INTUITIONS

TIME AND PLACE: Tuesdays 16:00-18:00, 23.21/U1.64

Instructor: Dr. Ioannis Votsis  
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Office hours (Room Geb. 23.21/04.86): Wednesdays 11:00-12:00

Intuitions have traditionally played a central role in philosophy. They have not only been useful heuristic tools but have also been tasked with the momentous role of adjudicating between competing accounts of philosophical concepts like knowledge, goodness, and reference. The aim of this course is to examine in detail and scrutinise the role of intuitions in philosophy. In pursuing this aim, we will delve into a number of debates in epistemology, metaphysics, ethics, logic, philosophy of language, philosophy of mathematics and philosophy of science. Among other things, we will seek answers to the following questions: What are intuitions? Are all intuitions acceptable? If not, how can we tell good from bad intuitions? What ought we to do when intuitions conflict? Is there a core body of intuitions on which consensus can be formed? Can we distinguish between pre-theoretical and theoretical intuitions? If so, what would be the benefit of such a distinction? Can intuition be cultivated? Under what circumstances, if any, can intuitions overrule empirical results? How are thought experiments and intuitions related? Whence do intuitions obtain their force? Ought we to trust intuitions? If not, what would that mean for philosophy in general and conceptual analysis in particular?

Main Textbook

General Surveys:

Coursework:
One presentation to be assigned on one of the essential readings. One essay to be handed in to the department by 31/01/09. Suggested essay topics will be distributed nearer the deadline.

WEEK 1: Introduction

WEEK 2: What is Conceptual Analysis?

Essential Reading:
Further Reading:

WEEK 3: Methods in Epistemology

Essential Reading:

Further Reading:

WEEK 4: Methods in Philosophy of Mind

Essential Reading:

Further Reading:

WEEK 5: Methods in Ethics

Essential Reading:

Further Reading:
**WEEK 6: Methods in Philosophy of Language**

**Essential Reading:**

**Further Reading:**

**WEEK 7: Methods in Philosophy of Science**

**Essential Reading:**

**Further Reading:**

**WEEK 8: Methods in Philosophy of Mathematics**

**Essential Reading:**

**Further Reading:**

**WEEK 9: What are Intuitions?**

**Essential Reading:**
Further Reading:

WEEK 10: Naturalism

Essential Reading:

Further Reading:

WEEK 11: Empirical Psychology meets Philosophy

Essential Reading:

Further Reading:

WEEK 12: Reflective Equilibrium

Essential Reading:

Further Reading:

WEEK 13: Experimental Philosophy

Essential Reading:

Further Reading:

WEEK 14: Defending Conceptual Analysis

Essential Reading:

Further Reading:

WEEK 15: In Search of Necessary and Sufficient Conditions

Essential Reading:

Further Reading:
http://consc.net/papers/analysis.html
WEEK 16: Is Analytic Philosophy on its Deathbed?

**Essential Reading:**

**Further Reading:**