

PHIL 158 / Fall 2018

PHILOSOPHY OF LANGUAGE

Dr. Bo Mou

Online Class

**[Wednesday intensive sessions
with flexible class-participation timeline/location]**

The philosophy of language is philosophical investigation into language in view of its relation to reality/objects, thought, and logic. It has been considered as one of the core areas of philosophy especially in the setting of development of contemporary philosophy; the class on the subject has been one of the required philosophy courses in many strong philosophy programs. (1) It has its intrinsic value for philosophical or other intellectual thinking as it provides powerful conceptual and explanatory resources that are needed for in-depth philosophical exploration. (2) It explores a range of issues that have extensive significance, such as: What is meaning? What is the relationship between language and the world? What is the relationship between language and thought? How is language communication possible? (3) It is closely related to some other important subjects in philosophy (such as: metaphysics, philosophy of mind, logic, and epistemology) and some other disciplines (such as: linguistics, psychology, and cognitive science).

The course as given in Fall 2018 is an “advanced” introduction to the philosophy of language on a range of closely related significant issues concerning the relationship between language, reality and thought. This course emphasizes constructive engagement of distinct perspectives to the issues under examination.

The *Course Reader* includes relevant classical and more recent resources on the issues. The background-introduction textbook is Michael Morris’ *An Introduction to the Philosophy of Language* (Cambridge University Press, 2007)

For philosophy-major students who plan to enter Ph.D. programs in philosophy, this course will prepare you in this core area. For those who plan to enter law schools, it will enhance your capacities of conceptual, linguistic and logical analyses. For others, it will help you have due understanding of the relationship between three most significant things in your life: language, world, and thought.