

PHI

Philosophy

Note: Prior to the priority registration period each semester, the Department of Philosophy publishes information on courses (200 level and above) to be offered for the next semester. This information includes details on course topics and materials to be used in each course. Students are encouraged to obtain the information to assist them in course selection.

PHI 100 INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY: KNOWLEDGE AND REALITY. (3)

An introduction to philosophical studies with emphasis on issues of knowing, reality, and meaning related to human existence.

PHI 111 INTRODUCTORY TOPICS IN PHILOSOPHY (Subtitle required). (1-3)

This course will cover topics that cross traditional systematic or historical lines in philosophy or that relate philosophy to topics or periods in other disciplines. May be repeated under a different subtitle to a maximum of six credits. Prereq: Determined by instructor.

PHI 120 THE ART OF THINKING: AN INTRODUCTION TO LOGIC. (3)

A course which treats argumentation, syllogistic, and sentential logic. The focus will be on the use of formal methods in the construction and criticism of actual arguments, the aim being to inculcate standards of good reasoning, e.g., clarity, consistency and validity. Credit is not given to students who already have credit for PHI 320.

PHI 130 INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY: MORALITY AND SOCIETY. (3)

An introduction to philosophical studies with emphasis on a critical study of principles of moral action and social and political values.

#PHI 135 THE ETHICS OF A HUMAN LIFE. (3)

Ethical questions arise at every stage of a human life, from before a person is born until after she dies. This course will explore the ethical questions that arise at familiar stages of a person's life: her conception, childhood, adulthood, death, and what happens after death. We will consider some surprising ways philosophers have tried to answer these questions, and we will think about how the arguments they make can help us better understand the ethical shape of a human life as a whole.

PHI 160 SCIENCE, WAR, AND THE FATE OF THE WORLD. (3)

Global wars remade the modern world in the 20th century. These global wars fueled — were fueled by — revolutions in our understanding of science and scientific inquiry, from the physics that ushered in air travel, nuclear bombs, and computers to the chemistry and biology that fed the world while giving rise to more powerful weapons than ever before. In this class, we will examine how the scientific revolutions that brought about atomic theory, quantum mechanics, relativity, and modern agriculture were shaped by the complex relationship between science, war, and society, and how modern physics reshaped philosophical views on the nature of space, time, matter, and the very practice of science itself.

PHI 193 CIRCUS AND PHILOSOPHY. (3)

How is juggling like being a good person? What does the trapeze have to do with free will? What does circus have to do with truth? Intended for students with little to no experience in either circus or philosophy, this class uses the acquisition of circus skills as a springboard for basic philosophical inquiry.

This class is fully participatory: we won't just be learning about the circus, we will be learning how to circus. Each full week will be divided into two classes: one in a movement space, where students learned a physical circus skill, such as aerial arts, juggling, or acro-balancing, and the other in a classroom setting where students investigated various philosophical topics in metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, aesthetics, logic, and more.

PHI 205 FOOD ETHICS. (3)

An examination of philosophical issues about food, including whether taste is subjective or objective, why different foods are acceptable to eat in some cultures but not in others, the moral permissibility of eating animals and animal products, and the impact of food production on the environment.

PHI 245 INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION. (3)

An introduction to the philosophical study of religion, with attention to issues such as the nature of religious language, religious experience, concepts of God, science and religion, religious pluralism, miracles and revelation, death and the afterlife, and the problem of evil.

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PHI 260 HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY I: FROM GREEK BEGINNINGS TO THE MIDDLE AGES. (3)

Western philosophy from ancient through late medieval times including systematic work in logic, metaphysics, epistemology and ethics by such philosophers as Plato, Aristotle, Augustine and Aquinas.

PHI 270 HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY II: FROM THE RENAISSANCE TO THE PRESENT ERA. (3)

An introductory study of the development of Western philosophy from early modern to recent times including systematic work in logic, metaphysics, epistemology and ethics by such philosophers as Occam, Descartes, Hume and Kant.

PHI 300 SPECIAL TOPICS IN PHILOSOPHY (Subtitle required). (1-3)

Topics that cross traditional systematic or historical lines in philosophy or that relate philosophy to topics or periods in other disciplines. May be repeated under a different subtitle to a maximum of seven credits. Prereq: Determined by instructor.

PHI 305 HEALTH CARE ETHICS. (3)

This survey course will evaluate theories, topics, and controversies from all levels of contemporary health care ethics. While much of the discussion will be centered around the ethical obligations that one has as a healthcare provider, we will also assess the ethical dilemmas that a patient or their family may face as they navigate the complex landscape of the healthcare system. We will broadly explore the key philosophical arguments and general positions for the main theories in health care ethics. We will also demonstrate how these concepts can be effectively translated to the clinical or “real-world” setting as we discuss real and hypothetical cases.

PHI 310 PHILOSOPHY OF HUMAN NATURE. (3)

An introductory philosophy course for upper division students that analyzes various ways that philosophers have attempted to define the human individual. It pursues diverse methods of inquiry into questions such as these: Do human beings have a fixed and definable human nature? What differentiates the properly human from the nonhuman? Are human actions free or determined? How are human beings essentially related to history, culture, society and the natural environment?

PHI 315 PHILOSOPHY AND SCIENCE FICTION. (3)

An examination of fundamental questions in metaphysics, epistemology, and value theory through a comparison of works of philosophy and science fiction. Questions will be discussed such as: Can there be time travel? Can computers think? Can there be non-human persons, and if so how would we identify them? Can there be ways of knowing that are radically different from our own, and what might they be like? How much can a person change while remaining the same person?

PHI 317 EXISTENTIALIST THOUGHT AND LITERATURE. (3)

A survey of existentialism as a literary movement as well as a philosophical one, with emphasis upon their intersection and interaction. The course will trace the emergence of existentialist themes in modern thought and culture, and will analyze and assess the movements' continuing significance.

PHI 320 SYMBOLIC LOGIC I. (3)

A systematic study of sentential logic, elementary quantification, and the logic of identity. The student will acquire specific skills in symbolic methods of analysis which are necessary for further study in logic as well as useful for addressing complex issues in philosophy and other areas.

PHI 330 ETHICS. (3)

An examination of fundamental issues in ethics, such as duty, character, virtue and vice, evil, moral responsibility, free will, the good life, the emotions, skepticism, and rationality.

PHI 332 PROFESSIONAL ETHICS. (3)

A study of ethical issues related to professional roles, especially those of physicians and lawyers. Among the topics to be considered are the nature and justification of professional responsibilities and duties; obligations of professions to society; the professional-client relationship and its rights and obligations; enforcement of codes of ethics.

PHI 334 BUSINESS ETHICS. (3)

An introduction to moral problems that arise in contemporary business practice and the ethical frameworks proposed to resolve them. Topics will include areas such as truth-telling and integrity; social responsibility; property rights and their limitations; and justice in personnel and labor practices.

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PHI 335 THE INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIETY.

(3)

An examination of several incompatible views concerning the relation between the individual and society, including radical individualism and collectivism, as well as more moderate theories. Attention will be given to contemporary as well as classical spokesmen for these views and emphasis will be placed upon relating these theories to contemporary social, cultural, and political issues.

PHI 336 ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS.

(3)

An introduction to moral problems that arise in human interaction with the natural environment. Topics to be addressed include questions such as: what is man's place in nature? Do nonhuman animals or ecosystems have intrinsic moral worth, and if so, how can it be respected? What problems and ambiguities arise in attempting to live in an environmentally responsible fashion? How can we adjudicate conflicts between social and environmental values?

PHI 337 INTRODUCTION TO LEGAL PHILOSOPHY.

(3)

A general introduction to basic concepts, institutions, and mechanisms of law. Understanding of the legal system and its methods is promoted through discussion of topics which include: basic legal reasoning, the function of the legal process, fundamental legal concepts and categories (such as property, crime, and contract).

PHI 340 INTRODUCTION TO FEMINISM AND PHILOSOPHY.

(3)

Introduction to basic feminist thought from a philosophical perspective explored through topics such as gender roles, images of women in society, violence against women, and male socialization. Emphasis on causes of and solutions to the oppression of women. This course fulfills the UK Core Requirement: Community, Culture, and Citizenship in the USA.

PHI 343 ASIAN PHILOSOPHY.

(3)

An introduction to the main concepts, assumptions, problems and texts of one or more Asian philosophical traditions, such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism.

PHI 350 METAPHYSICS AND EPISTEMOLOGY.

(3)

An examination of fundamental issues in metaphysics and epistemology, such as causation, the nature of space and time, personal identity, free will, the existence of God, the nature and types of knowledge, the character of human existence, skepticism, and rationality. This course is a Graduation Composition and Communication Requirement (GCCR) course in certain programs, and hence is not likely to be eligible for automatic transfer credit to UK.

PHI 361 BIOLOGY AND SOCIETY (Subtitle required).

(3)

Humans, although undeniably unique, are as much a part of the natural world as any other species. This course surveys historical and contemporary approaches to the study of humans from a biological point of view. Against this backdrop, we examine a range of issues that loom large in modern society, for example, whether race and gender have a firm basis in biological science. This course is repeatable up to a total of 6 credit hours under different subtitles.

PHI 380 DEATH, DYING AND THE QUALITY OF LIFE.

(3)

A philosophical and interdisciplinary investigation of a cluster of prominent issues about the meaning of life and death, caring for dying persons, and the quality of life of the terminally ill. Among topics included are: death definitions and criteria; allowing to die vs. killing; euthanasia and suicide; life prolongation, ethics of care of the terminally ill; and rights of the dying.

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PHI 393 PHILOSOPHY OF FILM.

(3)

This course will examine the aesthetics of film from the early 20th Century to the present. Instead of using films to discuss philosophical issues, we will discuss the philosophical issues that film as an aesthetic medium raises. The aesthetic – for us, medium of film – is thus understood as irreducible to the traditional division in philosophy between practical philosophy (ethics, political philosophy) and theoretical philosophy (epistemology, metaphysics). The aesthetic brings with it its own set of rules, chief among them is the idea that its rules cannot be set out in advance of its product. We will thus be discussing art (film) as what generates a new theoretical discourse about it at each turn. The theoretical discourse, however, is in lively conversation with the product it seeks to understand and must change as the object itself evolves. What is more, film products themselves constitute their own proper critique of their own tradition in the sense that, for instance, the depth of field shot followed on from the formal constraints of the montage technique. This course will also have a practical component. Each student will create a short film (on a selected topic) which will then be shown to the class as a whole and subjected to (friendly) critique in class by all as well as in writing by a group of students. The film will then be reworked to address suggestions, resown again so that others may comment upon it both in writing and in their own films. In this way, students will both be able to make theoretical and practical comments on each other's work.

PHI 395 INDEPENDENT WORK.

(3)

Open only to students who have distinguished themselves in philosophy or in allied subjects. May be repeated to a maximum of 12 credits. Prereq: Major and standing of 3.0 in department.

PHI 399 EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING.

(1-6)

To provide the opportunity for students to earn credit for work-study experience. The student must work with a faculty member to describe the nature of the experience, the work to be performed, the accompanying philosophical reflection and study, appropriate course credit for the work, and criteria by which the work may be evaluated. This information must be written and filed in the Philosophy Department and the Office for Experiential Education prior to the student's registration for the course. May be repeated to a maximum of 12 credits. Pass-fail only. Prereq: Consent of instructor and department chairperson; completion of a departmental learning agreement.

PHI 500 TOPICS IN PHILOSOPHY (Subtitle required).

(1-3)

Topics that cross traditional systematic or historical lines in philosophy or that relate philosophy to topics or periods in other disciplines. May be repeated to a maximum of seven credits.

PHI 520 SYMBOLIC LOGIC II.

(3)

An intermediate course in symbolic logic which reviews sentential logic, develops further the logic of quantification, and introduces metalogical issues such as the construction, consistency, and completeness of deductive systems. Prereq: PHI 320 or consent of instructor.

GROUP A

PHI 503 TOPICS IN ANCIENT PHILOSOPHY.

(3)

A study of representative texts and issues in Ancient Philosophy with special attention to historical continuity and the interrelations of thinkers and problems. Possible Topics: Pre-Socratic Philosophers, Plato, Aristotle, Stoicism, Epicureanism, Scepticism. May be repeated to a maximum of six credits. Prereq: PHI 260 or consent of the instructor.

PHI 504 ISLAMIC AND JEWISH PHILOSOPHY AND THE CLASSICAL TRADITION.

(3)

A study of representative texts and issues in Islamic and Jewish philosophy with special attention to the historical continuity with the Greek philosophical tradition and the interrelations of thinkers and problems. Possible topics: the commensurability of philosophy and (revealed) law, the creation or eternity of the world, the nature of prophecy, the human good, the nature of God and divine language. Prereq: PHI 260 or consent of instructor.

PHI 506 TOPICS IN MEDIEVAL PHILOSOPHY.

(3)

An investigation of issues in Medieval Philosophy. Topics will be chosen which illustrate continuity both with Ancient Greek Sources and with problems in Modern Philosophy. Possible Topics: Neo-Platonism, Faith and Reason, Freedom and Determinism, Universals, the Existence of God, Renaissance reactions. May be repeated to a maximum of six credits. Prereq: PHI 260 or the consent of the instructor.

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PHI 509 TOPICS IN THE HISTORY OF MODERN PHILOSOPHY. (3)

A selective study of representative issues and texts in modern philosophy, with special emphasis upon historical continuity and interrelation of thinkers and problems. Possible topics: British empiricism; Leibniz and Locke; Descartes and his critics; Hobbes and Rousseau; Hume and Kant; philosophy and the rise of modern science. May be repeated to a maximum of six credits. Prereq: PHI 270 or the consent of the instructor.

PHI 513 NINETEENTH CENTURY PHILOSOPHY. (3)

An examination of the major topics and trends in 19th century philosophy. Prereq: PHI 270 or consent of instructor.

PHI 514 AMERICAN PHILOSOPHY. (3)

A study of the development of philosophy in America from colonial to recent times with attention to religious, political, literary and scientific influences on American thought. The focus will be on the pragmatic spirit that was the moving force from 19th century idealism to 20th century naturalism, with emphasis on the works of such thinkers as Royce, Peirce, James and Dewey.

PHI 515 CONTEMPORARY PHILOSOPHY: THE ANALYTIC TURN. (3)

A survey of several 20th century philosophical movements, such as logical positivism and ordinary language philosophy, whose members agree that careful attention to language is one of the keys to the resolution of philosophical problems. The works of representative thinkers such as Moore, Russell, the Vienna Circle, Wittgenstein and Austin will be studied. Prereq: PHI 320 or 350 or the consent of the instructor.

PHI 516 CONTEMPORARY PHILOSOPHY: PHENOMENOLOGICAL DIRECTIONS. (3)

A study of 20th century philosophies represented by the works of thinkers such as Husserl and Heidegger, Gadamer and Ricoeur, Habermas and Apel. Generally based in a reflection on human experience, these philosophies undertake a radical criticism of common conceptions of human nature while variously emphasizing rationality, ontology, language, or social and historical context. Prereq: PHI 270 or consent of instructor.

PHI 517 EXISTENTIALISM. (3)

A systematic study of the fundamental concepts and problems of existentialism. Readings selected from such philosophers as Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Sartre, Marcel, Heidegger, and Jaspers. Prereq: PHI 270 or the consent of the instructor.

GROUP B

PHI 519 CRITICAL SOCIAL THOUGHT. (3)

This course provides a pluralistic introduction to major 20th-century paradigms of critical social thought. Critical social thought in philosophy comprises those authors and schools that focus philosophical methods and questions on the analysis of social conditions and/or focus sociocultural methods and questions on the study of philosophy. These include feminist philosophy, Marxist-influenced social theory, poststructuralism, critical race theory, and post-analytic philosophy. Prereq: For undergraduates, PHI 270, 335, or 340 or consent of instructor. For graduate students outside the philosophy department, permission of the instructor.

PHI 522 ADVANCED CRITICAL THINKING. (3)

We are bombarded with arguments in our daily lives. That is, we are told that we ought to believe things for various reasons – that we ought to buy this car for these reasons; that we ought to vote for this politician for those reasons. Yet, what makes an argument a good argument? What allows us to make good decisions? This course will focus on the nature and principles of correct judgment. More exactly, we will be concerned with both the formal and informal ways in which arguments can be shown to be good or bad. We will also examine the ways in which human beings are likely to be deceived and fall prey to fallacies. And we will look at the various cognitive biases that affect our judgments and practical decisions. This course may not be used to satisfy any requirement in the Philosophy BA, MA, or PhD.

PHI 530 ETHICAL THEORY. (3)

A study of ethical theories by detailed examination of a few selected works. Theories considered may include naturalism, intuitionism, noncognitivism, utilitarianism, universalizability, and natural law. Prereq: PHI 130, 330, or 335 or the consent of the instructor.

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PHI 531 ADVANCED TOPICS IN ETHICS (Subtitle required). (3)

A topical study in ethics, emphasizing, but not restricted to, contemporary issues. Topics may include the nature of practical reason, justification of moral theories, moral luck, amorality and immorality, moral language, and weakness of will. May be repeated to a maximum of six credits under different subtitles. Prereq: One of the following: PHI 130, 305, 330, or 530; or graduate standing.

PHI 532 ADVANCED ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS. (3)

Using the work of forester and founder of wildlife ecology, Aldo Leopold, as our example, students will examine issues central to the field of environmental ethics. The course is divided into 8 units. One unit is devoted to developing writing skills. The other seven units concern the basic themes at issue in environmental ethics. These include a review of the principles at work in an ecological ethic, the Darwinian basis of this ethical theory, advances in ecological theory which threaten basic concepts at work in an ecological ethic, and a review of specific problems within environmental ethics, e.g., wilderness preservation, the idea of conservation, appraisals by underrepresented groups, etc.

PHI 535 SOCIAL AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY. (3)

A critical examination of some philosophical problems concerning the nature and evaluation of social and political organizations. For example, questions concerning the nature, justification, and limits of political power may be explored in connection with a study of important classical positions. Prereq: PHI 130, 330, or 335 or the consent of the instructor.

PHI 537 PHILOSOPHY OF LAW. (3)

Concept of law; relations between law and morals; nature of legal reasoning; analysis of legal concepts; justification of punishment. Pass/fail basis only for law students. Prereq: PHI 130, 330, or 335 or the consent of the instructor.

PHI 540 FEMINIST PHILOSOPHY. (3)

An introduction to feminist philosophical theory, including feminist treatments of various questions in metaphysics, epistemology, logic, and value theory, such as: the nature (if any) of the self; the role of perspectives in knowledge; the nature of reason and the criteria for justification in argumentation; feminist theories of morality and feminist theories of social justice.

PHI 545 PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION. (3)

An analysis of the philosophical issues raised by religion, such as the problem of religious knowledge, the nature of religious language, science and religion, concepts of God, death, and evil. Prereq: PHI 100, 260, or 270 or the consent of the instructor.

PHI 592 AESTHETICS. (3)

Problems of method in aesthetics; major types of aesthetic theory. Aesthetic materials of the arts in literature, music, and the space arts. Form and types of form. Meaning in the arts. Interrelations of the arts. Lectures, discussions, reports. (Same as A-H 592.)

GROUP C

PHI 550 PHILOSOPHICAL PROBLEMS IN KNOWLEDGE AND REALITY. (3)

Critical examination of issues regarding the foundations of knowledge, the nature of reality and the relation between the two. Evidence, belief, certainty, perception and justification will be among problems considered. Understandings of truth, existence, causality, freedom, time, space and matter will also be attended to. Prereq: PHI 100, 260, 270, or 350 or the consent of the instructor.

PHI 560 PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENTIFIC METHOD. (3)

An examination of the logical and epistemological foundations of empirical science, including fundamentals of concept formation, criteria of cognitive significance, issues of explanation, interpretation, and prediction, and testing and confirmation of theories and laws. Prereq: PHI 100, 120, or 350 or the consent of the instructor.

PHI 561 PHILOSOPHICAL PROBLEMS IN THE NATURAL SCIENCES (Subtitle required). (3)

A systematic examination of selected conceptual and/or metaphysical problems in the natural sciences. Possible topics include: reductionism, teleology, causality and determinism, the structure of space-time, and the "anthropic principle" in cosmology. Prereq: PHI 100, 120, or 350 or the consent of the instructor.

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PHI 562 PHILOSOPHICAL PROBLEMS IN THE SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES. (3)

An examination of various methodological issues and broader philosophical questions of special concern in the social sciences. Among the topics to be studied: the structure of theories and the roles of mathematics and experimentation in the social sciences, the possibility of an objective or value free social science, and the conceptions of human nature presupposed by different schools of social science. Prereq: PHI 100, 120, or 350 or the consent of the instructor.

PHI 565 PHILOSOPHY OF LANGUAGE. (3)

An investigation of problems current in the philosophy of language such as meaning and reference, the nature of analysis, linguistic relativity and the relation of linguistics to philosophy. Prereq: PHI 320 or 350 or the consent of the instructor.

PHI 566 BAD LANGUAGE: PROPAGANDA, LIES, AND BULLSHIT. (3)

This course concerns the use of language as a tool for political expression, activism, and oppression. Recent work in the Philosophy of Language has addressed the nature of propaganda, the nature and function of lies and bullshit, and the many other subtle ways language can be used to mislead and manipulate. This work bears obviously on timely questions of politics and justice. But it also exhibits and benefits from the precision and empirical rigor characteristic of the best kind of work in Philosophy of Language. This course will survey and critically engage with contemporary work on propaganda, slurs, lies, bullshit, “dog-whistling”, insinuation, and more generally on the language we use to debate, critique, and shape our political life and social institutions. This course may not be used to satisfy any requirement in the Philosophy BA, MA, or PhD.

PHI 570 PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY. (3)

An examination of the theories and methods utilized by historians with special attention to the problems of laws and explanations in history, the nature of historical knowledge and narrative, and the roles of causal judgments and historical understanding. Attention will also be given to theoretical interpretations of history as offered by Marx, Hegel, Toynbee and others. Prereq: PHI 100, 260, or 270 or the consent of the instructor.

PHI 575 PHILOSOPHY OF MIND. (3)

An examination of problems current in the philosophy of mind, such as the concept of person, the relation of mind and body, the relation of minds and machines, knowledge of other minds, and the roles of dispositions and volitions in human action. Attention will be given to the philosophical analysis of such psychological categories as consciousness, feeling, emotion, perception, imagination, thinking and will. Prereq: PHI 100 or 350 or the consent of the instructor.