

Philosophy Department

Electives Spring 2010



Electives

Phil 3370

Philosophy of Art and Beauty

Phil 3450

Theory of Knowledge

Phil 3660

Marx and Marxism

Phil 3665

Existentialism

Phil 3750

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Phil 3751

History and Philosophy of Crime
and Punishment

Phil 4000

Modern Logic

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Contemporary Ethical Problems

Phil 4330

Business Ethics

Phil 4335

Medical Ethics

Phil 4470

Philosophy of Natural Science

Phil 4540

Philosophy of Education

Phil 4931

Justice and Conflict Resolution

The study of philosophy serves to develop intellectual abilities important for life as a whole, beyond the knowledge and skills required for any particular profession. Properly pursued, it enhances analytical, critical and interpretive capacities that are applicable to any subject-matter, and in any human context. It cultivates the capacities and appetite for self-expression and reflection, for exchange and debate of ideas, for life-long learning, and for dealing with problems for which there are no easy answers. It also helps to prepare one for the tasks of citizenship.--American Philosophy Association

Phil 3370-PHILOSOPHY OF ART AND BEAUTY

MW 2:00-3:15, Dr. Curtis Carter

This course asks, how do diverse philosophical theories and cultural perspectives contribute to understanding of the arts? The course integrates readings, and experiential learning based on the student's prior experiences, attendance at performances and museum visits, and class discussion with a view to developing understanding and appreciation of the fine arts (classical, modern and contemporary), and popular arts. Major topics selected from these issues: the concept of art, the art world, art criticism, experiencing art, art and social change (feminism, cultural diversity, postmodernism), Readings from ancient, modern, contemporary authors from Plato to Danto.

Requirements: Readings from assigned reading list; Participation in Class discussions. Attendance at performances (music, theater, dance), and Museum visits. Written research paper 15-20 pages, four 1 page written responses to performances and museum visit; Mid term and final examination. Mandatory class attendance in accordance with university policy.

Readings: Stephen Davies, THE PHILOSOPHY OF ART. Selections from S. Cahn and A. Meskin, AESTHETICS: ANTHOLOGY; Selected Readings from Raynor Library Class Reserves.

PHIL 3450-THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE

TTH 9:30-10:45, Dr. Nobel Ang

In this course, we will examine the central concepts and issues surrounding the theory of knowledge, including knowledge, truth, justification, the nature of empirical knowledge, the problem of skepticism, as well as the nature and possibility of a priori knowledge.

Readings: EPISTEMOLOGY: AN ANTHOLOGY, ed. by Ernest Sosa and Jaegwon Kim (Wiley-Blackwell, 2000)

Requirements: 1000-word term paper (30%), Mid-term Exam (40%), Final Paper (30%)

PHIL 3660-MARX AND MARXISM

TTH 11:00-12:15, Dr. James South

An introduction to the thought of Karl Marx and the tradition of Western Marxism. The first half of the course will consist of an intensive reading of key Marx texts including (but not limited to) selections from The Paris Notebooks, The German Ideology, The Eighteenth Brumaire, Capital, The Civil War in France, and The Critique of the Gotha Program. The second half of the semester will study the trajectory of Marxism in the West with particular emphasis on Lukacs and Adorno. We will conclude the semester by working through a recent Marxist inspired work to see what relevance Marx may still have.

Requirements: Two semester exams (20% each) and a cumulative final exam (40%). In addition, frequent short writing assignments will be required. These, along with class participation will account for the remaining 20% of the grade.

Readings: Karl Marx, SELECTED WRITINGS, ed. Lawrence Simon; Max Weber, THE VOCATION LECTURES, ed. Tracy Strong; David Harvey, A BRIEF HISTORY OF NEOLIBERALISM; additional readings on reserve.

PHIL 3665-EXISTENTIALISM

MWF 1:00-1:50, Dr. David Twetten

"Existentialism" describes a new style of philosophizing developed in nineteenth century Europe in reaction to "modern philosophy" and especially to German idealism. Existentialists focus on us as individuals discovering ourselves in the world, with questions such as: What is the meaning of life? What is the role of freedom, anguish, love, and self-deception in a society that no longer shares a religious or philosophical view of life? What account can be given of being and beings in light of our contemporary situation? After introducing the major figures and the development over history of the central existentialist themes, we shall examine the great existentialist syntheses of the twentieth century, together with some comparatively less well known theistic reactions to them. The class begins, then, with the precursors of theistic and atheistic existentialism, Kierkegaard and Nietzsche. The heart of the course focuses on Heidegger's Being and Time and Sartre's Being and Nothingness, developing the main lines of these monumental works against the background of Husserl and the foundations of phenomenology as a philosophical approach. Finally, the course concludes with the theistic reaction of Gabriel Marcel in The Mystery of Being. No special background other than a willingness to read will be presupposed.

Readings: Guignon, ed. EXISTENTIALISM: BASIC WRITINGS (Hackett); Solomon, FROM RATIONALISM TO EXISTENTIALISM: THE EXISTENTIALISTS AND THEIR NINETEENTH-CENTURY BACKGROUNDS (Rowman & Littlefield); Dreyfus, BEING-IN-THE-WORLD: A COMMENTARY ON HEIDEGGER'S BEING AND TIME (MIT Press); Hannay, Kierkegaard: A BIOGRAPHY (Cambridge); Safranski, Nietzsche: A PHILOSOPHICAL BIOGRAPHY (Norton).

Requirements: Periodic quizzes over the reading material; midsemester and final exams; 1-2 papers; presentation(s); class participation.

PHIL 3750 - PHILOSOPHY OF LAW

Section 101: TTH 2:00-3:15, Dr. Nancy Snow

Section 102: TTH 3:30-4:45, Dr. Nancy Snow

This course will survey some basic problems in the philosophy of law: the nature of law, constitutional adjudication, law and morality, the criminal law, legal moralism, legal paternalism, and punishment.

Readings: PHILOSOPHY OF LAW: CLASSIC AND CONTEMPORARY READINGS, Larry May and Jeff Brown, editors.

Requirements: A mid-term exam, a final exam, drop-box assignments, and in-class and D2L discussion participation.

PHIL 3751-PHILOSOPHY AND HISTORY OF CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

Section 1001: TTH 9:30-10:45, Fr. John Jones

Section 1001: TTH 11:00-12:15, Fr. John Jones

This course offers a multidisciplinary analysis of the philosophy and history of crime and punishment. Our primary focus will be on crime and punishment in the United States from the 17th to the present. We will be particularly concerned with investigating the various ethical issues underlying public policy regarding the punishment of criminals.

Readings: Friedman, CRIME AND PUNISHMENT IN AMERICAN HISTORY; Joycelyn M. Pollock, ETHICAL DILEMMAS AND DISCUSSIONS IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE.

Requirements: Most likely a mid-term and a final exam as well as one brief paper (about 3 -4 pages).

PHIL 4000-MODERN LOGIC

MWF 12:00-12:50, Dr. Noel Adams

This course on symbolic logic begins with propositional logic and then moves on to predicate logic. Emphasis is on understanding constructing deductive proofs, as well as symbolizing arguments. Over the course of the semester will examine truth tables, the nature of statements, logical relations, counterexamples, and natural arguments.

Readings: INTRODUCTION TO LOGIC: PROPOSITIONAL LOGIC. (Revised Third Edition.) , Howard Pospesel, Prentice Hall, 2000; INTRODUCTION TO LOGIC: PREDICATE LOGIC. (Second Edition). Howard Pospesel, Prentice Hall, 2003.

Requirements: Regular attendance is crucial for success in this class. There will be problem sets assigned every day. There will be five exams, each worth 100 points; thus 500 points will come from the exams. There will be ten quizzes, each worth 10 points each; thus 100 points will come from quizzes. Of the 600 points possible, exams make up 5/6 of your overall grade, and the quizzes add up 1/6 of your overall grade.

PHIL 4320-CONTEMPORARY ETHICAL PROBLEMS

Section 101: MWF 8:00-8:50, TBA

Section 102: TTH 8:00-9:15, TBA

Ethical considerations such as human rights and responsibilities in social and racial justice, war and international relations, expression of dissent, and sexual conduct.

PHIL 4330-BUSINESS ETHICS

Section 101: MWF 8:00-8:50, TBA

Section 102: TTH 12:30-1:45, TBA

An application of theories of ethics to the moral dimensions of business endeavors and their effects on individuals, organizations, and society. Selected topics may include issues of responsibility, discrimination and affirmative action in the workplace, whistle-blowing, economic justice, environmental impact, and the effects of the "global economy."

PHIL 4335-MEDICAL ETHICS

MW 2:00-3:15, Dr. Theresa Tobin

This course introduces students to moral issues that arise in the practice of health care and modern medicine. The primary goal of the course is to help students become better equipped to make reasoned judgments about certain ethical issues that may arise in healthcare practice and policy formation. We will explore a wide variety of topics including experimentation on human subjects, informed consent, autonomy and paternalism, euthanasia and physician-assisted suicide, and issues related to resource allocation, social justice, and health policy.

Readings: ETHICAL ISSUES IN MODERN MEDICINE (sixth edition), edited by Bonnie Steinbock, John Arras, and Alex London, McGraw Hill Publishing Company

Requirements: Weekly reading responses, midterm exam, research paper

PHIL 4470-PHILOSOPHY OF NATURAL SCIENCE

TTH 12:30-1:45, Dr. Anthony Peressini

In this course we will consider some of the philosophical issues (particularly the conceptual and methodological ones) associated with science, including the issues of what constitutes a scientific explanation and how it is that theories are confirmed by the activities of scientists. Special attention will be paid to the notion of reduction in science — especially science's tendency to view everything as physical. We will critically examine the senses in which science is entitled to a claim of objectivity and the senses in which it is not. Finally we will take up the realism debate, which is the problem of whether the theoretical entities of scientific theories (electrons, genes, etc.) should be regarded as actually existing in same way that chairs and desks do.

Readings: Robert Klee, INTRODUCTION TO THE PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE: CUTTING NATURE AT ITS SEAMS.

Requirements: Weekly writing, and three mediums length papers (including perhaps two one hour tutorial sessions with the instructor)

PHIL 4540-PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

MW 2:00-3:15, Dr. Melissa Shew

Most major philosophers—from East to West, antiquity to the present day—have taken a keen interest in education. Whether a philosopher explicitly engages the processes and aims of education in philosophical writings and teachings or implicitly does so through sustained discussions of philosophy as education insofar as it's bound to learning and knowledge, the intimate kinship between the two raises a host of questions that we will pursue in this class. We will read Plato, Aristotle, Rousseau, Dewey, Freire, and Deloria, in order to interrogate, challenge, and understand various philosophical perspectives on education in dialogue with each other, both in the history of philosophy and our classroom.

Readings: Freire, Paulo. PEDAGOGY OF THE OPPRESSED, Continuum Publishing (2000); Dewey, John, EXPERIENCE AND EDUCATION, Free Press (1997); Vine Deloria and Daniel Wildcat, POWER AND PLACE, Fulcrum Publishing (2001); Plato, MENO (trans. GWA Grube), Hackett Publishing (1976).

Requirements: Two exams, short writing assignments; presentation, final essay.

PHIL 4931 - SPECIAL TOPICS IN PHILOSOPHY: Justice and Conflict Resolution

MW 2:00-3:15, Dr. Michael Wreen

No description Available