



COURSE INFORMATION

1. OFFICE HOURS AND HOW TO REACH ME

I (Peter Vranas) will hold office hours on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, 9:55-10:55am, in my office, 5171 Helen C. White Hall (phone: 263-3740). I hope to meet each of you several times during the term. You have no obligation to come (it doesn't count towards your course grade), but I hope you will take advantage of my willingness to give you individualized attention. I will be handing out a sign-up sheet for my office hours, but feel free to make appointments if the above times don't suit you. You can best reach me by email (vranas@wisc.edu).

2. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

	Grade component (see syllabus for dates)	Weight
1	Thirteen problem sets. Each set contains a quiz to be taken in class on the due date.	55%
2	Three 50-min in-class exams. These are closed-book and cumulative: they cover all material up to the date on which you take them. (There is no final exam.)	45% (15% each)
	Some handouts are on my website: https://vranas.website	100%

This is a 3-credit course. It meets for three 50-minute class periods each week over the semester and carries the expectation that students will work on course learning activities on average for about 2 hours out of classroom for each class period.

3. CLASS PARTICIPATION AND DISCUSSION RULES

Class participation is not graded, because (1) I would like people to speak out of intrinsic motivation and interest in the topics, not to get a higher grade, and (2) I wouldn't like people to be afraid of speaking because saying something less than brilliant might hurt their grade. On the other hand, I would like *everyone* to participate: I believe that each of you has interesting things to say, and I would like to hear them.

The fundamental discussion rule is that we must *treat everyone with the utmost respect*. It's not acceptable to insult or ridicule people or views. Everyone should feel free to voice unpopular opinions, as long as the opinions are expressed respectfully and backed by arguments. *You should feel especially free to disagree with me.*

The fundamental rule of respect has two concrete consequences. (1) Interrupting others is disrespectful: *please raise your hand and wait for your turn* before you speak. (2) Ignoring speakers is disrespectful: *please don't talk among yourselves* while someone is speaking.

4. MAIN COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. To help you discern ambiguities in English arguments involving necessity and possibility.
2. To help you disambiguate by translating from English into logical notation.
3. To help you decide whether the translated arguments are valid or not.
4. To familiarize you with the fundamental metaphysical debates surrounding modal logic.
5. To fight superficiality by emphasizing quality rather than quantity.
6. To help you develop valuable skills by emphasizing rigorous thinking, clarity, and precision.

5. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS

If you would like special arrangements because (1) you have a disability or (2) you are observing some religious holidays or (3) you have work responsibilities, please let me know within the first two weeks of the term. Students with disabilities may wish to contact the McBurney Disability Resource Center (<http://www.mcburney.wisc.edu>).