Advanced Topics in Metaphysics (L6/7)
Alex Grzankowski
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Class Meetings: Thursdays 18:00
E-mail: a.grzankowski@bbk.ac.uk
Office: Dept. of Philosophy, room 313
30 Russell Square

Description:
This instalment of Advanced Topics in Metaphysics will be a focused study of the metaphysics of intentionality and the metaphysics of intentional objects. When we think, we think about things. But what are the things about which we think? Some seem to be ordinary objects such as the Prime Minister but some seem to be extraordinary. We sometimes think about things that don’t exist such as Pegasus or about possible but non-actual things such as a golden mountain. Some of our acts of thinking seem to be directed upon propositions – I might think that it will rain tomorrow. In this module we will take up three main topics. First, the nature of what are apparently intentional relations. If to think is to enter into a relation with what we think about, we require relata for the relation. We, then, may need to countenance an array of “intentional objects”. Or, despite first appearances, perhaps to think about something isn’t to enter into a relation with something. Second, we will consider the nature of potential candidates for being intentional objects such as Meinongian objects, merely possible objects, and fictional objects. Finally, we will consider the nature of propositions. Are there any propositions? If there are, are they representational entities? Can they be reduced to any other category such as sets or properties or are they perhaps sui generis entities?

Assessment: One essay of around 3500 words, with a maximum of 3700 words (excluding bibliographies)

Suggested Preliminary Reading:
Crane, T. (2012). The Objects of Thought. OUP. Chapter 1
Hanks, P. (2015). Propositional Content. OUP. Chapters 1 and 2

Schedule:
Primary readings will be posted on Moodle. Readings listed as ‘additional’ are suggestions for those writing papers on the topic or for the enthusiast. Lectures will focus on the primary readings. It will be much too demanding if you try to read all of the primary and suggested readings every week. In some cases the additional readings are entire books. Please focus on the primary readings.
Meeting 1: Intentionality And The Objects Of Thought
Primary Reading:
Chapters 1 and 4: Crane, Tim (2013). The Objects of Thought. Oxford University Press.

Additional Reading:

Pierre Jacob’s SEP entry on Intentionality: http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/intentionality/

Meeting 2: Meinongianism and Nonexistent Objects
Primary Reading:


Additional Reading:


Meeting 3: Adverbialism/Non-Relationalism
Primary Reading:


Additional Reading:


**Meeting 4: Propositionalism**

*Primary Reading:*


*Additional Reading:*


**Meeting 5: Intentional Identity and Dependent Abstracta**

*Primary Reading:*


*Additional Reading:*


Meeting 6: Propositional Attitude Relations

*Primary Reading:*


*Additional Reading:*


Meeting 7: Propositional Content and Possible Worlds

*Propositions*

*Primary Reading:*


*Additional Reading:*

Meeting 8: Structures Propositions and Gappy Propositions

*Primary Reading:*


*Additional Reading:*)


**Meeting 9: The Unity of the Proposition**

*Primary Reading:*


*Additional Reading:*


**Meeting 10: Propositions as Properties**

*Primary Reading:*