Broadly construed, logic offers purely formal standards of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ inferential relations and practices. Classical logic, for example, tells us that an inference is valid if and only if the truth of the premises guarantees the truth of the conclusion. The philosophy of logic takes a step back and asks various questions about logic itself. It is an ontological, epistemological, methodological and semantic investigation of logic. In this course we will attempt to throw light on a number of vital questions. Here’s a sample: How can we best understand the relation of logical consequence? Should additional information be able to invalidate inferences that were once deemed valid? Why, if at all, would we want to adhere to the idea that anything follows from a contradiction? Can there be true contradictions? What are the bearers of truth? Are there any disadvantages to having degrees of truth? Does ordinary language conform to an existing system of logic? Should it so conform? Are there adequate counterparts of ordinary language quantifiers in logic? Can we get a logical grip on vagueness? What ought we to make of the existence of rival logical systems? Should we be instrumentalists with respect to logic? If not, is there one correct system of logic or many? If many, what is the range of application of each? Are there fundamental logical principles that are unreviseable? How are physical and logical modalities related? What do paradoxes tell us about logic? Finally, can we reason without logic?

Useful Books:

Coursework:
- One presentation (about 20 minutes) on one of the main readings. [3 credits]
- One essay (about 2,500 words), deadline 13/07/10. [3 credits]

NB: Presentations will be assigned on the second week. Suggested essay topics will be distributed in May.

WEEK 1: Introduction

WEEK 2: What is the Philosophy of Logic?

Main Reading:

Further Reading:
WEEK 3: The Relation of Logical Consequence

Main Reading:

Further Reading:

WEEK 4: Logical Constants

Main Reading:

Further Reading:

WEEK 5: Truth

Main Reading:

Further Reading:

WEEK 6: Self-Reference Paradoxes

Main Reading:

Further Reading:
WEEK 7: Dialetheism

Main Reading:

Further Reading:

WEEK 8: The Logic of Ordinary Language

Main Reading:

Further Reading:

WEEK 9: Monotonic vs. Non-Monotonic Accounts of Reasoning

Main Reading:

Further Reading:

WEEK 10: Vagueness

Main Reading:
Further Reading:

WEEK 11: Modal Logic

Main Reading:

Further Reading:

WEEK 12: Monism vs. Pluralism

Main Reading:

Further Reading:

WEEK 13: The Law of Non-Contradiction

Main Reading:

Further Reading:
WEEK 14: Normativity of Logic

Main Reading:

Further Reading:
MacFarlane, J. (pre-print) ‘In What Sense (if any) is Logic Normative for Thought?’.

WEEK 15: Is there a Logic of Induction?

Main Reading:

Further Reading: