

DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

2016 SUMMER SESSION II

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

PHIL 2300-001	Beginning Philosophy 10:00-11:50 MTWRF	ENG/PHIL 163
Dr. Joel Velasco		

This course provides an introduction to philosophy and is structured around questions of perennial philosophical importance: Is there a God? Can faith be justified? What does it mean to have a mind? Do we have free will? and How should we live?

PHIL 2310-001	Logic 12:00-1:50 MTWRF	ENG/PHIL 163
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 2320-001	Intro to Ethics 10:00-11:50 MTWRF	ENG/PHIL 164
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 3321-001	Philosophy of Law 10:00-11:50 MTWRF	ENG/PHIL 260
PHIL 5322-001	Law & Philosophy 10:00-11:50 MTWRF	ENG/PHIL 260
Dr. Daniel Nathan		

Every year, the United States Supreme Court sends down decisions that engage broad popular interest. Many of these decisions generate a broad spectrum of political and personal responses. However, 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 underlying 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 5314-001	Contemp Aesthetics 12:00-1:50 MTWRF	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? Is art the proper subject of ethical inquiry? How should we think of government sponsorship and censorship of the arts?