PHIL 6420 - PHILOSOPHY OF LANGUAGE
(PREREQUISITE(S): Consent of Dept. Chair)
Section 101 -- TTH 9:30-10:45, FR. GARTH HALLETT

Broad perspectives on the relevance of language for philosophy--as reviewed in a book in preparation (Hallett, Invisible Language: Its Incalculable Significance for Philosophy)--will lead to personal projects exploring the possibilities of philosophy within the bounds of language. Class discussion of the readings then of the research papers will largely replace lecturing.

NO TEXT BOOKS REQUIRED.

PHIL 6470 - PROBLEMS IN METAPHYSICS
(PREREQUISITE(S): Consent of Dept. Chair)
Section 101 -- MW 1:00-2:15, DR. DAVID TWETTEN

Course Description: The course is an introduction to contemporary analytic metaphysics, focusing on the question of the constitution of material objects. It begins by tracing the history of contemporary semantic metaphysics in Frege, Russell, early Wittgenstein, David Lewis, and Kripke, against the background of the classical problem of universals (Avicenna v. Ockham), as well as modern developments in Locke, Leibniz, and Mill. Then we shall follow a single-author introductory text and an anthology of classic papers in considering contemporary versions of realism and nominalism, and the three major constitution theories: property bundles, bare particulars, and constituentism. Among our questions will be: Are there persons and other continuants? What is the relation of time to their constitution? Is existence a property? What is the status of possible worlds? As time permits, we shall also consider causality, free will and determinism, among other metaphysical issues, according to class preference. The course is intended also to introduce analytic styles of thought to those for whom they are unfamiliar: knowledge of symbolic logic is not presupposed.


COURSE REQUIREMENTS: class participation, seminar presentation(s) or a seminar paper, final paper.

PHIL 6610 - ARISTOTLE
(PREREQUISITE(S): Consent of Dept. Chair)
Section 101 -- TTH 2:00-3:15, DR. OWEN GOLDIN

In this course we will study the major philosophical positions taken by Aristotle. We will try to ascertain the questions Aristotle was attempting to answer, what his answers were, and the extent to which they are valid. We will concentrate on Aristotle’s philosophy of science, metaphysics, and philosophy of mind, but will also devote some time to his ethical writings.

Another goal of the course is to familiarize the students with important work in contemporary Aristotelian scholarship.

TEXTS: Barnes, ed., THE COLLECTED WORKS OF ARISTOTLE, Barnes, ed., CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO ARISTOTLE, other secondary literature will be made available on reserve.

REQUIREMENTS: Two major papers.
PHIL 6620 - AUGUSTINE  
(PREREQUISITE(S): Consent of Dept. Chair)  
Section  101  -- MW 11:00-12:15, DR. JAMES SOUTH  

This course will consist of close readings of a few texts of St. Augustine, most notably: The Teacher, Confessions, and selections from The City of God. The focus of the course will be on understanding and philosophically considering Augustine's notions of language, interiority, conversion, and memory.

The class will be run as a seminar and presupposes no prior significant knowledge of Augustine's thought. The final grade will be based on student participation and the completion of a 20-25 page research paper.

Required texts:

1) ST. AUGUSTINE, AGAINST ACADEMICIANS AND THE TEACHER, tr. Peter King  
Hackett Publishing Co.

2) ST. AUGUSTINE, CONFESSIONS, tr. Garry Wills  
Penguin Classics

3) AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO, CITY OF GOD, tr. H. Bettenson  
Penguin Classics

4) Peter Brown, AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO: A BIOGRAPHY (New Edition, with an Epilogue)  
University of California Press

Additional readings on Class reserve/D2L.

PHIL 6640 - ST. THOMAS AQUINAS  
(PREREQUISITE(S): Consent of Dept. Chair)  
Section  101  -- MW 9:00-10:15, DR. DAVID TWETTEN  

Course Description:  In the advent of the rediscovery of the full corpus of Aristotle’s writings, Aquinas developed a novel philosophical system that purported to be at once grounded in authentic “aristotelian” principles and fully harmonious with scriptural belief. This system is possible only because of Aquinas’ unprecedented metaphysics of existence, which owes as much, ironically, to the platonic tradition transmitted through arabic philosophy as it does to Aristotle. Aquinas’ “system,” which was partly condemned by ecclesial authorities in the thirteenth century and was somewhat suspect for much of the remaining middle ages, was rediscovered and taken in the twentieth century as a model for the harmony of faith and reason, of science and scripture. After placing Aquinas in his historical setting, the course examines how he arrives at the central tenets of his metaphysics, natural theology, epistemology, psychology, and ethics. In addition to his expositions of cognition, free will, and the nature of human action, we focus on the real distinction between existence and essence and on how Aquinas uses it in order to establish the existence and nature of God and the immortality of the human soul. The course also provides an introduction to the tools of research and to contemporary scholarship on Aquinas.

TEXTS: BASIC WRITINGS OF ST. THOMAS AQUINAS, vol. 1, ed. A. Pegis;  Aquinas, ON BEING AND ESSENCE, tr. A. Maurer;  Aquinas, TREATISE ON HAPPINESS (ST I-II.1-21), tr. J. Oesterle.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:  class participation, seminar presentation(s) or a seminar paper, final paper.
PHIL 6652 - POST-CARTESIAN RATIONALISM
(PREREQUISITE(S): Consent of Dept. Chair)
Section 101 -- TTH 3:30-4:45, DR. TIMOTHY CROCKETT

Description: This seminar will be a detailed examination of early modern (17th century) Rationalism as it developed in response to both the general overthrow of Scholastic philosophy and the rise of Cartesian metaphysics. We will begin with a brief overview of the contrast between Scholastic science and the new science, and a quick review of Cartesian metaphysics and epistemology. We will then turn to the works of G.W. Leibniz, and Benedict de Spinoza. Our primary goal will be to understand the philosophical views of these philosophers and the arguments that support those views. However, we will also spend some time considering the very idea of Rationalism itself and whether the distinction between Rationalism and Empiricism is informative or helpful in classifying various philosophical views.

Topics we will discuss include the relation between mind and body, the nature of space and time, the relation between our representations of the world and the world as it is in itself, the nature of substance and material reality, the relation between God and creation, the nature of inter- and intra-substantial causality, and the unity of organic entities.


REQUIREMENTS: One take-home midterm exam, one in class presentation, occasional short textual summaries/analyses, a final paper.

PHIL 6660 - KANT
(PREREQUISITE(S): Consent of Dept. Chair)
Section 101 -- TTH 11:00-12:15, DR. JAVIER IBANEZ-NOE

The main objective of this course will be to provide a careful reading of two ground-works of modern philosophy, the CRITIQUE OF PURE REASON, and the CRITIQUE OF PRACTICAL REASON. Emphasis will be placed on mastering the structure and arguments of both books, but an attempt will also be made to situate Kant’s thought within the history of modern philosophy.

TEXTS: CRITIQUE OF PURE REASON, CRITIQUE OF PRACTICAL REASON; Optional: Allen Wood, KANT.

REQUIREMENTS: Two papers and final exam

PHIL 6959 - SEMINAR:
(PREREQUISITE(S): Consent of Dept. Chair)
Section 101 -- TTH 12:30-1:45, DR. MICHAEL MONAHAN

[Section Title: Philosophy of Race and Racism]

It is difficult, if not impossible, to live and work in the United States without in some way confronting race, even if it is only to dismiss it as an “illusion”. And regardless of one’s position on the ontological status of race, the reality of racism is undeniable, even if it is only a matter of the misguided beliefs of an ignorant few. While the questions and problems of race and racism date back at least to the 16th century, it is only recently that they have been given sustained attention from professional philosophers. Indeed, the last fifteen years has seen an enormous increase in the amount of work done on these issues. This class will explore recent philosophical literature on race and racism from a diversity of perspectives, with a particular emphasis on “whiteness”. We will discuss the ontological status of race itself, the role race plays in identity formation and expression, the moral and political rights and duties associated with life in a racialized world, and the nature and function of racism as a social phenomena.

TEXTS: Alcoff, VISIBLE IDENTITIES: RACE, GENDER, AND THE SELF, Corlett, RACE, RACISM, AND REPARATIONS, Glasgow, A THEORY OF RACE, Sullivan, REVEALING WHITENESS, Yancy, BLACK BODIES, WHITE GAZES

REQUIREMENTS: one class presentation, one paper, and a final exam.
This will be a course in Philosophy and Professional Ethics. We will discuss various issues across the professions from an ethical perspective. The core text will be "Ethics Across the Professions" ed. Martin, Vaught, Solomon. We will discuss such issues as "What is it to be Professional," Duties and Rights; Truth, Lies, and Deception; Privacy Confidentiality, secrecy, trust; Integrity, Loyalty, Whistle Blowing; Reciprocity, Conflicts of Interest, and Government Regulation. The main project will be to write a first rate paper of a topic you choose and it will be presented in class.