PIP77021 | The Development of Analytic Philosophy

Credits:	**10 ECTS**
Contact Hours:	**11 x 2-hour seminars**
Prerequisite:	**Significant amount of undergraduate work in philosophy**
Semester:	**Hilary Term**
Module Leader :	**James Levine**
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Office Hours:	**(To be determined after the timetable is fixed)**
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Module Outline:

The purpose of this course is to examine some aspects of the development of analytic philosophy—specifically, to examine how some issues regarding the nature of analysis, the philosophy of mathematics, and the philosophy of language that arose for early analytic philosophers (primarily Bertrand Russell and Gottlob Frege, but also, to some extent, the early Wittgenstein) have played out in more recent analytic philosophy.

First, we will look at some basic issues regarding propositions—including what they are, how they are individuated, and what the "analysis" of a proposition involves. We will identify certain differences between Frege's views and Russell's regarding propositions and will consider how the different approaches of Frege and Russell are related to the views of more recent philosophers, including W. V. Quine, Robert Stalnaker, and Jeffrey King.

Second, we will look at some similarities and differences between Frege's philosophy of mathematics and Russell's. While both endorse the logicist view that arithmetic is reducible to logic, they interpret their shared logicism in different ways:

Frege takes it as supporting the view that arithmetic is analytic and that numbers are "self-subsistent object", Russell takes it as supporting the view that logic is synthetic and a priori and that numbers are "fictions". We will relate these differences between their views of arithmetic to differences between their views of propositions and analysis and will relate issues that arise in their philosophy of mathematics relate to more recent developments, including the attempt by Crispin Wright and Bob Hale to defend a version of Frege's logicism, issues regarding reference to mathematical entities raised by Paul Benacerraf and Quine, and structuralist approaches to the philosophy of mathematics.

Third, we will look at some aspects of the views of Frege and Russell that have played a central role in the development of the philosophy of language—in particular, Frege's theory of sense and reference (Sinn and Bedeutung) and Russell's theory of definite descriptions. We will consider reasons why Frege and Russell introduce these competing theories, how they have been understood and debated by subsequent philosophers of language, and how they influenced the early Wittgenstein.

Finally, we will consider some aspects of Wittgenstein's early philosophy, as reflected in his *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, focusing on issues it raises regarding the limits of thought and the status of metaphysics, considering differences between Wittgenstein's approach to these issues and Russell's, and considering also how these differences between Wittgenstein and Russell are related to the views of more recent philosophers including Donald Davidson, Thomas Nagel, and Thomas Hofweber.

Learning Outcomes:

At the end of this course students will be able to:

- Relate central aspects of Frege's and Russell's views of mathematics to their views of language.
- Relate the views of Frege and Russell regarding mathematics and the philosophy of language to more recent discussions within analytic philosophy
- Explain and assess the views of the early Wittgenstein regarding the limits of thought

Recommended Reading List:

To be announced in class

Assessment:

One essay (3,000 words), 100% of the overall mark.