

## **Fall 2025 Department of Philosophy Grad Course Descriptions**

Listed below are the Philosophy courses being offered at Purdue University in Spring 2025. The courses are listed by their five-digit course number and course title, followed by a brief description. The tables below each description also include information on the course type (e.g., lectures = ‘LEC’), the enrolment limit of the course, the day(s)/time of the course or each section of it, the classroom in which the course will be taught, and the instructor(s) for the course. Courses that include a recitation section are marked in the tables below as type ‘LEC/REC.’ Details of the recitation sections are not listed. The type ‘DIST’ indicates a fully asynchronous, online course. ‘Grad’ indicates that a graduate student will be the instructor of record. PHIL courses that are cross-listed with other courses are marked as such (e.g., ‘c/l DEPT 10000’).

Have questions about philosophy graduate courses? You can contact our Grad Coordinator, Vickie Sanders, via email at [sanders@purdue.edu](mailto:sanders@purdue.edu), or by phone at 765-494-4275.

### **500 LEVEL COURSES**

#### **52500 Studies in Metaphysics**

| <b>Course</b> | <b>Type</b> | <b>Enrolment</b> | <b>Time</b>    | <b>Bldg/Rm</b> | <b>Instructor</b> |
|---------------|-------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|-------------------|
| PHIL 52500    | LEC         | 10               | TR 1:30-2:45pm | BRNG 7119      | COVER             |

A straight-ahead meat-and-potatoes course in metaphysics and how to do it. If we permitted Aristotle’s famous text to be our guide (his Metaphysics has as its title a word he’d never encountered), we would think hard about the nature of unchanging things and their first causes. This won’t be a history course, nor will we start by agreeing that metaphysics is the study of “being qua being”. But here are two respects in which our course will have something in common with that venerable old project: (i) it will try to say something about being (while appreciating that there is no such thing), and (ii) it will try to land on necessary truths about what there is and the nature of what there is. Full stop, pretty much. The first of those is some (i) meta-metaphysics, likely to be a little more than half the serving of that “how to do it” portion of our meat and potatoes. Topically, the second of those can range as widely as the whole wide world – and in a way even more widely still: it’s not as if one wasn’t doing metaphysics when one carefully thought one’s way to the conclusion “So, it turns out that there are no properties (after all) that you and I share”, or to the conclusion that there are no bearers of properties (not really), but just properties; meanwhile Spinoza was obviously wrong, since the whole wide world – of all that’s actual – is in a pretty obvious sense less than what’s possible. (There are novels, for crying out loud [i.e. pieces of literature which, though false, aren’t necessarily false].) So the second and larger main helping (ii) will try to land on necessary truths about properties, and about the nature of so-called particulars, but also about the nature of necessity and contingency (modality) itself. At least those four, this semester. All done from our armchairs, of course – with perhaps a teeny exam, probably less reading than you expect, certainly a middling amount of writing, and some amount of in-class participation that defies prediction.

### **58000A Rationality: Between Epistemology and Cognitive Science**

| <b>Course</b> | <b>Type</b> | <b>Enrolment</b> | <b>Time</b>   | <b>Bldg/Rm</b> | <b>Instructor</b> |
|---------------|-------------|------------------|---------------|----------------|-------------------|
| PHIL 58000A   | LEC         | 10               | M 2:30-5:20pm | BRNG 7119      | KARLAN            |

This seminar is designed to introduce graduate students (and select advanced undergraduate students) to the interdisciplinary study of rationality. How we reason and form beliefs, and how we should do so, forms the core of a set of interdisciplinary questions of interest to epistemologists, metaethicists, theorists of action, psychologists, computational cognitive scientists, and neuroscientists, among others. This course will introduce students to both historical debates between these fields (e.g. the so-called "rationality wars" of the 1980s and 1990s) and cutting-edge work on similar questions (e.g. contemporary debates on "bounded," "ecological," "computational," and "resource" rationality). Students will learn both about traditional views of rationality found in classic works in epistemology and theories practical reason, as well as empirically grounded work in the cognitive and computational sciences that either complements or challenges the traditional picture. The ultimate goal is for students to come away from the seminar with a deeper understanding of the complex and exciting ways that normative and descriptive projects intersect in the study of the rational mind.

### **58000B Philosophy of Money**

| <b>Course</b> | <b>Type</b> | <b>Enrolment</b> | <b>Time</b>    | <b>Bldg/Rm</b> | <b>Instructor</b> |
|---------------|-------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|-------------------|
| PHIL 58000B   | LEC         | 10               | T 9:00-11:50am | BRNG 7119      | YEOMANS           |

We will approach the question 'What is money?' from the perspective of social ontology. We will begin with a brief orientation to the three functions of money (means of payment, store of value and unit of account), different measures of the money supply, and some of the history of the development of money. Then the first half of the seminar will be devoted to Georg Simmel's *The Philosophy of Money* (1900). This classic of social theory explores the relation of money to exchange, to large-scale society, and to rationality itself. It explores the way that money creates new forms of freedom at the same time that it undermines the strength of social ties and the traditional virtues. The second half of the course will be devoted to 21st-century debates in social ontology on the nature of money. Topics will include credit, commodity, and social-positioning theories of money as well as the relation between money, states, and banks. In addition, we will take up some moral issues in our relation to money, including distinctively monetary vices such as miserliness. Students will present their research during the last two seminar sessions as well as responding to another student's presentation. The seminar paper is a 3000-word essay of sufficient quality to be submitted to the APA Colloquium program.

## 600 LEVEL COURSES

### 60100 Special Topics in Ancient Philosophy

| Course     | Type | Enrolment | Time          | Bldg/Rm   | Instructor |
|------------|------|-----------|---------------|-----------|------------|
| PHIL 60100 | LEC  | 10        | W 2:30-5:20pm | BRNG 7119 | SCHROEDER  |

This is a graduate seminar on Plato's philosophy of perception, focusing on his so-called "later" dialogues (especially the *Theaetetus*, *Timaeus*, and *Philebus*). The course will begin with Plato's physical and physiological account of perception and its implications for the objects of sensory awareness. For the remaining two-thirds of the course, we will focus on the content of perception and perception-involving mental states, and on the relation between perception and other players in Plato's psychological economy such as thought, memory, imagination, pleasure/pain, and desire. Prerequisite: PHIL 50100.

### 68000 Memory

| Course     | Type | Enrolment | Time           | Bldg/Rm   | Instructor |
|------------|------|-----------|----------------|-----------|------------|
| PHIL 68000 | LEC  | 10        | M 11:30-2:20pm | BRNG 7119 | ROBINS     |

Philosophers have long recruited memory to address puzzles that arise in discussion of other philosophical questions (e.g., personal identity, knowledge, moral responsibility). Nonetheless, it is only recently—in the last 15 years or so—that memory has become a sustained topic of investigation in the way that other mental capacities, like imagination and perception, have been. In the short time it has been active, however, the philosophy of memory has grown rapidly. This seminar will focus on contemporary work in the philosophy of memory, which is centered primarily on issues that arise in the philosophy of mind and epistemology. Where there's time and student interest, we will make connections to historical treatments of memory and memory's connection to other areas of philosophy, such as metaphysics, philosophy of science, and ethics.



Department of Philosophy