Persons, Survival and Immortality; Course Description

This course will consider a range of interconnected topics under the heading of “Persons, Survival and Immortality”. The course will begin with a brief review of issues in the personal identity debate as found in the work of Bernard Williams, Derek Parfit and Galen Strawson, among others. After this we will read Peter Goldie, *The Mess Inside: Narrative, Emotion, and the Mind* (OUP, 2012). This will be followed by a brief interlude, reading Thomas Nagel’s “Death” and Williams’ “The Makropulos Case”. We will conclude the course with an examination of Samuel Scheffler’s *Death and the Afterlife* (OUP, 2013), including several responses to it as presented by Wolf, Frankfurt, Shiffren, and Kolodny.

Required Texts:

- Samuel Scheffler, *Death and the Afterlife* (OUP, 2013)
- Handouts

Course Evaluation:

Term Paper (2000 words) = 50%
Exam = 35%
Participation = 15%

Contact:

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-- the course syllabus, class readings, and other relevant material will be posted here.
Proposed Course Schedule and Class Readings

*Sept. 9: [no class]

Sept. 16: Introduction &
  Williams, ‘Self and Future’ & *Parfit, ‘Unimportance of Identity’ (Handout)

Sept. 23: G. Strawson, ‘Against Narrativity’ (Handout)

Sept. 30: Goldie, Mess Inside, Chps. 1 and 2

Oct. 07: Goldie, Mess Inside, Chps. 3 and 4

*Oct. 14: [no class]

Oct. 21: Goldie, Mess Inside, Chps. 5 and 6

Oct. 28: Goldie, Mess Inside, Chps. 7 and 8

Nov. 04: Nagel, ‘Death’/ *Williams, ‘The Makropulos Case’ (Handout)

Nov. 11: Sheffler, Death & Afterlife, Lectures 1 and 2.

Nov. 18: Sheffler, Death & Afterlife, Lecture 3; and Wolf

Nov. 25: Sheffler, Death & Afterlife, Frankfurt, Shiffren, Kolodny, Sheffler (pp. 143-207)

Please note: This schedule is liable to changes and alterations as we proceed. Please check with me if you have any questions about readings during the term.

* = primary reading