

**University of St Andrews — Department of Philosophy**  
**PY4617 *The Philosophy of Saul Kripke***

Semester 1 2023-24

30 Credits

**MODULE INFORMATION**

**Lectures:** Monday, 2-4pm, Butts Wynd room 10

**Seminars:**

- Group 1: Thursday 2pm, Butts Wynd room 11.
- Group 2: Thursday 3pm, Butts Wynd room 11.

Seminars begin in week 2. Please sign up for a seminar on MMS at your earliest convenience.

**Module convenor and lecturer:** Justin D'Ambrosio, [jzd1@st-andrews.ac.uk](mailto:jzd1@st-andrews.ac.uk)  
Office hour: Monday, 4-5pm, Edgecliff B17.

**Assessment:** 100% coursework

1. Two short analytical essays, 1000 words each, due October 6<sup>th</sup> and October 27<sup>th</sup>, respectively, questions to be released 2 weeks prior.
2. One longer final essay, 3000 words, due December 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Module Description:** This course concerns the philosophy of Saul Kripke, one of the most influential analytic philosophers of the past 50 years. The course will focus largely on what is considered to be his magnum opus, *Naming and Necessity*, as well as the topics therein. These will include issues concerning the metaphysics of modality, the nature of reference, the relationship between the mind and the body, the nature of kinds, essential and non-essential properties, among many others. The course will also touch on Kripke's famous commentary on Wittgenstein, along with his views on propositional attitudes, the first person perspective, and truth.

**LECTURE PLAN & ESSENTIAL READINGS**

**Main texts:**

1. Saul Kripke, *Naming and Necessity* (NN) (on Moodle)
2. Saul Kripke, *Philosophical Troubles*, (PT) (on Moodle)

3. Saul Kripke, *Wittgenstein On Rules and Private Language* (W)
4. *Saul Kripke*, ed. A. Berger. (SKB)

### General background reading:

1. Christopher Hughes, *Kripke: Names, Necessity, and Identity*, Oxford: Oxford University Press 2004
2. G.W. Fitch, *Saul Kripke*, Acumen Publishing 2004
3. John Burgess, *Kripke: Key Contemporary Thinkers*, Polity 2013

**Fun Introductory Reading.** Technically optional, but worth it. This will give you a sense of the historical importance of the lectures you're about to read.

"The Ashtray", by Errol Morris. In the NYT archive:

1. <https://archive.nytimes.com/opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/03/06/the-ashtray-the-ultimatum-part-1/>
2. <https://archive.nytimes.com/opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/03/07/the-ashtray-shifting-paradigms-part-2/>
3. <https://archive.nytimes.com/opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/03/08/the-ashtray-hippatus-of-metapontum-part-3/>
4. <https://archive.nytimes.com/opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/03/09/the-ashtray-the-author-of-the-quixote-part-4/>
5. <https://archive.nytimes.com/opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/03/10/the-ashtray-this-contest-of-interpretation-part-5/>

### Week 1: Introduction to Modality and Modal Logic

**Required Reading:** Kripke, Saul, "Semantical Considerations on Modal Logic", *Acta Philosophica Fennica*, 16, 83-94, 1963  
<https://philpapers.org/go.pl?id=KRISCO&proxyId=&u=http%3A%2F%2Fsaulkripkecenter.org%2Fwp-content%2Fuploads%2F2019%2F03%2FSemantical-Considerations-on-Modal-Logic-PUBLIC.pdf>

#### Recommended/Background Readings:

- James Garson, "Modal logic", *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*
- Wolfgang Schwarz, *Logic 2: Modal Logic*, especially chapters 9 and 10.  
<https://www.umsu.de/logic2/logic2.pdf>
- John Burgess, "Kripke Models", in SKB
- James Garson, "Quantification in Modal Logic", in *Handbook of Philosophical Logic*, [https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-94-017-0454-0\\_3](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-94-017-0454-0_3)

## Week 2: Naming and Necessity Lecture 1

**Required Reading:** Saul Kripke, *Naming and Necessity*, Lecture 1

**Background Reading:**

- Gottlob Frege, "On Sense and Reference"  
<http://www.scu.edu.tw/philos/98class/Peng/05.pdf>
- Bertrand Russell, "On Denoting",  
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/2248381>
- Robert Stalnaker: "Possible Worlds Semantics: Philosophical Foundations" in SKB

## Week 3: Naming and Necessity Lecture 2

**Required Reading:**

1. Saul Kripke, *Naming and Necessity*, Lecture 2
2. Saul Kripke, *Identity and Necessity*, In Milton Karl Munitz (ed.), [\*Identity and Individuation\*](#). New York: New York University Press. pp. 135-164 (1971)

**Background Reading:**

- Bernard Linsky, "Kripke on Proper and General Names", in SKB
- Scott Soames: "Kripke on Epistemic and Metaphysical Possibility", in SKB
- Dilip Ninan, 'Naming and Epistemic Necessity', *Noûs*, 55(2): 334-362

## Week 4: Naming and Necessity Lecture 3

**Required Reading:** Saul Kripke, *Naming and Necessity*, Lecture 3

**Background Reading:**

- Hilary Putnam, "The Meaning of Meaning"
- Alexander Bird, "Natural Kinds", *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*,  
<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/natural-kinds/>

## Week 5: Mind, Body, and A Posteriori Physicalism

- **Required Readings:** Sydney Shoemaker, 'Kripke and Cartesianism', in SKB

**Background Reading:**

- Alex Byrne, 'Imagination and Possibility', *Philosophical Perspectives* 21, 2007
- David Chalmers: "Does Conceivability Entail Possibility?"

- Stephen Yablo: “Is Conceivability a Guide to Possibility?” <https://www-jstor-org.ezproxy.st-andrews.ac.uk/stable/2108052?origin=crossref>
- Stephen Yablo, “Concepts and Consciousness”, <http://www.mit.edu/~yablo/concon.html>

### **Week 6: No class, independent learning week**

### **Week 7: Propositional attitudes**

**Required readings:** Kripke “A puzzle about belief”, in *PT*

**Background Reading:**

- M. Richard “Kripke’s puzzle about belief”,
- N. Salmon, “A note on Kripke’s puzzle about belief”
- Tim Crane, “Names, Sense, and Kripke’s Puzzle”, in *From the Logical Point of View 2*: 11-26
- Bryan Frances, “Contradictory Beliefs and Epistemic Closure Principles”, *Mind and Language* 14(2): 203-226, 1999

### **Week 8: Fiction and nonexistence**

**Required readings:** Kripke “Vacuous names and fictional entities”,

**Background Reading:**

- N. Salmon “Fiction, myth, and reality”, in SKB
- David Braun, ‘Empty Names’, *Noûs* Vol. 27, No. 4 (Dec., 1993), pp. 449-469
- Andrew Bacon, ‘Quantificational Logic and Empty Names’, *Philosopher’s Imprint*, Vol. 13, No. 24, 2013

### **Week 9: Rule-following and private language**

**Required readings:** Saul Kripke, *Wittgenstein on Rules and Private Language*

**Background Readings:**

- Indrek Reiland, “Rule-Following I: The Basic Issues”, in *Philosophy Compass*, forthcoming
- Indrek Reiland, ‘Linguistic Mistakes’, *Erkenntnis*, 88(5), 2191-2206, 2023

### **Week 10: Rule-following and private language**

**Required readings:** Kripke Wittgenstein on Rules and Private Language, pt. 2 (excerpts)

**Background Reading:**

- G. Wilson “On the scepticism about rule-following in Kripke’s version of Wittgenstein” in SKB
- Jared Warren ‘Killing Kripkenstein’s Monster’, *Noûs*, 54(2): 257-289, 2020

**Week 11: The first person**

**Required readings:** Saul Kripke, “The first person” (in PT)

**Background Readings:** TBD depending on class interests

**ADDITIONAL READINGS & RESOURCES**

Philpapers index on Rigid Designation:

<https://philpapers.org/browse/rigid-designation>

Philpapers index on Kripke’s Modal Argument against Dualism:

<https://philarchive.org/browse/kripkes-modal-argument-against-materialism>

Philpapers index on Kripke’s Puzzle about Belief:

<https://philarchive.org/browse/kripkes-puzzle-about-belief>

Philpapers index on Kripkenstein:

<https://philpapers.org/browse/kripkenstein-on-meaning>