

**CS Pure Logic B**  
**Tense and Modality**

Thomas Müller

WBMA 3052

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Time: Wednesday, 19:00–21:45  
Place: Ruppertgebouw 136  
Meetings: 23 April 2008 – 25 June 2008  
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In this course we'll focus on papers from Kit Fine's collected volume *Modality and Tense* (Oxford UP 2005; ISBN 0-19-927871-7, paperback, approx. 35 EUR). Furthermore, we'll read some of Tarski's and Etchemendy's work on logical consequence and include a brief recap of basic techniques of modal and temporal logic. Additional materials for these parts will be made available via the BSCW system,

<http://bscw.phil.uu.nl/>

### Course layout

- 23 April:** First session: Introduction, distribution of topics for class presentations. Discussion of Tarski, "On the concept of logical consequence", and Etchemendy, *The Concept of Logical Consequence*, Chap. 1 and 6 (on BSCW). [**Jacque**]
- 7 May:** Background lecture: Formal modal logic. Preparatory reading: Beall and Van Fraassen, *Possibility and Paradox*, Chap. 4.3 and 5 (on BSCW). Homework sheet will be dealt out.
- 14 May: Homework exercises due, in hard copy, at beginning of class.**  
Fine, "The problem of *de re* modality", pp. 40–76. [**Lars, Niels, Jesse**]
- 21 May:** Fine, "The problem of *de re* modality", pp. 76–104. [**Lars, Niels, Jesse**]
- 28 May:** Fine, "The problem of possibilia" (pp. 214–231). [**Wim**]
- 4 June:** Fine, "The varieties of necessity" (pp. 235–260). [**Matthijs**]
- 11 June: One-page outline of final paper due to be posted on BSCW at beginning of class.**  
Fine, "Tense and reality", pp. 261–288. [**Gonda**]
- 19 June: \*\*\* Date changed \*\*\*** Fine, "Tense and reality", pp. 288–320. [**Wouter**]
- 25 June:** No class meeting. **Final papers due, via email (in PDF format), by 22.00h.**

## Course requirements

### Active participation and interaction with others

You are expected to attend all seminar sessions and prepare for them carefully by reading the assigned texts closely. You are also expected to interact with your fellow students by commenting on their work and continuing discussion with them after class.

### Final grade

Active participation is a precondition for obtaining a grade. The grade itself is determined via four components:

**Class presentation (20%):** Each student will present at one of the sessions, introducing the assigned material (10–15min). The idea behind this is not a comprehensive survey of the material, but a structured exposition that helps to initiate discussion. A handout summarizing the main point is part of the presentation.

Discussion will proceed on the assumption that *everybody* has prepared the assigned material carefully.

**Homework assignment (10%):** After the background lecture on formal modal logic (7 May) there will be a homework assignment sheet that needs to be turned in the week after.

**Active discussion on BSCW (10%):** Each week from 7 May until 18 June, you need to post on BSCW one discussion question (plain text, about 1/2 page) dealing with the assigned text of that session. On 18 June you also have to post, additionally, two short comments on outlines of final papers posted by the other students (plain text, about 1/2 page). In BSCW, under “Options”, set your level to “Expert” so that you can enter new discussion notes. The **deadline** for the posts is **18:00h on the day of class**. Deadlines are strict.

The mark for this part will be determined purely quantitatively, as 10/9 times the number of posts.

**Final paper (60%):** Each student will write a 2500 word paper (in English) on a subject related to the themes discussed in the course. The topic of the paper, in the form of a written research problem (one page giving your name and e-mail address, a title, a clearly stated question, an outline and some literature), has to be posted on BSCW to facilitate distribution among the course participants two weeks prior to the paper deadline. The week after that, your fellow students will have posted comments that you should take into account when working out your final version. **Deadline for the research problem is 11 June 2008 before class on BSCW, for the final paper, 25 June 2008, 22.00h via email.** Deadlines are strict. The paper needs to have (i) a cover sheet indicating the title, your name, student number and email address, the course number and the date; (ii) an introduction stating the research problem and the goal of the paper; (iii) a main part; (iv) a conclusion and (v) a list of references consistently formatted in some standard style.

In the assessment of the paper, emphasis will be placed on the research problem and goal, on argumentative coherence and fairness, understanding of the relevant issues, originality, form, and clarity of writing.