

Graduate Seminar on Emotion

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Course Description:

The course will provide a foundational understanding of the main competing theories of human emotion in contemporary philosophy of mind and cognitive science. We'll consider a selection of key theories in three broad (and maybe a little idiosyncratic) categories: (i) Perceptual Theories (broadly construed to include both James-Lange theories and Damasio's Somatic Marker Theory); (ii) Cognitive Theories (including core-affect theory and various appraisal theories); and (iii) recent (pure) feeling theories. One of the key approaches we'll take is to focus on how well these theories address longstanding philosophical concerns about the rationality and intentionality of emotional states.

While not required, the following two sources may be helpful as we get started:

de Sousa, Ronald (2007), *Emotion*. Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. Deonna, Julien A. & Teroni, Fabrice (2011). *The Emotions: A Philosophical Introduction*. Routledge.

Required Texts:

All readings will be made available electronically.

Grading:

- **Presentation:** Each student will be responsible for leading one class discussion. Handouts and/or slides suggested to guide discussion. **10%** of final grade.
- **Paper 1:** By the end of week 5 students will turn in a short, focussed essay on a topic of their choosing. The paper will be roughly 5 pages long. In a typical 20-page graduate seminar philosophy paper, there will be 2-3 pages of set up and background, a few pages dealing with other approaches, a longish presentation and defense of one's claims, and a consideration of objections and implications. This paper is **not** a condensed version of such a paper; instead, I want you to just give me the middle, philosophically important bit. Make a claim and defend it. In other words, this should be a dense, well-argued paper. For an example of what I have in mind

check out Jessica Wilson's (2012) "The regress argument against Cartesian Skepticism" *Analysis*. Worth **35%** of your final grade.

- **Paper 2:** This is a longer paper (~15 pages) due on the last day of class. Again, the task will be to scale up what we did in the first essay, not recreate the structure of a typical seminar paper. Think of this as a kind of writing exercise, rather than just producing a typical paper. This essay will be worth **55%** of your final grade.

Course Policies:

To avoid penalties for late assignments, students must provide official documentation explaining why the assignment could not be handed in on time. Late writing assignments without documentation will not be accepted. Late papers without documentation will receive a late penalty of 1/3 letter grade for each day late, including weekend days (no exceptions).

Tentative Reading Schedule (subject to change):

Part 1: Perceptual/James-Lange Theory

- Week 1
Introduction, background, format, etc.
James, "What is an Emotion?"
- Week 2:
Prinz, "Which Emotions are Basic"
D'Arms, "Prinz's Theory of Emotion"
Craig, A. D., "How do you feel? Interoception: the sense of the physiological condition of the body."
- Week 3:
Damasio, "Emotion and Feeling" and "Feelings"
Colombetti, Giovanna (2008). The somatic Marker hypotheses, and what the iowa gambling task does and does not show.

Part 2: Cognitive & Appraisal Theories

- Week 4:
Helm, "Emotions and Recalcitrance: Reevaluating the Perceptual Model"
Oatley and Johnson-Laird, "Cognitive approaches to emotions"
- Week 5: Fridja, The Laws of Emotion
Deonna, Julien A. & Teroni, Fabrice (2015). Emotions as Attitudes.

- Week 6:
Russell: “Core Affect and the Psychological Construction of Emotion”
Lindquist, et al, The brain basis of emotion: A meta-analytic review

Part 3 : Feeling Theories and Particular Emotions

- Week 7: Kriegel, “Towards a New Feeling Theory of Emotion”
Whiting, Demian (2011). The Feeling Theory of Emotion and the Object-Directed Emotions.
- Week 8: Envy
Smith & Kim, “Comprehending Envy”
Protasi, “Varieties of Envy”
- Week 9:
Readings TBD

Thanksgiving **NO CLASS**

- Week 10: Happiness
Diener, “Subjective Well-Being: Three Decades of Progress”
Haybron, “On Being Happy or Unhappy”
Haybron, “Happiness“. *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.