and be able to make appropriate use of key philosophical concepts
and

£ be able to expound and assess central arguments

in the following areas: a) of philosophical logic: reference, names, descriptions; empty terms, identity

b) of ontology: substances, events

c) of metaphysics: truth, identity, existence, causation

There will be 20 seminars, 10 each in terms 1 and 2. Each seminar will last for 1½ hours, and will comprise a presentation by the lecturer, followed by, or interspersed with, discussion.

M.A. students taking the course will be assessed in a 3 hour exam. in late May/early June. They will be required to answer three questions from the paper in that exam. [\[1\]](#)

Term 1 weeks 1–5 Lecturer: Jennifer Hornsby

Topics: Reference and truth (including proper names and definite descriptions)

Term 1 weeks 6–10 and term 2 weeks 1-5 Lecturer: Barry Lee

Topics: Events; causation; substances: identity, co-location, persistence.

Term 2 weeks 6–10 Lecturer: Michael Martin (UCL)

Topics: Existence and empty terms

Reading

Lists of readings for the course and further reading lists with essay questions for each segment will be supplied by the lecturers on the course.

The following is background reading for the course:

For term 1:

§4 (pp.91-95) of 'Philosophical Logic', by Mark Sainsbury, in *Philosophy: A Guide Through the Subject*, ed. A.C. Grayling (Oxford U.P. '95).

"State of the Art Essays" on Substances [by Michael J. Loux] and on Events [by Lawrence B. Lombard], pp.233-247 and 277-294, in *Contemporary Readings in the Foundations of Metaphysics*, eds. S. Laurence and C. Macdonald (Blackwell 1998).

For term 2:

§§1, 2 and 3, (pp.63-91) of 'Philosophical Logic', by Mark Sainsbury, in *Philosophy: A Guide Through the*

Subject, ed. A.C. Grayling (Oxford U.P. '95).

Essays

Students should submit their work to the relevant tutor in their own College.^[2]

^[1] Part-time Birkbeck students who take the course in their first year sit a sessional test in the subject in June that year. The sessional test paper will be on the same pattern as the official 3 hour exam..

^[2] **Reminder for Birkbeck students:** The M.A. Logic and Metaphysics Subject Tutor to whom essays should be given is Barry Lee.

Tutorial essay requirements for this course: Full-time students: at least one each term;

Part-time students: at least 2 in all (at least one by end of T2).