Preliminary Reading in Philosophy
Pembroke College, April 2020

This preliminary reading list is intended for Pembroke students taking Physics and Philosophy. In your first year course, you will study Introduction to Philosophy (divided into General Philosophy and the Leibniz-Clarke Correspondence) and Elements of Deductive Logic (which also covers Introduction to Logic). You are encouraged to try to read as much as you can of the preparatory reading given below; doing so will certainly help make your first year easier!

General Philosophy

The course concentrates on topics connected to knowledge, reasoning, mind and body, personal identity, free will and the existence of God. Useful introductory texts are:

- Simon Blackburn: Think: A Compelling Introduction to Philosophy
- Thomas Nagel: What Does It All Mean?
- E. Conee and T. Sider: Riddles of Existence
- Bertrand Russell: Problems of Philosophy [available online]

All four contain discussions of topics in general philosophy which will be covered in your first year, in particular the first six chapters of Russell’s book, chapters 1 and 6 of the Conee and Sider book, chapters 2, 3, 4 and 6 of the Nagel book and all chapters of the Blackburn book.

General Philosophy - Online Resources

You may wish to read and think about the following links from the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. These are on the six topics covered in the General Philosophy course:

- https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/knowledge-analysis/
- https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/skepticism/
- https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/dualism/
- https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/freewill/

Introduction to Logic

This paper is a general introduction to logic and has one set text:

- Volker Halbach: The Logic Manual
Elements of Deductive Logic

Introduction to logic is followed by a more advanced course on elements of deductive logic. A good textbook covering the material taught is:

David Bostock  Intermediate Logic

The Leibniz-Clarke Correspondence

This course introduces questions about the philosophy of space and time:

H.G. Alexander [ed.]  The Leibniz-Clarke Correspondence
Nick Huggett  Space from Zeno to Einstein.
Tim Maudlin  Philosophy of Physics: Space and Time

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