PHILOSOPHY COURSE OFFERINGS
– FALL 2020 –

200-level Courses (Tier Two)

PHIL 274: Logic | *Arnold Vander Nat; Brandon Morgan-Olsen*

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/PSYC 276: Philosophy of Mind | *Joseph Vukov*

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, Philosophy of Cognitive Science and Consciousness, and Neuroethics.

PHIL 279: 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*

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 284: Health Care Ethics | *Elizabeth Hoppe*

This ethics course emphasizes the importance of using philosophical tools (concepts, values, theories, forms of argumentation, and so on) that illuminate, analyze, and evaluate the practice and domain of health care. The course aims to enable students to become better moral reasoners; that is, to improve one's ability to recognize, think through, assess, and articulate moral views as well as to understand, contribute to, and critique the views of others. The first part examines some of the key ethical theories that will be applied to the health care industry: Aristotelian ethics, Kantian deontology, and utilitarianism. In part two, we will investigate moral foundations such as moral norms, character, and status. The third and fourth parts address four principles that form a framework for medical ethics: autonomy, nonmaleficence, beneficence, and justice. The required textbook is: *Principles of Biomedical Ethics* by Tom L. Beauchamp and James F. Childress, 7th edition, Oxford University Press

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

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.

PHIL 287: Environmental Ethics | *Paul Ott*

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 direct 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 environmental justice.

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 Culkin 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.

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

PHIL 304: History of Ancient Philosophy | *Joshua Mendelsohn*

In this course, we will track the development of philosophy from the earliest Greek philosophers until Aristotle. We will work to understand evaluate the answers Greek philosophy offers to questions such as: Can you teach someone to be good? Will being good make you happy? What is knowledge? Are the senses our only access to reality? How should we organize ourselves as a community?

We will see how Greek philosophy emerged as a characteristic yet disparate group of voices in an intellectual landscape where epic myth and sophistry commanded epistemic authority. The earliest Greek philosophers will be read as responding to the cosmogenic myths of Homer and Hesiod. We will encounter Plato and Socrates in the context of their challenges and concessions to the looming influences of sophistry and myth. Readings from Socratic dialogues will supply a sketch of Socrates' life and his fate as a subversive figure, while readings from Plato's Meno, Republic, Theaetetus and Timaeus will show how Plato extends and transforms Socrates' ethical project into a metaphysical-epistemological program and a political philosophy. Finally, we will turn to Aristotle, and examine his ideas about the good life, the ideal city and the study of nature.

If there is time, we will cast a glance at the afterlife of some of these ideas in Hellenistic or early Medieval philosophy, and/or draw some comparisons with classical Buddhist and Vedic traditions. *This course is a requirement for the Philosophy major and is only taught in the Fall Term each year.*

PHIL 310: Issues in the Philosophy of Human Nature | *Freya Möbus*

The existence of something like a human nature that separates us from other animals has been stated throughout the history of philosophy. But many contemporary philosophers reject the very idea of human nature because there simply doesn't seem to be a criterion that reliably distinguishes us from other animals. Language, for instance, does not exclusively belong to humans. Plenty of other animals (and even plants and bacteria) communicate.

Ancient philosophers not only believed that human nature exists; they even argued that we should live in a particular way—that a certain way of life will bring us true happiness—precisely because of our nature. Aristotle, for instance, thought that the "proper function" of human beings was to think well, from which he derived the idea that the best life is one of contemplation, i.e., the life of a philosopher. In the Stoic fragments, we repeatedly find the claim that living well means "living in accordance with nature." Epicureans believed that humans by nature try to maximize pleasure and minimize pain; a good life, they argued, is thus one that accomplishes precisely that. Ancient Greek philosophers share this approach with Buddhist and classical Chinese philosophers: certain ideas about human nature, about what it means to be human, are foundational to their accounts about what it means to live a good (or bad) life.

In this class, I want to tackle the following questions with you: Do ancient philosophers simply make a mistake by inferring how we should live from what kinds of beings we are? Is what those ancient folks proposed even compatible with modern day science? And even if what they say is compatible with modern science, why should we care? Can ancient philosophers contribute anything to modern discussions about what it means to be human and living well? To this end, we will not only dig deep into the ancient philosophical texts, but also into their contemporary reception.

PHIL 321W: Ethics and Society – Philosophy of Race (Writing Intensive) | *Jesús Luzardo*

In this class, we will investigate the social construction of race in the United States, and how these modes of construction have affected social and political rights as well as the ethical well-being of members of racially constructed groups. In this course we will examine several contemporary arguments within the field of critical race theory.

PHIL 324B/BIET 395: Bioethics Minor Capstone | *Joseph Vukov and Toby Dye*

This course begins by considering general principles of research ethics from both philosophical and practical perspectives. The course then moves on to consider how these general principles can be applied in a specific context: research in neuroscience. While research in neuroscience regularly raises familiar ethical issues, it often raises these issues in a distinctive way. Issues surrounding informed consent, privacy, autonomy, confidentiality, the protection of vulnerable populations: all these issues take on new complications when considered within the context of research in neuroscience. As we approach these issues (and others), we will work not only to understand the underlying ethical question, but also to understand how research in neuroscience is ethically similar to and different from other kinds of research involving humans and other animals.

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

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. You must have completed at least two philosophy classes in order to enroll in this course.

PHIL 381: Philosophy of Science | *James Harrington*

This is a general introduction to philosophy of science. Topics covered include understanding the nature and structure of scientific theories and how they go about representing the world; the nature of natural laws and the difference if any between laws and mere regularities; scientific explanation and its role in the justification of scientific theories; questions about realism and truth in evaluating science. If time permits, we will address some issues in the philosophy of particular sciences including physics, biology and climatology.

PHIL 398(01): Capstone Seminar – Nietzsche | *Jacqueline Scott*

This course will attempt to explore the debate among Nietzsche scholars as to the nature of Nietzsche's positive philosophy in the late works. We will examine such issues as the role of tragedy/art, politics, culture, Dionysus, the *Übermensch*, will to power, *ressentiment*, health, and decadence in the later versions of his positive project. We will then be asking whether this project is focused on creating great individuals or on instituting a cultural/political revaluation, and if it is as radical as he thinks it is.

PHIL 398(02): Capstone Seminar – The Crisis of 21st Century Democracy: The Political Economy of Public Reason in the New Era of Identity Politics and Hyper-Inequality | *David Ingram*

The course will examine philosophical issues regarding the constantly evolving, complex and fraught relationship between democratic populism, the rule of law, capitalism, and socially mediated cyber (dis-)information. The questions the course will address include:

1. Is there such a thing as a democratic ideal? If so, how far should that ideal reflect the structural and institutional constraints imposed by complex legal, political, social, cultural, and economic systems?
2. What is the relationship between voting, schemes of representation, partisan competition for power, identity politics, inclusion, legitimation, and public reason (deliberation)?
3. Given the importance of technical expertise in managing complex systems in our modern scientific world, can democratic (viz. popular) rule remain a rational ideal to be striven for? Or has democracy become an annoying cacophony of polarized ideologies, worldviews, and parochial perspectives that serves no rational purpose and renders effective government impossible?
4. Is the principle of majority rule sacrosanct? Should non-elected judges have supreme power to overrule it? How can minority groups be guaranteed an effective, impactful voice in setting political agendas and influencing legislation?
5. In what ways is democracy a fair procedure for resolving political conflict? Must voting outcomes that are acceptable to all (including the losers) express a prior effort on the part of everyone to reason impartially about the common good? When can they also express a fair compromise between essentially competing interests and ideologies?
6. How have social media contributed to enhancing or distorting the democratic process? Given the relationship between social media platforms and their control by profit-driven, data-gathering mass media giants, can they ever be anything more than manipulative and polarizing forces in democratic life?
7. How far should democracy extend into the workplace? What would economic democracy look like?
8. In what sense, if any, is economic equality essential to democratic life? What is the relationship between universal welfare, healthcare, and educational opportunity to democracy?
9. How important is trust and solidarity in fomenting healthy democratic political life and social democratic welfare? In what respects does multicultural/racial diversity promote or hinder trust and solidarity?