

PHILOSOPHY COURSE OFFERINGS

– SPRING 2021 –

200-level Courses (Tier Two)

PHIL 272: Metaphysics | *Joshua Mendelsohn*
(*Mind and Science*)

The goal of metaphysics is to answer fundamental questions about the nature of reality, such as: What, fundamentally, exists? What, for that matter, does it mean for something to exist? Does everything exist in space and time? (If so, where is the number three, and when does the color red exist?) Are some things “more real” than others? If so, what is most real and what makes it that way? What does it take for an object or a person to persist over time? Are there facts that could not be otherwise (for instance, the fact that $2+2=4$)? What causes a fact to be like that?

These questions, and questions like them, fall outside the scope of special sciences like physics, sociology, psychology and mathematics – although answers to these questions are often presupposed by these sciences. Philosophers from the ancient world until today have not only pursued the project of answering these questions, they have also persistently challenged the possibility of answering them. Many philosophers have worried that when we ask questions like these, we are really just asking questions about our own language or our own thinking, not questions about the fundamental nature of reality like we had hoped. In this course, we will read and discuss both contributions to metaphysics and challenges to it. Readings will be drawn from contemporary and historical authors. The goal of the course is to learn to evaluate the answers offered to some of these questions by philosophers through to the present, and to make up your own mind about whether we can hope to answer them.

This course has a Mind and Science (M&S) designation for the purposes of major specialization.

PHIL 273: Philosophy of Science | *Brandon Morgan-Olsen*
(*Mind and Science*)

This course provides an introductory survey of contemporary philosophy of science, seeking to examine the nature of scientific knowledge. This will mean focusing on several key concepts, including the following: confirmation of scientific theories, evidence, explanation, theory interpretation, scientific development, and the epistemic attitudes of scientists. When appropriate, we will aim to make sense of these concepts using historical and contemporary examples of scientific practice.

This course has a Mind and Science (M&S) designation for the purposes of major specialization.

PHIL 274: Logic | *Arnold Vander Nat*

This introductory course in logic is a detailed study of the methods and principles of correct reasoning, and focuses on the deductive techniques from both traditional logic and modern logic. Central to this study is first, a precise analysis of the logical structure that sentences have, and second, the logical consequences that sentences have because of their logical structure. The laws of logic themselves are extensively studied, and they are rigorously applied in the solution of concrete problems of argumentation. This course may also study the types of common errors in reasoning, known as logical fallacies. An important outcome in this course is the improvement of one's critical thinking abilities.

PHIL 276/PSYC276: Philosophy of Mind | *Joseph Vukov*
(*Mind and Science*)

You are having conscious experiences right now. But what is the relationship between those experiences and the neural and bodily processes that underlie them? This course explores contemporary issues in philosophy of mind from philosophical, psychological, neurological, and historical perspectives. The course will be organized around three main units:

- *Mind-Body Theories*: Are your brain and mind the same thing? Or are they different? If so, how are they different? Mind-body theories attempt to answer these kinds of questions. This semester, we will explore several historical and contemporary mind-body theories, the arguments in favor of them, and the objections against them.
- *Philosophy of Cognitive Science and Consciousness*: Cognitive science uses empirical methods to study our experiences. The philosophy of cognitive science and consciousness reflects on the philosophical issues this study raises. For example: are minds like computers? How do our minds depend on our environments, languages, and cultures? How to understand consciousness?
- *Neuroethics*: Neuroethics studies ethical questions arising from studying the mind. For example: do recent discoveries in neuroscience undermine free will? Is it ever permissible for us to engage in cognitive enhancement? What is the relationship between death and brain death? Before you complete the course, you will become familiar with these (and other) questions, as well as historical and contemporary conversations about them. You will also build on important critical thinking skills including: the ability to read critically and for understanding; the ability to defend a position for which you believe; the ability to use philosophical resources to discuss pressing issues in philosophy of mind; and the ability to reflect on the 'big questions' raised by research in the cognitive sciences.

This course has a Mind and Science (M&S) designation for the purposes of major specialization.

PHIL 277: Aesthetics | *Stefano Giacchetti*
(*Existence, Meaning, and Culture*)

This course will explore one or more of the following philosophical questions in aesthetics:

What is art?

What is good art (art evaluation or critical theory)?

What is beauty?

What is it about human nature that allows us to experience beauty?

More specifically, the course focuses on fundamental philosophical writings on art, artists, and the social significance of aesthetics. Crucial concepts such as beauty, harmony, creativity and judgement of taste will be analyzed in the theoretical framework of modernity and supported by an insight into some of the most representative works of art.

We will start with a selection of paragraphs from Kant's Critique of Judgment, which will provide us with the terminological tools for analyzing aesthetics. Through his writings we will be able to clearly define an appropriate use of such concepts as "beautiful," "pleasant," "good" and "sublime." We will then analyze sections of the third book of Schopenhauer's most important work, *World as Will and Representation*, in which he outlines his conception of art as the model for an ethical behavior.

The third part of the course will focus on section four of Nietzsche's *Human, All Too Human*, a work which immediately relates to Schopenhauer's ideas, proposing a new interpretation of the origins and function of art. Nietzsche's idea of art as "exaltation of life" will be related to the raising of 20th century artistic movements. In the final part of the course we will analyze the works on aesthetics of one of the most influential members of the so called "Frankfurt School", Marcuse. Through his writings we will define the social relevance of art as the model for a utopian interpretation of future. To support his perspective, we will focus on contemporary artistic movements such as "futurism," "abstractionism" and the "atonal" musical composition.

This course has an Existence, Meaning, and Culture (EMC) designation for the purposes of major specialization.

PHIL 279: Judgment and Decision-Making | *Marcella Linn* (*Mind and Science*)

Our everyday conceptions of the way we think, make choices, and act often assume we exercise significant control and awareness. Many philosophical accounts of action and character make similar assumptions. But, current work in social psychology suggests we are prone to many cognitive biases and that our behavior is often influenced by minor situational factors rather than our conscious choices or character. These findings raise important questions pertaining to human agency as well as moral responsibility for action and character.

This course has a Mind and Science (M&S) designation for the purposes of major specialization.

PHIL 284: Health Care Ethics | *Jennifer Parks; Elizabeth Hoppe* (*Ethics and Values*)

PHIL 284 is designed to provide you with an introduction to the philosophical approach to problems in health care ethics. You will be taught to recognize and critically apply various ethical theories and principles with a view to solving moral problems in a rationally defensible manner. We will consider different ethical theories such as utilitarianism, Kantian ethics, care ethics, and the four principles of health care ethics (justice, autonomy, beneficence, and non-maleficence). A number of problematic issues will be covered, including roles and relationships in health care, abortion, caring for persons who are aging, euthanasia and physician-assisted suicide, and assisted reproductive technology.

This course has an Ethics and Values (E&V) designation for the purposes of major specialization.

PHIL 284W: Health Care Ethics | *Pamela Lomelino* (*Ethics and Values; Writing Intensive*)

In this class, you will learn to philosophically analyze complex ethical issues in health care. After learning the theories and concepts that provide the foundation for a philosophical analysis of health care ethics, you will have the opportunity to exercise and improve your newly acquired philosophical skills by analyzing various ethical issues that arise in the health care context – slowly progressing through more difficult issues, so that you have learned to apply the philosophical foundations you've learned onto a very complex and difficult health care ethical issue by the end of the semester.

This course has an Ethics and Values (E&V) designation for the purposes of major specialization.

This course fulfills a Writing Intensive (WI) requirement.

PHIL 287W: Environmental Ethics | *Paul Ott*

(Ethics and Values; Law, Society, and Social Justice; Writing Intensive)

Environmental ethics is the philosophical study of the value of nature (ecosystems, animals, plants), the human-nature relationship, and the ethical issues that arise from these two issues. The central issue has been the question of nature's value, answers to which range from strongly anthropocentric to strongly non-anthropocentric positions. Anthropocentrism regards humans as either the only or the highest entity of ethical worth (intrinsic value), with the non-human having either less value or only instrumental value. Non-anthropocentrism ascribes strong ethical value to various non-human entities, from individual animals (animal ethics) and living things (biocentrism) to holistic views concerning the moral status of species, ecosystems, and nature as a whole.

We will look at a number of related issues, such as the existence and nature of intrinsic value, animal ethics, the deep ecology/social ecology debate, ecofeminism, and issues in climate change and environmental justice. Before we investigate any of these issues, we will start by looking at the philosophical and historical origins of environmental and anti-environmental thinking. A central question we will discuss is the meaning of the concept of nature itself, which is fraught with controversy. We will also read a good portion of one of the most important books in environmental writing, Aldo Leopold's *A Sand County Almanac*.

This course has both an Ethics and Values (E&V) designation and a Law, Society, and Social Justice (LSSJ) designation for the purposes of major specialization. It also fulfills a Writing Intensive (WI) requirement.

PHIL 288: Culture and Civilization – Friendship, Romance, and Technology | *Peter Bergeron*

(Ethics and Values; Law, Society, and Social Justice)

We are deeply social creatures. The link between vibrant interpersonal relationships and a rich, flourishing human life was explored by the Greek philosopher Aristotle centuries ago. He claimed that even if we had all the goods that the world could offer, none of us would choose to have those at the expense of having friends. The importance of relationships continues to dominate the research of scholars in many fields. Our culture is profoundly technological. This has been true for decades and is not merely the result of the development of new forms of social media such as the smartphone. This culture shapes us in many ways, including the way we engage relationships with others. The Jesuit scholar John Calkin writes, "We become what we behold. We shape our tools and then our tools shape us." The effects of these tools on our relationships with others are being widely researched and hotly contested. It is clear that these new tools are shaping us. This course will explore two kinds of relationships, friendship and romantic partnerships, and the ways in which our technological culture both enhances and diminishes our capacity to connect well with others.

This course has both an Ethics and Values (E&V) designation and a Law, Society, and Social Justice (LSSJ) designation for the purposes of major specialization.

300-level Courses (Upper-Division Courses for Philosophy Majors and Minors)

PHIL 309: Classical Modern Philosophy – Canonical and Noncanonical | *Kristen Irwin*

Studying the classical modern philosophers doesn't tell the entire story of Western philosophical thought in the 17th & 18th centuries. While we will cover the canonical thinkers in this course primarily via secondary sources, we will spend our time in primary texts on noncanonical philosophers, which may include figures such as Elisabeth of Bohemia, Damaris Masham, Mary Astell, Anne Conway, Nicolas Malebranche, Pierre Bayle, Margaret Cavendish, Catherine Trotter Cockburn, and Mary Shepherd.

This course, taught each Spring Term, is a requirement for the Philosophy major.

PHIL 323: Philosophy of Law | *Vincent Samar*
(*Law, Society, and Social Justice*)

This course will consider a number of topics residing at the cutting edge where law and legal philosophy meet, including: What is law? Must law be related to morality? What is the interpretative function of courts? Should integrity constrain what courts decide? From whence does the duty to obey law come? Are there any human rights? Might some of these rights be manifested by our ideas of liberty, privacy and freedom of expression? Need we respond to terrorism by changing our values? What is distributive justice as compared with corrective or retributive justice? Are distributive justice questions implicated by court decisions involving affirmative action, gender, and sexual orientation? How is corrective justice manifested in tort and contract law? What is ownership? Is ownership of intellectual property morally justified? What is the relationship of causation to responsibility, and what is punishment and how is it justified? Students taking this course for 3 hours credit will be required to take a midterm examination counting 30% of their grade and write a 7 page analytical paper on a philosophy of law topic of their choice that will be due on the last day of class and will count for 70% of their grade. In anticipation of the paper, students will be required to submit a one paragraph statement of their topic and how they plan to approach it. This will be followed by a more extensive outline of the paper.

This course has a Law, Society, and Social Justice (LSSJ) designation for the purposes of major specialization.

PHIL 324B/BIET 395: Bioethics Capstone | *Jennifer Parks & Dawn Franks*
(*Ethics and Values*)

This course will provide a comprehensive overview of the field of human reproduction. We will explore several biological, physiological, ethical, legal, social justice, and health issues related to reproduction and assisted reproductive technology. The class will also consider U.S. public policies that have been formulated around reproduction.

This course has an Ethics and Values (E&V) designation for the purposes of major specialization. Credit for this course will count as credit towards the Bioethics Minor.

PHIL 335: Asian Philosophy – Classical Chinese Philosophy | *Richard Kim*
(*Ethics and Values*)

This course examines central philosophical traditions in the classical Chinese (pre-Qin) period, with a particular focus on ethical issues. Among the classical texts we will examine are the Analects, Mencius, and Xunzi (Confucianism), Daodejing and Zhuangzi (Daoism), Mozi (Mohism), and Han Feizi (Legalism).

In examining these texts we will explore a number of key philosophical issues: (1) What is the nature of the good life? (2) What virtues are necessary to live well? (3) How should we organize our society? (4) Is human nature good or bad? (5) Is individual moral self-cultivation or social structures more fundamental to social change?

This course has an Ethics and Values (E&V) designation for the purposes of major specialization.

PHIL 360: Contemporary European Philosophy | *Jennifer Gaffney*
(*Existence, Meaning, and Culture*)

This course focuses on central philosophical topics addressed in twentieth century French and German philosophy—for example, subjectivity, time, facticity, freedom, embodiment, power, and alterity. The course will consider the development of these themes in the fields of phenomenology, existentialism, deconstruction, and post-structuralism and include readings from figures such as Edmund Husserl, Martin Heidegger, Jean-Paul Sartre, Hannah Arendt, Simone de Beauvoir, Michel Foucault, and Jacques Derrida.

This course has an Existence, Meaning, and Culture (EMC) designation for the purposes of major specialization.

PHIL 369W: Philosophy of Medicine (Writing Intensive) | *Pamela Lomelino*
(*Mind and Science*)

In this course, you will learn to conduct a philosophical analysis of clinical judgement as practiced in Western Medicine. To do so, you will learn the epistemological aspects of clinical judgement, the metaphysical aspects of some of the core concepts at play in clinical judgement, and the ethical aspects involved in the doctor/patient relationship.

This course has a Mind and Science (M&S) designation for the purposes of major specialization. This course fulfills a Writing Intensive (WI) requirement.

PHIL 398: John F. Grant Capstone Seminar in Bioethics | *Mark Waymack*
(*Ethics and Values*)

This seminar will grapple with ethics and biomedical research using human subjects. It will include emphasis upon the ethically complicated issues of doing research involving certain socio-ethnic population groups with a view towards the issue of justice.

This course has an Ethics and Values (E&V) designation for the purposes of major specialization. Credit for this seminar will count as credit towards the Bioethics Minor.

PHIL 399: Capstone Seminar on a Topic in Philosophy – Models and Simulations in Science and Public Policy | *James Harrington*
(*Mind and Science*)

In both natural and social sciences investigators routinely "build" models of phenomena ranging from concrete material models ("tinker toy models" in chemistry, for example), abstract mathematical expressions ("phase space" models of physical phenomena or "selection landscapes" in evolutionary biology), and modern computer simulations are used in everything from climate science to epidemiology. In many areas of public policy such models play a crucial role in providing information on which politicians and policy makers rely in decision-making. In this class we'll examine such model building and simulation practices from various perspectives, including the role of models in science, the relationships between models and theories, problems with the interpretation of models, and questions of the reliability of models. Along the way we'll examine various current issues related to modeling and policy including climate change, epidemiological modeling of the current pandemic, and the use of economic models in politics. Readings will include books and articles from Nancy Cartwright, Eric Winsberg, and Margaret Morrison among others.

This course has a Mind and Science (M&S) designation for the purposes of major specialization.