PHIL 2300-001 Beginning Philosophy 9:00-9:50 MWF ENG/PHIL 152

Staff

This is a general introduction to philosophy, designed to acquaint students with certain significant problems as they are considered by major philosophical figures. These are not esoteric questions but instead ones central to ordinary human experience. Students will be encouraged to formulate and defend their own answers to these questions, using the concepts and methods of inquiry introduced in the course. This process will help improve students’ abilities to think more critically and to communicate with greater clarity and precision.

PHIL 2300-002 Beginning Philosophy 2:00-3:20 TR ENG/PHIL TBA

Dr. Anna Christina Ribeiro

This course is an introduction to some central philosophical questions:

* What is the moral way to conduct our lives?
* What is free will? Do we have it?
* Who is the ‘I’ that (apparently) makes decisions?
* Is there a difference between the mind and the brain?
* How do we know the answers to these and other questions? How do we know that we know them? How do we justify our answers?

Readings will be both historical and contemporary.

PHIL 2300-003 Beginning Philosophy 10:00-10:50 MWF ENG/PHIL 164

PHIL 2300-004 Beginning Philosophy 9:00-9:50 MWF ENG/PHIL TBA

Dr. Dustin Tucker

This course is an introduction to philosophy by way of some central philosophical questions, such as "Do we have free will?" "Can we prove that God does or does not exist? If not, what should we believe?" and "What is the relationship between the mind and the body?" In addition to introducing these topics and some of the major problems that surround them, we will focus on honing your ability to read a text carefully, to write clearly and precisely, and especially to think critically about difficult and intricate problems, philosophical or otherwise.

PHIL 2310-002 Logic 11:00-11:50 MWF ENG/PHIL TBA

PHIL 2310-003 Logic 12:00-12:50 MWF ENG/PHIL 163

Dr. Jonathan Dorsey

This course focuses on the syntax, semantics, and derivation system for sentential and predicate logic.  Importantly, the student will learn not only the formal theory of logic but also how to use it to assess the validity of arguments in natural language.

PHIL 2310-004 Logic 10:00-10:50 MWF ENG/PHIL 153

PHIL 2310-006 Logic 11:00-11:50 MWF ENG/PHIL 153

Staff

Development of formal methods for evaluating deductive reasoning. Additional topics may include uses of language, definition, nondeductive inference. Satisfies the Core Curriculum mathematics requirement. (in conjunction with a mathematics course).

PHIL 2310-005 Logic 11:00-12:20 TR ENG/PHIL TBA

Dr. Christopher Hom

A central aspect of reasoning is the ability to give arguments for one’s conclusions. Logic is the formal representation of arguments, so mastering logic is essential for good reasoning. In this course, we will investigate the underlying, logical form of sentences and the deductive relations that hold between them, thus giving us deeper insight into the notion of logical inference from premises to conclusion. The course will present three logical systems, each in increasing expressive power: sentential logic, monadic quantificational logic, and polyadic quantificational logic. For each system, we will closely examine the syntax of the system, its relation to English, and its particular semantic features (e.g. satifiability, validity, implication and equivalence).

PHIL 2320-001 Intro to Ethics 9:00-9:50 MWF ENG/PHIL 163

Dr. Jeremy Schwartz

How should we live? What is a good life? Ought I to forgo my own interests for the interests of another? Is it sometimes permissible to kill innocent human beings? Is it permissible to kill animals for food? Ethical philosophy attempts to answer these sorts of questions through reason and reflection. Within current ethical philosophy, there are three major schools of thought on how these sorts of questions should be answered: utilitarianism, virtue theory, and deontology. While each of these attempts to shed light on all of these questions merely through reason and reflection, each of them arrives at very different answers to these questions. In this class, we will investigate utilitarianism, deontology, and virtue theory in some detail by closely reading both the founding texts of each of the ethical theories as well as reading some modern re-interpretations and criticisms. In addition, in the last part of the class, we will seek to apply these theories to three test cases: abortion, animal rights, and global poverty. The application to test cases should both shed light on our intuitions about these morally contested issues but also shed light on the ethical theories themselves.

PHIL 2320-002 Intro to Ethics 9:30-10:50 TR ENG/PHIL TBA

Dr. Howard Curzer

Contemporary ethics is dominated by three systems (virtue ethics, utilitarianism, deontology) proposed by three great philosophers (Aristotle, Mill, Kant). Students in this course will come to understand these three moral systems. Students will be able to compare and contrast these three moral systems, weighing their strengths and weaknesses. Students will also apply each of these three moral systems to three contemporary moral problems (abortion, economic justice, marriage).

PHIL 2320-003 Intro to Ethics 10:00-10:50 MWF ENG/PHIL 163

PHIL 2320-004 Intro to Ethics 11:00-11:50 MWF ENG/PHIL 163

Dr. Walter Schaller

This course will be centered on the moral theories of John Stuart Mill and Immanuel Kant. We will read selections from Mill’s two most important books, UTILITARIANISM and ON LIBERTY. We will pay particular attention to Mill’s defense of individuality (and his criticism of social tyranny) in ON LIBERTY and try to figure out how it is consistent with utilitarianism. In the process we will also want to evaluate Mill’s criticisms of paternalism, the offense principle, and legal moralism. We will also consider some important theoretical questions about the moral relevance of the distinction between killing and letting die, and between intending and merely foreseeing harm. THIS COURSE FULFILLS THE CORE CURRICULUM HUMANITIES REQUIREMENT.

PHIL 2320-006 Intro to Ethics 12:00-12:50 MWF ENG/PHIL 153

Staff

Discussion of problems and theories of morality. Includes the application of philosophical techniques to issues of contemporary moral concern

PHIL 2350-001 World Religions & Phil. 9:00-9:50 MWF ENG/PHIL 260

Dr. Mark Webb

This course is a study of seven major world religions: Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, Islam, Judaism, and Christianity.  We will study the doctrines and practices of each of these religions; then, for each religion, we will critically examine some element of doctrine or practice to see if it can be justified.  For example, we will critically examine the doctrines of karma and reincarnation, the doctrine of monotheism, the problem of evil, and the doctrine of the incarnation. This course satisfies the multiculturalism requirement.

PHIL 3303-001 Modern European Phil. 11:00-12:20 TR ENG/PHIL 163

Dr. Francesca di Poppa

This course will offer an overview of the major philosophical debates in the age from Bacon to Kant (early 17th to late 18th century). Among the topics covered, issue in metaphysics and epistemology (such as the problem of causation and the quest for a clear and certain knowledge), ethics (questions on duty and human happiness), religious epistemology and some political thought. We will read, among others, Descartes, Bacon, Malebranche, Hobbes, Spinoza, Leibniz and Kant.

PHIL 3304-001 Existentialism & Phenomenology 2:00-2:50 MWF ENG/PHIL 163

Dr. Jonathan Dorsey

This course is a study of existentialist thought regarding the self and its relation to nature. We will focus on works by Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Dostoevsky, Kafka, Sartre, and Camus. Some of these works are traditional philosophical works (non-fictional prose), while others are short stories or novels to be read for their philosophical implications.

PHIL 4301-001 Seminar in Ancient Philosophy: 3:00-4:20 MW ENG/PHIL 264

Homer’s Odyssey And Plato’s Republic

Dr. Howard Curzer

Homer’s Odyssey was one of the worldview-defining narratives of the ancient Greek world. The Odyssey staked out positions in aesthetics, epistemology, ethics, feminist philosophy, metaphysics, philosophy of mind, and political philosophy. Detailed study of Homer was de rigueur for the well-bred and well-read. Plato’s Republic, like everything else at the time, was written and read through the lens of Homer. But the Odyssey and the Republic shared a special relationship. Sometimes agreeing, more often dissenting, Plato’s Republic took up the array of issues broached by Homer’s Odyssey to an extent unmatched by any other ancient text.

Yet for more than 2000 years the two works have been separated by disciplinary boundaries, obscuring the philosophic side of the Odyssey, the literary side of the Republic, and the intimate connections between them. In this class we will reunite Plato’s Republic and Homer’s Odyssey. By juxtaposing the Odyssey (construed as a philosophy text) and the Republic we shall gain and regain insights into both. We shall also learn a few things about aesthetics, epistemology, ethics, feminist philosophy, metaphysics, philosophy of mind, and political philosophy.

PHIL 4320-001 Ethics--Metaethics 9:30-10:50 TR ENG/PHIL 163

Dr. Jeremy Schwartz

Metaethics asks not about the virtues of any particular normative ethical theory but about the status of ethical claims. Are ethical claims a form of knowledge? Are they objective? Are they part of the fabric of the world? Are they projections of our attitudes onto the world? This course seeks to make progress on these questions. Of particular im**p**ortance will be developing an understanding of noncognitivism in ethics which is an ancestor of the ethical-properties-are-projections view. Note that the topics covered in this course are completely disjoint from the topics covered in the course offered in the spring of 2012 under the same title.

PHIL 4321-001 Political Philosophy 1:00-1:50 MWF ENG/PHIL 163

Dr. Walter Schaller

This course will focus on the three leading social contact theorists (Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau) and one of the leading critics of the idea of a social contract (David Hume). We will read chunks of their great books. The focus of our discussion will be the different ways in which they conceive of the ‘state of nature,’ and the kind of ‘social contract’ each thinks that persons would agree to. The problem for each of them is to solve the problem of political legitimacy and obligation: why are citizens morally obligated to obey the law? What gives some people the right to coerce other people? And then we will study Hume’s very different answer to these questions.   
  
Books:   
Hobbes, Leviathan (Penguin)  
Locke, Second Treatise of Government (Hackett)  
Rousseau, Basic Political Writings (Hackett)  
Hume, Political Writings (Hackett)

PHIL 4330-001 Epistemology 12:00-12:50 MWF ENG/PHIL 164

Dr. Dustin Tucker

Epistemology is the study of knowledge---what it means to know something, how we can come to know anything, whether knowledge is even an important topic to focus on, and other related issues. We will study a variety of answers to these questions, in the process learning about the important theories and debates in contemporary epistemology.

PHIL 5125-001 Intro to Research Ethics 3:00-3:50 F ENG/PHIL 264

Dr. Jeremy Schwartz

There are norms that govern being a good brother, a good friend, and a good citizen. There are also norms that govern being a good researcher. Some of these norms, like intelligence, patience, and diligence have few if any ethical dimensions, but other norms, like academic integrity and honesty do have ethical dimensions. In this class, we will reflect upon the particular ethical challenges that face researchers. The ethical dimensions of research are increasingly being emphasized (in part due to the public outcry over their infringement), and reflection on these dimensions is increasingly being recognized as part of the training of a researcher. This class attempts to contribute to this training.

PHIL 5301-002 Studies In Greek Philosophy: 3:00-4:20 MW ENG/PHIL 264

Homer’s Odyssey And Plato’s Republic

Dr. Howard Curzer

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PHIL 5302-002 Studies in Modern Philosophy 3:30-4:50 TR ENG/PHIL 264

(1600-1800)

Dr. Francesca DiPoppa

This course will focus on the questions of epistemology loosely intended in the age from Bacon to Kant (early 17th to late 18th century). At the beginning of the 17th century there was a great enthusiasm for the geometrical method, which philosophers thought would, if properly used, answer all kinds of philosophical questions and solve all philosophical disputes for good. As we know, that did not happen. We will see the dream disintegrate: from the grandiose constructions of Descartes, Spinoza and Leibniz we will move to the caustic criticism of Hume and the solutions offered by Reid and Kant.

PHIL 5314-001 Contemporary Aesthetics 11:00-12:20 TR ENG/PHIL 264

Dr. Anna Christina Ribeiro

How and when did art begin, and why? What counts as art?  What function does art serve, if any?  Do we experience art works differently from other things in the world?  How do we interpret works of art?  Do we ever have ‘aesthetic’ experiences? Is it right to evaluate artworks on the basis of the moral views they might express? Do we learn things from art that we could not have learned otherwise? We will discuss these and other questions as we consider particular art forms and works and read philosophical essays on these topics from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

PHIL 5333-001 Seminar in Philosophy of Language 6:00-9:00 T ENG/PHIL 264

**Dr. Christopher Hom**

The seminar addresses to the extent to which the meaning of language is dependent upon context. We will frame this question in considerably more detail by examining such linguistic expressions as:

* indexical terms (‘I’, ‘she’, ‘that’)
* quantifiers (‘all’, ‘some’)
* vague terms (‘bald’, ‘red’)
* comparative adjective (‘tall’, ‘flat’)
* attitude attributions (‘believes’, ‘knows’)
* moral and aesthetic attributions (‘is good’, ‘is tasty’)
* expressive terms (‘damn’, racial slurs)

The goal of the seminar is a deeper consideration of the relation between semantics and pragmatics. Though not required, a previous course in either linguistics or philosophy of language is recommended.