**Master in Cognitive Science and Humanities**

2016-2017

**History of Philosophy and Language Theory (3 ects)**

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Aim and Competences

 a. Good knowledge of the philosophical reflection on language, from Sophists and Plato until the beginning of Semantics and Pragmatics.

b. By engaging in constructive discussion and by critically evaluating the main philosophical theses and arguments in that field, students will improve the capacity to communicate ideas clearly and concisely in both written and verbal form.

c. Improvement of analytical skills oriented to the links among philosophy of language, philosophy of mind, philosophy of logic, ontology, formal semantics, and pragmatics.

SYLLABUS (subject to possible amendment)

1. The Sophistic Movement. Gorgias’ *On the Non-Existent* (*Peri tou me ontos*) and *Encomium of Helen*.
2. Self-Reflection on the role of the poet. A *Metatheatrical* reading of Euripides’ *Helen*.
3. Naturalism vs. Conventionalism. Plato’s *Cratylus* and the correctness of *names* (*onomata*).
4. Aristotle on Language: *On Interpretration* (*Peri Hermeneias*) and *Categories* (*Kategoriai*).
5. Rationalism and Empiricism. The Port-Royal Grammar. Locke’s Essay concerning Human Understanding (Book III). Leibniz’s New Essays (Book III).
6. John Stuart Mill’s System of Logic (Book I).
7. Wittgenstein on Language.
8. Chomsky’s conception of language.

**Bibliography**

**Basic bibliography**

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Chappell, V. C. (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Locke*. Cambridge: C.U.P., 1999.

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Cooke, H. C.; Tredennick, H. (eds.), Aristotle, *The categories; On interpretation* [Edited with Translation and Notes by H. C. Cooke & H. Tredennick]. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983.

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Jolley, N. (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Leibniz*. Cambridge: C.U.P., 1995.

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Leibniz. G. W., *New Essays on Human Understanding.*

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Losonsky, M.,*Linguistic Turns in Modern Philosophy***.** Cambridge: C.U.P., 2006.

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Skorupski, J. (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Mill*. Cambridge: C.U.P, 1998.

Sluga, H. and Stern, D. (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to Wittgenstein*. Cambridge: C.U.P, 1996.

Way, A. S. (ed.), *Euripides: Iphigenia at Aulis; Rhesus; Hecuba; the daughters of Troy; Helen* [Edited with Translation and Notes by A. S. Way]. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1912.

**Advanced bibliography**

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Wittgenstein, L., *Tractatus logico-philosophicus*.

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Wittgenstein, L., *Philosophical Investigations*.

Requirements

Students are required to attend all lectures and seminars and they must submit two short essays (mid-November, mid-December) and to prepare one seminar presentation (maximum 30 minutes). Seminar presentations will consist in answering questions and discussing topics which will appear during the course on HPLT, as well as reading and making comments on philosophical papers connected to the content of the syllabus.

Evaluation and Grading

Active participation by students will be required, both in the lectures and in the seminars. Specific readings for each topic could be assigned. Students will be expected to read them and then to contribute actively in the classroom. Students will also be required to prepare seminar presentations and to write two short essays during the course of HPLT. Final examination: Take-home final.

 30% short essays + 30% seminar presentation + 40% take-home final.