Philosophy 525  
Truth and Paradox  
Spring 2003

Instructor: Michael Kremer  
My office is 119 Wieboldt Hall. I will hold office hours M and W 9-10 (am). If these times are not convenient we can make an appointment for another time. My office phone is 834-9884; my home phone is 643-1223. I can be reached by e-mail at kremer@uchicago.edu.

The class meets T and TH, 12:00-1:20.

Course objectives and prerequisites: The aim of the course is to study in some depth several recent approaches to the problems posed for the theory of truth by paradoxes such as the Liar Paradox. The only prerequisite for the course is a basic course in the metatheory of first-order logic, such as Philosophy 294/396. Other background material, for example the theory of transfinite ordinal numbers, will be introduced as needed.

Texts: Two books, Logic, Semantics and Metamathematics, by Tarski, and The Revision Theory of Truth, by Gupta and Belnap, are available in the Seminary Co-op. Other readings will be made available on electronic reserve as needed.

The syllabus lists “main readings” and “background readings” for each section of the course. Everyone should do the “main readings” throughout. The (slightly annotated) list of “background readings” is there to guide your more focused research for your term papers. (You will need to find the background readings in the library; fairly complete bibliographic information has been provided. In the case of unpublished materials I can make them available.)

Some useful background readings for the whole course:
Anil Gupta, “Truth,” in the Blackwell Guide to Philosophical Logic, Lou Goble, ed. (Surveys much of the material of the course.)
John Burgess, “Set Theory,” in the Blackwell Guide to Philosophical Logic, Lou Goble, ed. (Covers very briefly some of the essential elements of set theory needed in the course. For more details, consult a standard text such as Enderton’s Introduction to Set Theory. However, this should not be necessary.)

Work of the Course: The main requirement of the course is a term paper (in the range of 20+ pages or so). This is to be turned in at the end of the semester. It can consist in philosophical reflections on one or more of the theories we have covered in the class, technical studies of the theories, or some combination of these.

In addition to writing a term paper, students are required to attend class regularly, and to come to class prepared, having done the assigned readings and ready to talk about them.
ROUGH Syllabus

0: Introductory. (1/15)

I: Tarski’s definition of truth and the object-language/meta-language distinction. (H4/3-H4/17)

Main readings:

Supplementary background readings:

II. Kripke’s fixed-point theory. (T4/22-T5/13)

Main readings:
Supplementary background readings:
P. Kremer and M. Kremer, “Some Supervaluation-Based Consequence Relations,” forthcoming, *Journal of Philosophical Logic*. (Explores the supervaluation scheme and its logic; P. Kremer has more work on this in progress which may be available this semester, with special attention to truth.)
Scott Soames, *Understanding Truth*, relevant chapters.

III. Gupta and Belnap’s revision theory. (H5/15-H6/4)
Main readings:
Philip Kremer, “Does Truth Behave like a Classical Concept when there is no Vicious Reference?” unpublished. (e-reserve)

Supplementary background readings:
Gian Aldo Antonelli, “Non-Well Founded Sets via Revision Rules,” *Journal of Philosophical Logic* 23 (1994), 633-680. (Uses the revision theory to obtain models of the non-standard set theory used by Barwise and Etchemendy.)
Philip Kremer, “Comparing Fixed Point and Revision Theories of Truth,” unpublished. (Technical companion to “Does Truth Behave Like a Classical Concept when there is no Vicious
A number of fairly technical articles on the revision theory and related approaches can be found in the June 2001 issue of *Studia Logica 68* (2001).

Time permitting (if we get ahead of the syllabus) we may end with a brief discussion of some very recent work of Hartry Field which builds on Kripke and Gupta/Belnap (otherwise you can be aware of these as summer reading!):


Reference?”)