

PHI 3500/3845
Metaphysics

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We will be exploring some long-debated questions about the individuation and identity conditions of ordinary material objects: what makes one the object it is, distinct from others, and what makes it the same object over time. Our discussions will be based on recent papers on these topics which will be made available in a course-pack.

There will be two examinations, a mid-term and a final. You will receive the questions a week before the exam is due to be submitted by e-mail. In addition, you may write a paper. You can choose your own topic (but must get it approved) or write on one of two default topics to be distributed in mid-November. You can get comments on a draft if you submit it by the end of November, with the final version due on December 10. If you write a paper, the lowest of your three grades will be dropped.

It is essential that you read the text to be discussed before class and re-read it as soon after class as possible. When you read it before class, it is a good idea to try to write down briefly what you take the author's main claim and his argument for it to be and to check after class to see if your understanding has changed or you if you had missed something important. If so, write down a new summary to which you can refer when preparing for the exams. (More on the nature of the exams and how to prepare for them closer to the time.)

The readings are in a course pack available from Target:

1. Michael C. Rea, ed. (1997) "Introduction" *Material Constitution*, Rowman and Littlefield, pp. xv-xix (ISBN 0-8476-8383-4) (excerpt)
2. Michael B. Burke (1980) "Cohabitation, Stuff, and Intermittent Existence" *Mind* 89, pp. 391-405 (ISSN 00264423)
3. Richard Cartwright (1975) "Scattered Objects" in *Analysis and Metaphysics*, K. Lehrer, ed., Reidel: Dordrecht, pp.157-8 (ISBN 9027705712) (excerpt)
4. John Biro (2017) "Are there scattered objects?" *Metaphysica* 8/2, pp. 155-65
5. David Wiggins (1968) "On Being in the Same Place at the Same Time" *The Philosophical Review* 77/1, pp. 90-2 (ISSN 0031-8108) (excerpt)
6. Christopher Hughes (1997) "Same-kind Coincidence and the Ship of Theseus" *Mind* 106, pp. 53-67 (ISSN 0026423)
7. Alan Gibbard (1975) "Contingent Identity" *Journal of Philosophical Logic* 4, pp.188-92 (ISSN 00223611) (excerpt)
8. Crawford Elder (1998) "Essential Properties and Coinciding Objects" *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 58, pp. 317-31
9. Michael Jubien (2009) *Possibility*, Oxford University Press, pp. 15-22 (ISBN13: 9780199232789) (excerpt)

10. John Biro *b* (2018) "Constitution and identity" *Erkenntnis* 83/6, pp. 1127-38
11. John Biro *c* (2016) "Co-location and separability" *Philosophical Inquiries* IV, pp. 29-36
12. John Biro *d* (2020) "Leading a double life: statues and pieces of clay" *Metaphysica*
13. John Biro *e* (2019) "Persistence conditions and identity" *Metaphysica* 20/1, pp. 73-82
14. Peter van Inwagen (1990) *Material Beings*, Cornell University Press, pp. 124-31 (excerpt)
15. John Biro *f* (2018) "Saving the ship" *European Journal of Analytic Philosophy* 13/2, pp. 43-54
16. John Biro *g* (2020) "Rearranging the furniture" *Philosophia* 48/1, pp. 77-81
17. Trenton Merricks (2017) "Do ordinary objects exist? No." in *Current Controversies in Metaphysics* (E. Barnes, ed.)
18. John Biro *h* (mss.) "Two notes on composition"

Tentative schedule

Week 1 Introduction; Rea

Week 2 Burke

Week 3 Cartwright; Biro *a*

Week 4 Wiggins; Hughes

Week 5 Gibbard

Week 6 Elder

Week 7 Jubien First exam distributed

Week 8 Biro *b*; Biro *c* Exam due: Oct 8

Week 10 Biro *d*; Biro *e*

Week 11 van Inwagen

Week 12 Biro *f*; Biro *g*

Week 13 Merricks

Week 14 Biro *h*

Week 15 Review Second exam distributed

Week 16 Exam due: Dec 10

Please note the following university policies:

ACADEMIC HONESTY. UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge, which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Honor Code (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class. Plagiarism on any assignment will automatically result in a grade of "E" for the course. Plagiarism is defined in the University of Florida's Student Honor Code as follows: "A student shall not represent as the student's own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes (but is not limited to): a. Quoting oral or written materials, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution. b. Submitting a document or assignment which in whole or in part is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment not authored by the student." Students found guilty of academic misconduct will be prosecuted in accordance with the procedures specified in the UF honesty policy.

ATTENDANCE AND CLASSROOM POLICIES. Students are expected to attend class and to have done all assigned reading in advance. Failure to do so will adversely affect students' ability to perform well in this course. The use of laptop computers, smart phones, or other electronic devices during class is not permitted. Requirements for make-up exams are consistent with university policies specified at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES. Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drp/>). The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation.

ONLINE COURSE EVALUATION. Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester. Students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results>.

GENERAL EDUCATION. PHH 3500 counts towards the Humanities (H) and International (N) General Education requirements.

UNIVERSITY STATEMENT on COVID.

In response to COVID-19, the following practices are in place to maintain your learning environment, to enhance the safety of our in-classroom interactions, and to further the health and safety of ourselves, our neighbors, and our loved ones.

- If you are not vaccinated, get vaccinated. Vaccines are readily available at no cost and have been demonstrated to be safe and effective against the COVID-19 virus. Visit this link for details on where to get your shot, including options that do not require an appointment: <https://coronavirus.ufhealth.org/vaccinations/vaccine-availability/>. Students who receive the first dose of the vaccine somewhere off-campus and/or outside of Gainesville can still receive their second dose on campus.
- You are expected to wear approved face coverings at all times during class and within buildings even if you are vaccinated. Please continue to follow healthy habits, including best practices like frequent hand washing. Following these practices is our responsibility as Gators.
 - Sanitizing supplies are available in the classroom if you wish to wipe down your desks prior to sitting down and at the end of the class.
 - Hand sanitizing stations will be located in every classroom.
- If you are sick, stay home and self-quarantine. Please visit the UF Health Screen, Test & Protect website about next steps, retake the questionnaire and schedule your test for no sooner than 24 hours after your symptoms began. Please call your primary care provider if you are ill and need immediate care or the UF Student Health Care Center at 352-392-1161 (or email covid@shcc.ufl.edu) to be evaluated for testing and to receive further instructions about returning to campus. UF Health Screen, Test & Protect offers guidance when you are sick, have been exposed to someone who has tested positive or have tested positive yourself. Visit the [UF Health Screen, Test & Protect website](#) for more information.
 - Course materials will be provided to you with an excused absence, and you will be given a reasonable amount of time to make up work.
 - If you are withheld from campus by the Department of Health through Screen, Test & Protect you are not permitted to use any on campus facilities. Students attempting to attend campus activities when withheld from campus will be referred to the Dean of Students Office.

