DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

Course Descriptions Undergraduate and Graduate Fall 2018 08/20/18-12/08/18

*indicates Section can be taken for honors credit

PHIL 11000  INTRO TO PHILOSOPHY
The course satisfies: University Core Curriculum Humanities/Human Cultures Requirement, College of Liberal Arts Western Heritage Requirement, College of Sciences' Language & Culture, and General Education Requirements, College of Agriculture’s International Understanding & Humanities Requirements, College of Education's Other Department Requirement for Social Studies Education, College of Health and Human Sciences' HSCI Humanities, Behavioral/Social Sciences Requirement

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The basic problems and types of philosophy with special emphasis on the problems of knowledge and the nature of reality.

Davis: This course has two primary aims: (1) Provide exposure to a sample of philosophical issues and debates (2) Develop skills in formulating arguments and writing essays. The topics discussed include such questions as: Does God exist? Do human beings ever act freely, or is all action determined by natural laws? Is the mind just the brain, or is there more to it? How can we know that the regularity of the past is a guide to predicting the future? Can science explain everything? The course will help you to formulate your own answers to such questions, by critically examining the answers previous philosophers have given. No prior experience with philosophy is necessary. Regarding the other aim: Argumentation is the basic methodology of philosophy, so learning to do philosophy means learning to develop clear and convincing arguments—even about difficult and abstract topics. Since to defend a thesis is just to provide an argument, these skills will also prove useful for writing strong essays in other university courses. More generally, the ability to persuade others of one's own views is extremely useful outside the classroom. Thus, the benefits of developing skills in argumentation, critical thinking and writing extend far beyond the scope of the particular philosophical issues we'll discuss.

Bergmann: In this course you will be introduced to some methods of philosophical reflection, used in the history of philosophy and today, as they are applied to a variety of topics. Using these methods, we will try to get clear in our minds about some of the main positions and arguments relevant to these four questions: 1. Given that it doesn’t seem to be literally impossible that all of a person’s perceptual and memory evidence is produced artificially by a computer, can we know anything at all about the world around us and the past? 2. Is it rational to believe in God? 3. Are humans purely physical beings or do they have immaterial souls? 4. Does human life have any meaning and, if so, what is it? Readings will include works by historical figures such as Plato, Descartes, and Hume as well as selections from contemporary philosophers. The assignments will include 3 non-cumulative exams and several short writing assignments.

PHIL 11100  ETHICS
This course satisfies: University Core Curriculum Humanities/Human Cultures Requirement, College of Liberal Arts’ Social Ethics Requirement, College of Sciences’ General Education Requirement, College of Agriculture’s Humanities Requirement, College of Education’s Other Department Requirement for Social Studies Education, College of Health and Human Sciences’ HSCI Humanities, Behavioral/Social Sciences Requirement

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LLEC: Frank, D. Why be moral? Is it to your advantage to be moral? Are you moral if you help a poor person grudgingly, from duty? What if that poor person demands a dollar and Bill Gates cruises by having lost his wallet and needs a dollar to get to the bank to transfer millions for Africa relief work—to whom do you give the dollar, assuming you have only one dollar to give? Asking and pondering such questions requires no prerequisites, just a curious mind, like yours. We will ponder and use the thoughts of great moral philosophers like Plato, Aristotle, Hume, Kant, Mill, and Nietzsche, as we struggle to answer the aforementioned questions. We’ll also do some political philosophy in this course.

PHIL 114 Global Moral Ethics

This course is designed to enable you to use some of the techniques of modern deductive logic, with emphasis on the construction and appraisal of complex patterns of reasoning. Some of the things expected will be the recognition and reconstruction of arguments in ordinary language, the symbolization of propositions and arguments from English into logical notation, the testing of arguments for validity, and understanding and constructing proofs. You will be expected to know the notation and the techniques of propositional and predicate logic. Put less formally, you will learn what it means for a claim to follow from others, and to recognise and construct good arguments of your own.

PHIL 120 CRITICAL THINKING

This course satisfies: University Core Curriculum Information Literacy Requirement, College of Sciences’ General Education Requirement, College of Agriculture’s Humanities Requirement, College of Health and Human Sciences’ HSCI Humanities, Behavioral/Social Sciences Requirement

PHIL 15000 PRINCIPLES OF LOGIC

This course satisfies: University Core Curriculum Quantitative Reasoning Requirement

Tulodziecki: This course is an introduction to the basic concepts and methods of modern logic, with emphasis on the construction and appraisal of complex patterns of reasoning. Some of the things expected will be the recognition and reconstruction of arguments in ordinary language, the symbolization of propositions and arguments from English into logical notation, the testing of arguments for validity, and understanding and constructing proofs. You will be expected to know the notation and the techniques of propositional and predicate logic. Put less formally, you will learn what it means for a claim to follow from others, and to recognise and construct good arguments of your own.

Bertolet: This course is designed to enable you to use some of the techniques of modern deductive logic, which provide a precise way of distinguishing good and bad arguments — or as you’ll soon learn to say, valid and invalid arguments. We’ll start with arguments in English involving ‘and’, ‘or’, ‘not’, ‘if…then,’ and ‘if and only if,’ learning how to translate these into symbolic notation and ways of evaluating their validity. Later in the semester, we’ll move on to arguments involving quantifiers — words such as ‘all’ and ‘some’ — including those with multiple quantifiers, relations and identity. You will have thus learned the symbolization and techniques first of propositional logic and later of predicate logic. The course is in the Quantitative Reasoning section of the University Core.
PHIL 20600 PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

‘001  14676  TR  12:00 PM-01:15 PM  BRNG 1268  Draper, Paul R.

The goal of this course is to introduce students to philosophical inquiry about the nature and existence of God. The course has two parts. In the first part, an attempt is made to articulate and defend a Western monotheistic idea of God. Topics include the various methods for articulating an idea of God, especially one method called "Perfect Being Theology"; the issue of whether an eternal God would be timeless or everlasting; and the issues of whether perfect power is compatible with perfect goodness, and perfect knowledge with human freedom. In the second part of the course, evidence for and against God's existence is analyzed and evaluated. Topics include the issue of whether God's existence is needed to explain the existence or beginning of the Universe or the life it produces, and the issue of whether horrific suffering is evidence against God's existence. Students of all religious and non-religious viewpoints are welcome in this course and will be treated with respect.

PHIL 21900 INTRO TO EXISTENTIALISM

This course satisfies: University Core Curriculum Humanities/Human Cultures Requirement, College of Sciences’ General Education Requirement, College of Agricultures’ Humanities Requirement, College of Health and Human Sciences’ HSCI Humanities, Behavioral/Social Sciences Requirement

‘001  15066  TR  09:00 AM-10:15 AM  BRNG 1230  Smith, Daniel

A survey of both the philosophical and more literary writings of the existentialist movement. Readings will be chosen from among the following writers: Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Dostoevsky, Kafka, Marcel, Heidegger, Camus, Sartre, Jaspers, de Beauvoir, Ortega, and Merleau-Ponty.

PHIL 22300 FATE AND FREE WILL HONORS

This course satisfies: College of Sciences’ General Education Requirement, College of Agricultures’ Humanities Requirement, College of Health and Human Sciences’ HSCI Humanities, Behavioral/Social Sciences Requirement

H01  20055  TR  10:30 AM-11:45 AM  BRNG 1230  Bergmann, Michael

This is an introductory-level honors course focused on a fascinating set of topics related to the question of whether we have free will. Many reasons have been proposed for thinking that our fate is determined: arguments from logic, from science, and from theology have been employed with the aim of showing that our fate is already sealed. But has our fate been sealed? And if so, what does that imply? We will be examining and evaluating arguments for determinism and fatalism and considering their implications in connection with questions such as whether we have free will, whether we are morally responsible for anything, and whether we can make good sense of human actions such as deliberating, planning, punishing, praising, and blaming. Most of our readings will be from contemporary philosophers. The assignments will include 3 non-cumulative exams and several short writing assignments.

PHIL 22500 PHILOSOPHY AND GENDER

001  25259  MWF  12:30 PM-01:20 PM  BRNG 1230  Grad staff

An examination of the beliefs, assumptions, and values found in traditional and contemporary philosophical analyses of women. A range of feminist approaches to knowledge, values, and social issues will be introduced.

PHIL 23000/REL23000 RELIGIONS OF THE EAST

‘001  68740  MWF  12:30 PM-01:20 PM  STEW 320  Purpura, Ashley M.

This course offers an interdisciplinary introduction to the academic study of Indian, Southeast Asian, Chinese, and Japanese religious traditions, including: Hinduism, Jainism, Sikhism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism,
Shintoism, and Zoroastrianism. The philosophical and religious contexts of each tradition will be considered by examining its history, primary texts, key teachings, rituals, present practice, and diverse cultural expressions.

**PHIL 23100/REL23100 RELIGIONS OF THE WEST**

*This course satisfies:* College of Sciences’ Language & Culture, and General Education Requirements
College of Agricultures’ International Understanding, Multicultural Awareness, and Humanities Requirements, College of Managements’ International Elective, College of Health and Human Sciences’ International Selective, Cultural/International Diversity, HSCI Humanities, Behavioral/Social Sciences, Global Perspectives and International Cultures Requirements

*001* 68741 MWF 11:30 AM-12:20 PM  BRNG 1268  Ryba, Thomas

The purpose of this course is to provide a systematic survey of those religions variously described, in the West, as ‘Western Religions’ or ‘Religions of the West.’ Immediately, a problem arises because the adjective, ‘Western,’ is questionable. The descriptions ‘Western’ or ‘of the West’ have been understood as designating a problematic geo-cultural location—but also a homogeneous style of religious thought because of their common origins as *Abrahamic* monotheisms. Contemporary scholars of religion, and indigenous believers, often contest this imputed homogeneity and have pointed to the incredible complexity and fluidity of these traditions, characteristics which resist simplistic classification. Well aware of the challenges such descriptions present, we, in this course, will engage in a comparative study of the systems of belief and thought traditionally termed ‘Religions of the West’ by Western scholars of religions. This will be accomplished through a series of readings on these systems’ histories, philosophies, and scriptures.

**PHIL 26000 PHILOSOPHY AND LAW**

*This course satisfies:* University Core Curriculums’ Information Literacy and Written Communications Requirements, College of Liberal Arts’ Social Ethics Requirement, College of Sciences’ General Education Requirement, College of Agricultures’ Humanities Requirement, College of Health and Human Sciences’ HSCI Humanities, Behavioral/Social Sciences Requirement

*004* 11694  TR 11:30 AM-12:20 PM  ME 1012  Parrish, S. Lynn

What is law? Can a law be unjust? If a law is unjust are you obligated to obey it? What is the relation between morality and the law? What are the limits, if any, of freedom of expression? Should personal behaviors be restricted by social conventions? In this introductory course in philosophy and law, we shall discuss the nature of law and explore juridical issues as they arise from the confluence of political philosophy, social philosophy, and legal philosophy. Civil disobedience will emerge from social contract theory, and legal constraints on freedom of expression will emerge from libertarian considerations. Philosophers to be studied include Plato, Hobbes, Locke, Bentham, Mill, Hart, Devlin, Rawls, Dworkin, Scanlon, and Waldron.

**PHIL 28000 ETHICS AND ANIMALS**

*This course satisfies:* University Core Curriculum’s Human Cultures/Humanities Requirement, College of Liberal Arts’ Social Ethics Requirement, College of Sciences’ General Education Requirement, College of Agricultures’ Humanities Requirement, College of Health and Human Sciences’ HSCI Humanities, Behavioral/Social Sciences, Culture and Diversity, and Social Ethics Requirements

*001* 25263 MWF 02:30 PM-03:20 PM  BRNG 2280  Bernstein, Mark

We investigate ONE question: What is the nature and extent of our moral obligations to nonhuman animals. The investigation consists of reading some of the most important texts in this area in the last 40 years.

**PHIL 30100 ANCIENT PHILOSOPHY**

*001* 25264 MWF 11:30 AM-12:20 PM  BRNG 1230  Marina, Jacqueline

A survey of Greek philosophy from its beginning in the Milesian school through the Presocratics to Plato and Aristotle.

**PHIL 30200 HISTORY OF MEDIEVAL PHILOSOPHY**

*This course satisfies:* University Core Curriculum’s Human Cultures/Humanities Requirement, College of Liberal Arts’ Western Heritage Requirement, College of Sciences’ Language & Culture, and General Education Requirements, College of Agricultures’ Humanities Requirement, College of Health and Human Sciences’ HSCI Humanities, Behavioral/Social Sciences Requirement

*001* 14679 TR 12:00 PM-01:15 PM  BRNG 1230  Grad staff
A survey of the main trends and figures of medieval philosophy, with an emphasis on metaphysics, epistemology, and ethics. Readings (in English translation) may include Augustine, Boethius, Avicenna, Anselm, Abelard, Maimonides, Aquinas, Scotus, Ockham and Suarez.

PHIL 30300 HISTORY OF MODERN PHILOSOPHY
This course satisfies: University Core Curriculum's Human Cultures/Humanities Requirement, College of Liberal Arts' Western Heritage Requirement, College of Sciences' Language & Culture, and General Education Requirements, College of Agriculture's Humanities Requirement, College of Health and Human Sciences' HSCI Humanities, Behavioral/Social Sciences Requirement

PHIL 46500 PHILOSOPHY OF LANGUAGE
 Everybody assumes, at least tacitly, that language is a means for finding things out about the world. It is hard to see why people would spend money on books, commit time and money to listen to faculty members talk about physics, literature, or philosophy, or search the web unless they make this assumption. This suggests that we all presume language somehow represents the world, in a way that enables us to come to know things about it. So how does it do that? A sentence doesn't seem to picture the world in the way that a photograph does, so how are we to understand how it works? (Or maybe it doesn't represent the world at all – even worse news for newspaper publishers and perhaps also Google. Or maybe it does picture the world – there does happen to be something called the picture theory of meaning.) Along with such questions about language itself, there are questions about its use. If I say that you'll enjoy this course, I might be making a prediction, or I might just be expressing a hope that I have – or maybe in the right circumstances I can promise that you'll enjoy it. Since I say the same thing in each case, it must be something else that accounts for the different acts I might perform: what's that? Our main topics will be meaning, reference, and speech acts. This includes attention to proper names, definite descriptions ('the 400-place restaurant,' 'the 400-level philosophy of language course being offered F18) and so-called natural kind terms ('water,' 'tiger'). It is typical (and reasonable) for philosophers to start with literal uses of language, but we shall venture beyond those to consider non-literal ones such as metaphor. Course requirements will include some short papers, an in-class midterm, and a take-home final exam.

PHIL 50200 STUDIES IN MEDIEVAL PHILOSOPHY

An intensive study of some central topics in the thought of major medieval philosophers. Subject matter will vary. Philosophers most often studied are Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Duns Scotus, and Ockham.

PHIL 50300 STUDIES IN MODERN PHILOSOPHY

According to Hegel, “If one begins to philosophize, then one must first be a Spinozist.” We’ll begin to philosophize by studying Spinoza’s greatest work, the Ethics. We’ll figure out whether he was a God-intoxicated man or the founder of a system of philosophical atheism. We’ll see how his metaphysics, ethics, philosophy of mind, and political philosophy fit together. Two papers, a class presentation, and an analytical bibliography will be assigned.
The aim of this course is to use mathematical probability to "explicate" the concept of (supporting) evidence or confirmation and then use that explication to address a variety of foundational problems in the philosophy of science. Topics include:

1. the rules of mathematical probability and their relevance to epistemic probabilities and thus to philosophy of science;
2. confirmation theory and the basic (Bayesian) structure of scientific reasoning;
3. the raven paradox: why do positive instances confirm universal generalizations to such different degrees?
4. the asymmetry question: why does strong or conclusive evidence against a scientific theory seem so much easier to come by than strong or conclusive evidence for it?
5. what's wrong with statistical significance testing?
6. theories of intrinsic probability;
7. the problem of simplicity: what is simplicity and why are simpler theories not just easier to use, but more likely to be true?
8. Goodman's paradox and the new riddle of induction: how can one theory be more likely to be true than all competing theories even though that theory fits the data no better or even worse than some of those competing theories?
9. Hume's problem of induction: is it possible to justify induction?

PHIL 58000 METALOGIC

A graduate-level introduction to metatheoretic studies of formal axiomatic systems. Basic set theory is developed for use as a tool in studying the propositional calculus. Further topics include many-valued logics and metatheory for modal or predicate logic. Undergraduate students may be admitted to the course with special consent of the instructor in charge.

PHIL 58000A/TECH 58100 Blockchains, Networks, People: An Intro

This course provides an introduction to blockchain technology and discusses contemporary research in the field. The learning objectives are 1) gain an understanding of the basics of blockchain technology, 2) identify different theoretical approaches to the field including network, economic, and social theory, 3) learn structured research methods to apply to the review analysis of scientific literature, 4) lead a research discussion on these topics, and 5) develop and articulate your own theoretically and practically motivated research questions.

PHIL 68500 PHILOSOPHY OF KANT

This course will be concerned with the critical philosophy as a whole. Primary emphasis, however, will be on the theories of knowledge and metaphysics as developed in the Critique of Pure Reason. Lesser attention will be paid to Kant's ethics and the principles of judgment as time permits.
SCLA 101: Transformative Texts: EPIC ADVENTURES

MWF 11:30 – 12:20; 12:30-1:20; 1:30-2:20 Parrish, S. Lynn

SCLA 101 is the first of a two-semester sequence of courses devoted to essential texts and ideas in human literature from antiquity to the present. SCLA 101 is part of Level I of the Cornerstone certificate program. It fulfills the Written Communication and Information Literacy requirements in the University Core Curriculum. The course is dedicated to developing and enhancing the ability of students to write in a variety of genres, advancing their understanding of the importance of rhetorical situations and choices; analyzing and constructing arguments; gathering and evaluating sources; as well as learning how to read and evaluate print and visual media.

SCLA 101 is based on the fundamental premise that great texts inform and inspire students, encouraging their creative and imaginative capacities, helping students see the world from different perspectives and broadening their worldview. Students will examine a series of texts, seeking to understand the contexts in which they were produced, as well as what these texts mean to us today. What do these books tell us about the pains and pleasures of being human; the use and abuse of power; the existence and nature of God or gods; and the power and limits of human reason? What do these texts tell us about others and ourselves? How do they advance our self-understanding? How do they increase our understanding of other people and their perspectives?

In this version of SCLA 101, we will read and discuss tales of epic adventure in the ancient world and in the process, illuminate how travel and dislocation are foundational to the human experience. Staying in one spot for too long gets in the way of personal growth and maturity. The importance and necessity of change and the undergoing of new experiences and challenges is interwoven in our readings with themes of duty and obligation, the importance of family and friends, and the power of the past and the future over the present. This class will be devoted to an open, interactive discussion of these and other ideas. As participants contemplate the trials and tribulations experienced by epic characters of the past, the similarities of those experiences in a more familiar context will emerge – illuminating the timelessness of these great works of literature and explaining our continuing collective fascination with epic adventures like Star Wars, The Lord of the Rings, and Harry Potter.

SCLA 101 (Transformative Texts and Ideas): Law and Order (TR 12-1:15)
Instructor: Daniel Frank (Philosophy and Jewish Studies)

This course is the first in a two-semester sequence of courses devoted to essential texts and ideas from antiquity to the present. It is part of Level I of the Cornerstone Integrated Liberal Arts certificate program. SCLA 101 fulfills the Written Communication and Information Literacy requirements in the University Core Curriculum.

In this version of SCLA 101, the general focus is Law and Order, and the two sub-foci are Civilization and Its Discontents, and Civil Disobedience. The course is as much about human nature as it is about the political structures under which we live, and the resultant pressures these impose on our instinctual lives. Political life might seem to be a kind of necessary evil, a trade-off between natural freedom and law. If so, are there limitations to the alienation of our freedoms for the sake of the security of political life? Do we retain the freedom, the natural right, to curb the power of law by disobeying it? What might the justification for civil disobedience be?

We will worry together with great minds through the ages as we grapple with these issues. We will read and discuss in an interactive, open way works of Aeschylus, Sophocles, Plato, Rousseau, Thoreau, Freud, Rawls, and ML King, Jr.

Required texts for SCLA 101: Law and Order