

Descriptions: Spring 2023 Graduate Seminar

PHIL 6310 History and Theory of Ethics

Dr. Ericka Tucker

In this course we will focus on historical and contemporary ethical approaches to the question of global justice. We will begin with the question of perpetual peace in Erasmus and Abbe St. Pierre, Rousseau, and Kant, and explore the development of these ideas in contemporary ethical approaches to global goods, distributive justice and human rights. We will explore how utilitarians, deontologists, virtue theorists and others approach the question of what we owe to those beyond state borders.

PHIL 6605 Plato

Dr. Owen Goldin

This class will concentrate on Plato's Republic, Sophist, and Statesman, attending to how the dialogues address questions in ethics, epistemology, psychology, metaphysics, and logic. We will also consider the question of how to read a Platonic dialogue, studying classic and contemporary secondary literature in several traditions. Required text: Plato: Complete Works (Hackett) or recommended translations of works to be studied. Grading will be on the basis of class participation and two seminar papers.

Phil 6664 Husserl

Dr. Pol Vandavelde

Curricular requirements: HIST, M&E&PhSc

The course offers a critical investigation and evaluation of Edmund Husserl's philosophy with a focus on his philosophy of mind, specifically the extended mind thesis and enactivism. The approach is both historical and systematic.

Historical approach:

The course reconstructs Husserl's philosophy in three main periods: 1) The early Husserl and the breakthrough of phenomenology in the *Logical Investigations*; 2) The transitional period of idealism in *Ideas 1 General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology*; and 3) The late Husserl and the question of intersubjectivity in the *Cartesian Meditations* and *The Crisis of European Sciences*

Systematic Approach:

While reconstructing Husserl's development, the course also critically examines

- Husserl's versions and contributions to the extended mind thesis through his account of intersubjectivity. Consciousness is not encased in a singular brain but extends to other minds and to history so that, as Husserl says, "I hear, I see through the senses of others."
- Husserl's contribution to enactivism or the view that the mind operates in a dynamic interaction with the environment

PHIL 6670 Classical American Philosophy

Dr. Sebastian Luft

A survey of classical American thinkers in the tradition of American Pragmatism, beginning with the Classical authors of American Pragmatism (Peirce, James, Dewey) and then moving to the most important Neo-Pragmatism, Rorty. We will be reading some of his later articles, but also spend some time studying his newest book, *Pragmatism as Anti-Authoritarianism*, which was just published last year. The main topics of this class will be: the pragmatic concept/theory of truth; the nature of philosophy; the question of a liberal education; and the project of a pragmatic philosophy as a (dis-)continuation of the modern project of the Enlightenment.

PHIL 6953 —Text-Seminar on Ancient Philosophy - Being & Causality in Platonism Aristotelianized

Dr. David Twetten

The course is both systematic and historical. It focuses first on contemporary Platonism in metaphysics since Frege and Russell: why in contemporary semantics do the truth-makers of propositions about this world appear to require other-worldly

properties? Why, then, is there no contemporary discussion of other-worldly being and its causality? We will turn to select dialogues of Plato on Being and its effects, especially Parmenides, Sophist and Timaeus. These dialogues are the key to the transformation in Platonism effected first by Plotinus, second by Proclus. Why is it that Plotinus' One, according to the best scholarship, is not an efficient cause, yet it becomes an efficient cause in Proclus and Simplicius? Porphyry appears to be the major turning point in the doctrine of being, affirming being that is beyond Form. What are the stages by which the One becomes a Being, whether in Christian philosophy, such as in Augustine, or in Arabic Platonism? What does it mean to say that the doctrine of being and its causality in such thinkers as Augustine and Aquinas is Platonic? To what extent are these doctrines intelligible without affirming a Platonism that has been Aristotelianized, both in late Greek antiquity and in Arabic thought? Over the semester, we shall examine the best available arguments that being requires a universal cause. Our focus will be on producing a publishable paper in this quickly developing area of philosophy: late Greek Platonism and its heritage