

DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY SUMMER I 2021 COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

PHIL 2300-101 **Beginning Philosophy** **12:00-1:50** **MTWRF** **AGRSCI 214**

Douglas Westfall

This class will take seriously the questions that have bothered you since childhood. Questions like: What can we know? Do I have a soul? Free will? Is there a God? How should I live my life? What is justice? etc. This class will focus on classic texts in order to shed light on these problems while providing an introduction to the philosophic cannon.

PHIL 2310-101 **Logic** **10:00-11:50** **MTWRF** **ENG 0001**

Dr. Joel Velasco

This course is an introduction to formal logic focused on two artificial languages, propositional logic and first-order logic. By 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 2320-101 **Introduction to Ethics** **10:00-11:50** **MTWRF** **TBA**

Douglas Westfall

This class will examine questions like: Can personal choices be right or wrong? Are there things or acts that should appropriately be referred to as good or evil? Is there a right way to live, and why should I live that way? If there is one, how do you go about living it out in practice? Do I have obligations towards other people and if so, what are they? How should I think about conflicts between my self-interest and my responsibility to others? We will consider skeptical positions before turning to examine competing answers regarding these questions. This class will rely on original source materials (e.g. Plato's *Republic* and Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*) for us to understand the primary schools of ethics in hopes of becoming better people.

PHIL 3334-101 **Philosophy of Biology** **2:00-3:50** **MTWRF** **MCOM 166**

Dr. Joel Velasco

This course will examine a range of philosophical questions that arise within the study of evolutionary biology and its application to the human sciences. We'll first discuss questions concerning selection, fitness, adaptationism, and evolutionary explanations. We'll then look at Sociobiology and Evolutionary Psychology with an eye toward thinking about humans and human nature. We will then ask how we can (and should) study human behavior and finally, we will ask if human races exist.