

PHILOSOPHY COURSE OFFERINGS

– SPRING 2019 –

200-level Courses (Tier Two)

PHIL 272: Metaphysics | *Andrew Cutrofello*

In Plato's *Phaedo*, Socrates suggests that physics—the study of the physical world—can only tell us so much. There are things that physics cannot tell us about, such as the nature of justice or whether we have immortal souls. These topics belong to what we now call *metaphysics*. The prefix “meta-“ means “after” or “beyond.” Traditionally, it was the job of poets to deal with metaphysical topics. One of Plato's goals is to explain the difference between poetic and philosophical approaches to metaphysical topics, while maintaining the difference between metaphysics and physics. Ever since, philosophers have struggled to articulate the relationship between physics, metaphysics, and poetry. Some have argued that as physics has become more sophisticated, it has swallowed up metaphysics. Others have argued that all metaphysics – even that of Plato – is just a kind of poetry. Still others have followed Plato in trying to carve out a special domain for metaphysics. In this class we survey various approaches to this problem. We will begin with Plato and then move on to Immanuel Kant, Kitaro Nishida, Susan Howe (a poet, writing about the philosopher Charles Peirce), and Werner Heisenberg (a physicist, writing about the relationship between physics and metaphysics).

PHIL 274: Logic | *Harry Gensler*

This course aims to promote reasoning skills, especially the ability to recognize valid reasoning. We'll study syllogistic, propositional, modal, and basic quantificational logic. We'll use these to analyze hundreds of arguments, many on philosophical topics like morality, free will, and the existence of God. We'll also study informal fallacies. Our text is *Introduction to Logic* (by Harry J. Gensler, Routledge, 2017 third edition). My <http://www.harryhiker.com/courses.htm> page has a downloadable syllabus.

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 275: Theory of Knowledge | *Blake Dutton*

This course serves as an introduction to the theory of knowledge, otherwise known as epistemology. In the first part of the course (Unit 1), we will look at contemporary epistemology, largely as it is practiced in the Anglo-American philosophical tradition, and the set of problems that define it. Of major concern will be the nature of knowledge, the possibility of knowledge, the sources of knowledge, and the relation of knowledge to justification and truth. In the second part of the course (Units 2, 3 & 4), we will take a deep dive into three historically important texts that have shaped the field of epistemology: Plato's *Theaetetus*, Descartes' *Meditations on First Philosophy*, and Hume's *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*. Here we will see classic treatments of many of the same problems that occupy contemporary epistemologists. In the third part of the course (Unit 5), we will look at literature in cognitive psychology that explores the reliability of ordinary cognitive processes and the judgments to which they give rise. In doing so, we will discuss the bearing this literature has on the philosophical problems we have encountered in the first two sections of the course.

PHIL 276/PSYC276: Philosophy of Mind | *Joseph Vukov*

The philosophy of mind studies several issues falling under one wide-ranging question: what is the relationship between your conscious experiences and the neural and bodily processes that underlie those experiences? 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, Philosophy of Cognitive Science and Consciousness, and Neuroethics. The course counts towards the epistemology requirement in the Philosophy major, as a Group A Lecture course in the Psychology major, and as an elective towards the philosophy major and minor, psychology major, and cognitive/behavioral neuroscience major.

PHIL 279/PSYC279: Judgment and Decision-Making | *Marcella Linn*

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.

PHIL 284: Health Care Ethics | *Jennifer Parks; Elizabeth Hoppe*

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.

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

In this class, students will learn to philosophically analyze complex ethical issues in healthcare. After learning the theories and concepts that provide the foundation for a philosophical analysis of healthcare ethics, students will have the opportunity to exercise and improve your newly acquired philosophical skills by analyzing various ethical issues that arise in the healthcare context. *This course fulfills a Writing Intensive (WI) requirement.*

PHIL 284: Health Care Ethics (Online) | *Marcella Linn*

This course studies philosophical ethics as practiced in the health care setting. *This course section is offered as an online course.*

PHIL 287: Environmental Ethics | *Paul Ott*

This course will look at various philosophical and ethical views on the relationship between humans and the natural world. Topics may include: pollution, animal rights, and natural resources.

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

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 Cushman 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.

PHIL 288: Culture and Civilization – Classical Chinese Philosophy | *Richard Kim*

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, Xunzi, Daodejing, Zhuangzi, and Mozi. We will focus on the three core traditions represented by these texts: Confucianism, Daoism, and Mohism.

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 reason or emotion more fundamental to the good life?

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

PHIL 308: Classical Islamic Philosophy | *Blake Dutton*

From approximately 800 CE to 1200 CE, the Islamic world was home to a rich tradition of philosophical inquiry that flourished under the Abbāsīd caliphate and that had as its center Baghdad. Though Islam put its distinctive imprint on this tradition, its practitioners are best seen as building upon and extending the achievements of their Greek predecessors—particularly Aristotle and the Neoplatonists. Like the Greeks before them, Muslim philosophers of this period explored an astonishing range of philosophical questions in such diverse areas as logic, metaphysics, cosmology, psychology, ethics and political philosophy. Unlike their Greek predecessors, however, they were concerned to give an account of the relation of what is known through philosophical inquiry to what is known through scripture. In other words, they were concerned to give an account of what is known through natural reason and what is known through prophetic revelation. The way in which they carried out this task will be the overarching theme of this course.

After an overview, first, of the early development of Islam, its intellectual culture, and the place of philosophy within it, we will turn to the work of four towering figures of the Islamic philosophical tradition: al-Fārābī (870-950), Ibn Sīnā (980-1037), al-Ghazālī (1058-1111) and Ibn Rushd (1126-1198). In reading al-Fārābī and Ibn Sīnā, we begin with the two most influential figures in this tradition by far. Our focus will be on the emanationist cosmology that each constructs, the theory of cognition that each develops in conjunction with this cosmology, and the theory of prophecy that each articulates in the light of all of this. In reading al-Ghazālī, we turn to a fierce critic of the philosophical tradition within Islam, yet one who had attained mastery of its methods and results. Our focus will be on his critique of al-Fārābī and Ibn Sīnā and his views on the limits and dangers of philosophy within Islam. In reading Ibn Rushd, we end with the greatest of the Andalusian philosophers within Islam. Our focus will be on his attempt to vindicate philosophy against the attacks of al-Ghazālī and his development of a purely Aristotelian philosophy devoid of Neoplatonic elements. In all of this, we will pay careful attention to what each of these thinkers had to say, not only about the particular philosophical issues that commanded their interest and attention, but also about the overall relation of faith to reason.

PHIL 309: Classical Modern Philosophy | *James Harrington*

The history of philosophy from the Scientific Revolution through Kant.

This course is a requirement for the Philosophy major and is only taught in the Spring Term each year.

PHIL 311: Issues in Metaphysics | *Andrew Cutrofello*

Philosophical attempts to determine the sense of our most fundamental concepts—concepts such as Being, Unity, Reality, etc.—have a tendency to generate apparent contradictions, or what philosophers call antinomies. In the *Parmenides*, Plato derives four antinomies from hypotheses about the being or non-being of "the One." Perplexingly, he says nothing about how we should respond to them. In the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant identifies four different antinomies about the idea of the world as a totality. He goes on to explain why they arise and how they can be resolved. Hegel, in his two works on logic, criticizes Kant for the way in which he resolves his antinomies, and for failing to recognize that every concept gives rise to an antinomy. Our aim in this class will be to examine and assess all three approaches—those of Plato, Kant, and Hegel.

PHIL 340: Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas** | *Alberto Bertozzi*

A study of the philosophy of Thomas Aquinas, including background regarding his life and medieval context.

*** This course has seats reserved for St. Joseph students, meaning there are limited enrollment opportunities for other students. Please contact the instructor or Undergraduate Program Director for more information.*

PHIL 355/PSYC 355: Neuroethics | *Joseph Vukov*

Neuroethics encompasses two fields of study: the ethics of neuroscience and the neuroscience of ethics. This course considers both fields, but focuses on the former. More specifically, the course considers how neuroethicists use classic bioethical principles, philosophical resources, and contemporary neuroscience and cognitive science to address ethical questions that are emerging from new neuroscientific discoveries and technologies. The course counts towards credit for the philosophy major and minor, the psychology major and minor, and the cognitive/behavioral neuroscience major.

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

In this course, students will investigate philosophical questions concerning the practice of medicine in the clinical context, such as the epistemology of medicine; the goals of medicine; core concepts in medicine; medicine as a profession; and the ideal physician-patient relationship.

This course fulfills a Writing Intensive (WI) requirement.

PHIL 389W/WSGS 389W: Contemporary Issues – Epistemologies of Ignorance
(Writing Intensive) | *Hanne Jacobs*

Broadly understood, social epistemology focuses on what role social interaction and social structures play in the acquisition of knowledge. In this class we will focus on how one's particular position in a particular society can result in a lack or absence of knowledge in the form of ignorance. We will discuss different forms of ignorance, to what extent and in what way ignorance is produced, whether and to what extent we are responsible for being ignorant, as well as which strategies could help us overcome ignorance. The body of literature we will focus on intersects with feminist theory and critical race theory, and our discussion will cross the disciplinary boundaries of philosophy into psychology, history, science, and poetry and literature.

This course fulfills a Writing Intensive (WI) requirement.

PHIL 396/407: Seminar in Medieval Philosophy – Suárez and Jesuit Scholasticism* |
Kristen Irwin; Peter Hartman

The course investigates the Thomist Scholastic roots of Francisco Suárez, a Jesuit contemporary of Descartes, and his influence on early modern philosophy. Suárez profoundly influenced the early modern philosophical landscape on a variety of topics, both in his own right and as a source for scholastic views against which early modern philosophers developed their own views. We will trace both metaphysical and moral themes in Suárez's works to their medieval origins in Thomas Aquinas, and follow them through early modern responses. Topics to be covered will include: substances and accidents, relations, causal powers, the soul and its faculties, the mind-body relationship, mental representation, the will and freedom, habits, and moral responsibility.

We will also read relevant selections from Thomas Aquinas and Suárez's medieval predecessors, as well as his early modern successors—those whom he read and those who responded to him—to provide the complete context of the origin and reception of his thought. Students will receive a foundation not only in Thomas Aquinas and early modern philosophy, but also an understanding of core philosophical issues produced by one of the most important scholastic thinkers of the early modern period.

**This course is a split 300/400-level course with limited enrollment opportunities for undergraduates. Please contact the instructors or Undergraduate Program Director for more information.*

PHIL 398(02): Grant Capstone Seminar in Bioethics | *Mark Waymack*

This seminar will explore the ethical complexities of human subjects research. It will especially focus on human subjects research that raises difficult questions about human person and social context. For example, what particular ethical difficulties does research that relates to "race" pose? What ethical quandaries do we face in relation to biomedical research into questions of sex and gender? Etc.

Credit for this seminar will count as credit towards the Bioethics Minor.

PHIL 398(01): Capstone Seminar in Contemporary Philosophy – Justice: Food, Water, and the Environment | *Heidi Malm*

This course in analytic philosophy will explore a variety of contemporary and controversial ethical issues lying at the crossroads of ethical theory, applied ethics, social philosophy and the philosophy of law. The unifying themes will be (as the title implies) considerations of justice involving food, water, and the environment at large. Sample topics include: (a) competing theories of justice and how they create different frameworks for addressing applied problems of justice; (b) the differences between demands of justice within a nation (e.g., what do we owe other Americans with respect to sufficient food, potable water, and sustainable environmental practices?), and demands of justice between nations (e.g., must there be a causal connection between the country that could aid and the harm that would be addressed by the aid, in order for there to be a duty to aid? Why?); c) can we have obligations to future generations? Can we harm persons who don't yet exist? Can they be 'harmed' even if no individual has been made worse off from his/her starting point?; (d) philosophic conceptions of property and, in light of them, whether water (or even just rain water) can rightly be considered property, and if it can, can air also be claimed as property?; (e) claims for 'food sovereignty' by indigenous groups, as well as the debate between those promoting the "local foods" movement and those promoting an international 'fair trade movement' each as matters of ethics and justice; (f) duties to address structural problems of (in)justice such as 'food deserts', proximity to poorly regulated dumping grounds; (g) rights, justice, and environmental policy involving non-human animals and the environment (e.g., who has 'moral standing' to make a claim of justice? Can a river have 'standing' (as in New Zealand)? A bird (as in Hawaii)? A chimpanzee (as in an East-coast state but the ruling was overturned)? And... several topics to be selected on the basis of student interest.