

UNIVERSITATEA DIN BUCUREȘTI
FACULTATEA DE FILOSOFIE
Departamentul de filosofie teoretică

Course Syllabus

I. General Information:

Program: MA

Title: Anscombe - Intention

Status: Optional

Hours: 2 (weekly/ 2 hours course)

Credits: 6

Grading method: Writing assignments and final colloquium

II. Instructor:

Gheorghe Ștefanov, Senior Lecturer PhD.

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Office Hours: Wednesday, 4 – 6 PM.

III. Course Description:

A. Overview:

The course is designed as a slow reading group dedicated to the study of G. E. M. Anscombe's book, *Intention*. It is assumed that all participants have good critical thinking abilities and are also familiar with basic concepts, views and arguments from contemporary epistemology and philosophy of language. Some acquaintance with the philosophy of the later Wittgenstein might be useful, but is not required.

B. Course objective:

The course aims to help students develop research and writing skills by studying a single

philosophical work, fundamental for the development of an entire philosophical discipline, i. e. philosophy of action. Since this is a course for graduate students, participants will be expected to engage in discussions during class meetings and also to do high-level, independent research.

C. Course Requirements:

Class attendance is necessary. Students should do, however, more than just attend the class. They are expected to show up having read the assignment for the day and ready to talk about it. Each student is required to write a short *research paper* (4-6 pages) in at least two versions – one to be discussed with the instructor during office hours and a final version to be submitted at the end of the semester. Grades will be determined on the basis of the participation in class discussions (30%), evaluation of papers (50%) and a final colloquium during which we will discuss the submitted papers (20%). The course specifics – including course requirements, grading and the schedule of assignments – are subject to change and will be announced in class and on the internet.

C. Topics and readings:

1. Language games. Actions vs. events. Intentional vs. unintentional actions. Voluntary vs. involuntary actions.
 - Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, §§ 23, 65, 97, 588-592, 610-632, 635-7, 642-4, 647-8, 652, 654-661, 665-6, 679, 688-9, 692-3
2. Intention talk. Expressing an intention for the future - a sort of prediction?
 - Anscombe, *Intention*, §§ 1-3
3. Knowledge without observation . The question „why”.
 - Anscombe, *Intention*, §§ 4-8
4. Reasons vs. mental causes
 - Anscombe, *Intention*, §§ 9-11
5. Motives vs. mental causes
 - Anscombe, *Intention*, §§ 12-15
6. Intentional actions. Acting without a reason. The intentional character of actions is not an additional trait.

- Anscombe, *Intention*, §§ 16-19
- 7. Intentional action vs. the intention "with which" I act
 - Anscombe, *Intention*, §§ 20-22
- 8. Action under a description
 - Anscombe, *Intention*, §§ 23-26
- 9. The inner act of „intending to”. Knowledge without observation
 - Anscombe, *Intention*, §§ 27-31
- 10. Practical knowledge. Practical reason. Aristotle's view about the practical syllogism
 - Anscombe, *Intention*, §§ 32-35
- 11. "I want"; a characterization in terms of desirability
 - Anscombe, *Intention*, §§ 36-39
- 12. Traits of practical reason determined through analogies
 - Anscombe, *Intention*, §§ 40-44
- 13. Practical knowledge (again). The form of an action's description. Animal intentions
 - Anscombe, *Intention*, §§45-48
- 14. Voluntary vs. intentional actions. Intentions with respect to the future (again)
 - Anscombe, *Intention*, §§49-52

D. Recommended Texts:

- G. E. M. Anscombe, *Intention*, second edition, Harvard University Press, 1963
- Rachael Wiseman, *Guidebook to Anscombe's Intention*, Routledge, 2016
- Roger Teichmann, *The Philosophy of Elizabeth Anscombe*, OUP, 2008
- A. Ford, J. Hornsby, F. Stoutland (editors), *Essays on Anscombe's Intention*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 2011
- Steven R. Bayne, *Elizabeth Anscombe's Intention*, CreateSpace, 2010
- P. Rayappan, *Intention in Action. The Philosophy of G. E. M. Anscombe*, Peter Lang, Bern, Berlin, Bruxelles, Frankfurt am Main, New York, Oxford, Wien, 2010, especially chapters 2 and 4 (“Anscombe’s Analysis of Intention” and “Discussion of Intention after Anscombe”).