PHIL 2300-002 Beginning Philosophy 10:00-10:50 MWF ENG/PHIL 260

PHIL 2300-003 Beginning Philosophy 11:00-11:50 MWF ENG/PHIL 260

Dr. Darren Hick

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 2310-001 Logic 9:00- 9:50 MWF ENG/PHIL 150

PHIL 2310-003 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 2310-002 Logic 10:00-10:50 MWF MCOM 353

Dr. Joel Velasco

This course is an introduction to formal logic focused on two artificial languages, propositional logic and first-order logic. Studying these languages (and translating sentences of natural language--sentences of English--into them), we will develop some tools to help us understand and evaluate arguments built up out of ordinary English sentences. We will also develop a better understanding of important philosophical concepts, such as truth and meaning. Overall, we will learn to use mathematical and logical reasoning to evaluate the validity of an argument. Assessment will be by exams and homework, which will require you to apply various tools and techniques in making such evaluations.

PHIL 2310-005 Logic 9:30-10:50 TR MCOM 75

Dr. Christopher Hom

A central aspect of reasoning is the ability to give deductive 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 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, its particular semantic features, and the general properties of satisfiability, validity, implication and equivalence.

PHIL 2320-002 Intro to Ethics 9:00-9:50 MWF ENG/PHIL 260

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 2320-003 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 argument for freedom of speech and his 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 2350-001 World Religions & Phil. 9:00-9:50 MWF MCOM 00075

Mark Webb

This course introduces students to the major world religions while placing a special emphasis on the philosophical issues related to religion. My approach is to cover each religion alongside the other religions of the larger tradition. I give special attention to the the different understandings of human nature and personhood, problems of human existence, and proposed solutions.

We cover the Vedic Tradition (Hinduism, Jainism, Sikhism, and Buddhism), the Chinese Tradition (Confucianism and Daoism), and the Abrahamic Tradition (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam). In addition to discussing the basic tenets, practices, and history of each religion, we consider some of the philosophical commitments entailed by various religious beliefs. When feasible, we will invite guest speakers representing different religions and take field trips to worship sites.

PHIL 3303-001 Modern European Phil. 12:30-1:50 TR ENG/PHIL 163

PHIL 3303-002 Modern European Phil. 2:00-3:20 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 3321-001 Philosophy of Law 11:00-12:20 TR ENG/PHIL 260

Dr. Daniel Nathan

The United States Supreme Court regularly sends down decisions that engage broad popular interest. On the docket for this year, for example, are cases addressing voting rights, abortion, gay marriage, and campaign contributions and free speech. Each of these court matters has been viewed by the general public as highly controversial, and has generated a broad spectrum of political and personal responses. But popular political views rarely reflect an understanding of the nature of law and legal systems, or a familiarity with the Court’s reasoning in relevant previous cases, or even a superficial acquaintance with philosophically and legally reasonable views of the ideas of justice, privacy, or liberty. This course will try to remedy such gaps in understanding, first by studying the nature of law and its relation to morality, then by turning its focus to the nature of liberty, privacy, and justice in specific relation to the legal issues raised within Supreme Court cases over the past several decades.

PHIL 3330-001 Philosophy of Science 1:00-1:50 MWF ENG/PHIL 164

Dr. Joel Velasco

An introduction to fundamental philosophical problems concerning the nature of science. Topics include criteria for the confirmation and falsification of scientific theories, the character of scientific explanation, realism about unobservable entities, the objectivity of science, and issues having to do with the ways in which scientific knowledge changes over time.

PHIL 3341-001 Phil and Lit: Jane Austen and Ethics 9:30-10:50 TR ENG/PHIL 163

Dr. Jeremy Schwartz and Dr. Marta Kvande

Jane Austen is today one of the most recognized names in British literature — familiar from her novels themselves, modern film versions, and updated adaptations — and one reason she remains so compelling to us is the way her novels present ethical dilemmas and ethical ideas. In this course, we’ll read all of Austen’s major novels and consider them through the lenses of both literary and philosophical analysis, focusing on what they have to say about ethics: what constitutes moral action? What are the distinctively Austenian virtues and how do they relate to living a good life? What is the right ethical relation between the self and others? What are the ethics of reading Austen — how do we balance an understanding of her context, her irony, and her moral judgments?

PHIL 4341-001 Great Figures in Phil 2:00-2:50 MWF ENG/PHIL 164

Dr. Jeremy Schwartz

Thisclass focuses on the *Critique of Pure Reason*, which is the greatest work of the enlightenment thinker Immanuel Kant. In this work, Kant ushered in his “Copernican revolution” and sought to radically change the questions that philosophers ask, the answers they give to the traditional questions, and their method of approaching philosophy as a whole. Kant himself claims that “there is not a single metaphysical problem which has not been solved, or for the solution of which the key at least has not been supplied,” [A10] and although few would agree with Kant on this claim, most everyone would agree that there is not a single metaphysical problem about which Kant has not advanced our thinking. This class is meant to guide you in your first encounter with the text. At the end of this class, you should be able to read the *Critique* on your own such that you can refer to the text in order to evaluate the claims of commentators and come up with original textual interpretations of your own. Our procedure will be to read through the *Critique* slowly and carefully with an emphasis on understanding Kant at a sentence-by-sentence level and seeing how this sentence-level understanding fits in with a broader philosophical picture.

PHIL 5125-001 Intro to Research Ethics 2:00-2:50 F ENG/PHIL 264

Dr. Mark Webb

Introduces future researchers to research ethics. Presents frameworks for moral reasoning and application of those frameworks to moral problems through a discussion of case studies.003

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

Dr. Darren Hick

In this course, we will focus on contemporary philosophical problems in the arts, with particular focus on the interrelated roles played by art, artist, and audience, as well as by society at large. We will seek to answer such questions as: What makes art, art? How are the various arts different? How are they alike? Who is the artist? Who is the audience? Who determines what properties a work has, and if it is any good? Is art the proper subject of ethical inquiry? How should we think of government sponsorship and censorship of the arts?

PHIL 5321-001 Social/Political Phil 3:00-4:30 MW ENG/PHIL 264

Dr. Walter Schaller

This course will focus on three topics: John Rawls’s theory of justice (reading Justice as Fairness: A Restatement and maybe parts of Political Liberalism); Robert Nozick’s libertarian theory of justice (Anarchy, State, and Utopia); and property (property rights). Rawls says little about property rights; Nozick’s theory, in contrast, is grounded in property rights. Having studied Rawls’s theory, we will try to figure out whether it needs to be supplemented with a more robust theory of property rights, and, conversely, whether Nozick’s theory is too focused on property. In addition to Nozick (a right-libertarian), we will read what some left-libertarians say about property (and self-ownership). Is it preferable to more traditional justifications of rights? (We will, of course, be interested in all of Rawls’s theory, not just what it says, or does not say, about property rights. In particular, we will want to examine his argument for political liberalism (in contrast to comprehensive liberalism, like John Stuart Mill’s) and his rejection of perfectionism.)

PHIL 5322-001 Law and Philosophy 3:30-4:50 TR ENG/PHIL 264

Dr. Daniel Nathan

Issues of interpretation abound when it comes to law and, over the last few decades, such controversies have even become familiar to the general American public. Thus, for example, discussions swirl about whether the Supreme Court should use Framer’s Intent as their ultimate guide in interpreting the Constitution in politically charged cases. This seminar will look at arguments in favor of and against the use of intention in legal interpretation, with particular consideration of legal theorist Ronald Dworkin’s view, and a recent debate on interpretation between Justice Antonin Scalia and Dworkin. However, because there are interesting and deep parallels between interpretation in law and the arts, the theoretical focus of the seminar will be much broader than just legal interpretation: Instead we look closely at the broader debate in aesthetics, and from there we will examine and compare interpretive approaches in both law and the arts. So, while we will motivate the topic of the seminar with examination of the debate in law, we will look at the development of interpretive theory in both art and law, and how both can be informed by an understanding of the question of authorial intention generally.

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

Dr. Christopher Hom

The seminar will focus on how contemporary theories of meaning account for expressive aspects of language. Expressive language includes insults (e.g. ‘jerk’), exclamations (e.g. ‘oops’), swear words (e.g. ‘f\*\*k’), racial epithets (e.g. ‘limey’), honorific terms (e.g. ‘sir’), evaluative terms (e.g. ‘honorable’) and predicates of personal taste (e.g. ‘beautiful’). Along the way, we will consider various issues such as the semantics-pragmatics distinction, nominalism about meaning, context-sensitivity, social dimensions of language, and how (or whether) norms are linguistically represented. Requirements include a seminar presentation, a presentation commentary, a short paper, and a longer, research paper. A previous course in philosophy of language (e.g. PHIL 4331) is recommended but not required.

PHIL 5340-001 Seminar In Metaphysics 6:00-9:00 W ENG/PHIL 264

Dr. Alex Grzankowski

Attitudes and Their Objects: When I believe that Lubbock is flat, there is something I believe. In particular, *that Lubbock is flat*. ‘That Lubbock is flat’ designates the proposition that Lubbock is flat. It is common to hold that that very proposition is the *content* of my belief and that to be in contentful state is to stand in a relation to a proposition. This course will focus on representational mental states. We will be interested in both the states and their objects. The dominate view has it that the states are relations, but recently this has been questioned. With respect to the objects, propositions are often taken to be *the* objects of the attitudes. We will take a detour into the metaphysics of propositions and we will also question whether there are attitudes with objects that aren’t propositions. Finally, we will consider the prospects for understanding consciousness in terms of representational states. If there is time and interest, we may discuss the possibility of ‘non-conceptual’ representation.