

Philosophy Courses

Fall 2015

All 100 and 200-level philosophy courses satisfy the Humanities requirement -- except 120, 198, and 298. We offer both a *major* and a *minor* in philosophy plus a concentration in Politics, Philosophy, and Law – the requirements can be found at www.philosophy.cofc.edu.

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MAJOR IN PHILOSOPHY: 33 semester hours in philosophy which must include 120; 201; 202; and 450. Of the remaining 21 hours of electives in philosophy, at least 12 hours must be taken in courses at or above the 200 level, with at least nine of these at or above the 300 level. *Note: A maximum of six hours of PHIL 398, 399, or 499 may be taken to satisfy the requirement of nine elective hours at or above the 300-level*

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MINOR IN PHILOSOPHY: 18 semester hours in philosophy which must include: Philosophy 101; Philosophy 120; a course in the history of philosophy (201, 202, 304, 305, 306, 307, or 310); and three additional courses in Philosophy, two of which must be at or above the 200-level.

Philosophy majors who are interested in independent study options (including Internships, Bachelor's Essays, and Teaching Apprenticeships) should consult with the department chair or their advisor

CRN 11322	PHIL 101 - INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY	McKinnon	MW	2:00 – 3:15
CRN 11323	PHIL 101 - INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY	Neufeld	TR	9:25 – 10:40
CRN 10837	PHIL 101 - INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY	Coseru	TR	12:15 – 1:30
CRN 10838	PHIL 101 - INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY	Coseru	TR	1:40 – 2:55
CRN 10839	PHIL 101 - INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY	Krasnoff	TR	10:50 – 12:05
CRN 11324	PHIL 120 – SYMBOLIC LOGIC	Lesses	MWF	9:00 – 9:50
CRN 11325	PHIL 120 – SYMBOLIC LOGIC	Lesses	MWF	10:00 – 10:50
CRN 13332	PHIL 150 – NATURE, TECHNOLOGY & SOCIETY	Boyle	MWF	11:00 – 11:50
CRN 13333	PHIL 150 – NATURE, TECHNOLOGY & SOCIETY	Boyle	MWF	12:00 – 12:50
CRN 11835	PHIL 155 – ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS	Hettinger	MWF	9:00 – 9:50
CRN 11836	PHIL 155 – ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS	Hettinger	MWF	10:00 – 10:50
CRN 13336	PHIL 165 – PHILOSOPHY & FEMINISM	Hough	MW	3:25 – 4:40
CRN 11949	PHIL 170 – BIOMEDICAL ETHICS	Baker	MWF	12:00 – 12:50
CRN 10840	PHIL 201 – HISTORY OF ANCIENT PHILOSOPHY	Lesses	MWF	1:00 – 1:50
CRN 13339	PHIL 207 – ETHICS	Nadelhoffer	TR	10:50 – 12:05
CRN 13338	PHIL 209 – POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY	Krasnoff	MWF	11:00 – 11:50
CRN 13335	PHIL 234 – EASTERN PHILOSOPHY	Coseru	TR	9:25 – 10:40
CRN 11837	PHIL 280 - AESTHETICS	Hettinger	MW	3:25 – 4:40
CRN 13337	PHIL 285 – PHILOSOPHICAL ISSUES IN LITERATURE	Hough	MWF	12:00 – 12:50
CRN 12228	PHIL 298 – SPECIAL TOPIC: PRACTICAL ETHICS	Kipnis	TR	3:05 – 4:20
CRN 13331	PHIL 301 – TOPICS IN ETHICS: THREE ETHICAL THEORIES	Baker	MW	2:00 – 3:15
CRN 13334	PHIL 305 – HISTORY PHIL: WOMEN IN MODERN PHILOSOPHY	Boyle	TR	12:15 – 1:30
CRN 11838	PPLW 400 – PPLW SEMINAR: PSYCHOPATHOLOGY & THE LAW	Nadelhoffer	TR	1:40 – 2:55

PHIL 101: Introduction to Philosophy

Prof. McKinnon

CRN 11322 (MW 2:00 – 3:15)

NO PREREQUISITE

This course will introduce students to a number of topics in contemporary philosophy, often drawing on the resources of other fields such as psychology, linguistics, and sociology. We'll cover a large range of topics including: whether it's rational to have a child; what we can know, and how we can learn from others; why we sometimes don't believe people who are telling the truth; why we sometimes make a plan but fail to follow through; racism, sexism, and privilege; how we can unintentionally discriminate against people; and other topics. This is a discussion based course, and topics are meant to challenge students' values and beliefs in a respectful learning space.

PHIL 101: Introduction to Philosophy

Prof. Neufeld

CRN 11323 (TR 9:25 – 10:40)

NO PREREQUISITE

This course covers four broad areas of philosophy: (1) Philosophy and religion: Do we have good reasons to think that a god exists? What kinds of reasons might these be? Is the existence of God compatible with the existence of evil in the world? (2) Skepticism and knowledge: When can we say we know something? How do we justify our beliefs? Do you know that you are not in the Matrix right now? Does it matter? (3) Body and Mind: What is the relationship between mind and body? Is the mind just the brain? What might turn on an answer to this question? (4) We choose the fourth topic together as a class. Topics might include freedom of the will, the nature of morality, or the justification of the exercise of political power.

PHIL 101: Introduction to Philosophy

Prof. Coseru

CRN 10837 (TR 12:15 – 1:30)

CRN 10838 (TR 1:40 – 2:55)

NO PREREQUISITE

What is the difference between knowledge and mere opinion? Can we be certain of anything? Are there universal criteria for distinguishing between right and wrong? Is there a universal good that can be known by all? Is there a relationship between virtue and happiness? Can we be truly free? Are ideas innate or acquired? What is the relation between reason and faith, or reason and experience? No matter what our answers to these questions, how are we to proceed? What role does culture, gender, politics, science play in shaping our identities? Assuming that judgments and actions can be morally right or wrong, what aspects of actions make them so? Is it the consequence of an action, for example? Or the action itself? And, in general, what is the best way to live? What is the good life? We will examine a variety of answers to these questions through a combination of classical and modern readings.

PHIL 101: Introduction to Philosophy

Prof. Krasnoff

CRN 10839 (TR 10:50 – 12:05)

NO PREREQUISITE

Philosophy is a kind of questioning of our ordinary beliefs. Philosophy makes, or at least investigates, a demand for a kind of deeper justification of those beliefs. What reasons do we have for thinking or acting as we now do, and how can we show that our reasons are good ones? In this class we will investigate the nature of this philosophical demand for reasons. What kind of justification are philosophers looking for, and why are they looking for it? Can we reasonably expect that they will be able to find it, and would finding it count as a good thing? We will address these questions by examining the work of four historically influential philosophers (Plato, Descartes, Hume, Nietzsche), and by evaluating their answers for ourselves.

PHIL 120: Symbolic Logic

Prof. Lesses

CRN 11426 (MWF 9:00 – 9:50)

CRN 11427 (MWF 10:00 – 10:50)

NO PREREQUISITE

This course serves as an introduction to the formal methods of deductive logic and aims to foster skills in abstract reasoning. You will learn: (1) to recognize and apply important logical distinctions, (2) to translate the statements and arguments of ordinary language into symbolic notation, (3) to derive a conclusion from a set of premises using the procedure of formal proofs, and (4) to interpret formal statements and arguments. Studying this formal logical system will help teach you to recognize and construct valid arguments and improve your ability to detect mistakes in reasoning.

Note: This course does not count toward the humanities minimum degree requirement. It does count toward the general education requirement in mathematics or logic.

PHIL 150: Nature, Technology & Society

Prof. Boyle

CRN 13332 (MWF 11:00 – 11:50)

CRN 13333 (MWF 12:00 – 12:50)

NO PREREQUISITE

An examination of the philosophical problems arising from the impact of science and technology on contemporary society. Topics include the relation of technology to society and political systems, the place of the individual within a modern technocratic society, the influence of technology on views of nature and the question of human values and scientific knowledge.

PHIL 155: Environmental Ethics

Prof. Hettinger

CRN 11835 (MWF 9:00 – 9:50)

CRN 11836 (MWF 10:00 – 10:50)

NO PREREQUISITE

We humans are massively transforming the earth and not all for the good. If present trends continue, there will be 50% more people, consuming twice as much on a warmer, more polluted planet with diminished fertility, fewer resources, less biological and cultural diversity, and more weeds, pests, trash, and inequality.

Environmental ethics examines the moral issues involved in this human impact on earth and its inhabitants. Are we eroding the quality of our lives or perhaps even threatening our existence? Is this influence on the planet an appropriate role for humanity? Does it treat others fairly (including future generations and other species)? What are our obligations to animals, plants, and wild nature, if any? Some argue that these concerns overlook nature's resilience, ignore humans' positive contributions to the planet, and fail to acknowledge the importance of property rights and our unparalleled standard of living. Are they right?

This course will introduce you to environmental issues from a philosophical perspective. Its goal is to get you to think seriously and carefully about the moral dimensions of these issues and to help you develop your own views about the proper relationship between human civilization and the natural world.

PHIL 165: Philosophy & Feminism

Prof. Hough

CRN 13336 (MW 3:25 – 4:40)

NO PREREQUISITE

Do women have a female 'nature,' and if so, what is it? In the first half of the course we will review various accounts of women in the history of philosophy (including Plato, Aristotle, Hume, Kant, Schopenhauer and Nietzsche). We will then read some essays in recent feminist philosophy, with a focus on ethical concerns: what is the moral significance of the (so-called) 'otherness' of women? Should feminist ethics emphasize or deny difference, and on what grounds? In what way should feminist concerns shape our understanding of issues like abortion and pornography?

PHIL 170: Biomedical Ethics

Prof. Baker

CRN 11949 (MWF 12:00 – 12:50)

NO PREREQUISITE

This is an introductory philosophy course whose focus is ethical issues in medicine. We will begin with a discussion of ethical theory as it relates to bioethics, especially to the responsibilities of the physician and the patient. End-of-life issues and beginning-of-life issues will comprise a significant portion of the course, but time will be spent on the just allocation of scarce medical resources and recent discussions surrounding health care reform in the United States. If time permits, we will explore issues involving behavior on the part of pregnant women that endangers the lives of their yet-to-be-born.

PHIL 201: History of Ancient Philosophy

Prof. Lesses

CRN 10840 (MWF 1:00 – 1:50)

PREREQUISITE: 3 semester hours in philosophy or permission of the instructor.

All of Western thought owes an incalculable debt to ancient Greek philosophy. What fascinated Greek philosophical thinkers accordingly constitutes a major part of the Western intellectual inheritance. This course examines the development of the philosophical views of (i) several early Greek thinkers, (ii) Socrates, (iii) Plato, and (iv) Aristotle. As much as possible, these philosophers will be read in the original sources in translation.

PHIL 207: Ethics

Prof. Nadelhoffer

CRN 13339 (TR 1:50 – 12:05)

NO PREREQUISITE

A study of major ethical theories, such as utilitarianism, Kantian ethics, and virtue ethics.

PHIL 209: Political Philosophy

Prof. Krasnoff

CRN 13338 (MWF 11:00 – 11:50)

NO PREREQUISITE

A survey of central texts from the history of political philosophy. Our emphasis will be on the nature and value of political philosophy. What sort of philosophical questions are raised by politics? How can answers to those philosophical questions be of any relevance to political practice? We will pay careful attention to the different ways that ancient, modern, and more contemporary political philosophers have approached these questions, and we will attempt to evaluate their answers for ourselves. Readings will include Plato, Aristotle, Aquinas, Hobbes, Locke, Hume, Rousseau, Marx, Foucault, Rawls, and Habermas.

PHIL 234: Eastern Philosophy

Prof. Coseru

CRN 13335 (TR 9:25 – 10:40)

NO PREREQUISITE

What is the nature of reality? What is the nature of mind? What is knowledge? What is virtue? What is the best way to live? In this course we examine how Indian, Chinese, and Buddhist philosophers have addressed these questions, and evaluate their specific methods of inquiry. Where appropriate, we also draw parallels to comparable developments in Western philosophy. We begin by exploring some of the earliest conceptions of self as articulated by Sāṃkhya, Yoga, and Cārvāka philosophers in India. We then proceed to examine the philosophical tenets of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika philosophers, and their long-standing debate with the Buddhists on such issues as personal identity and the limits of thought. We also examine central issues in Buddhist philosophy of mind and moral psychology. Our exploration of classical Chinese thought covers Kongzi's and Mozi's analyses of human nature and society, their systematic development by Mengzi and Zhuangzi, and alternative ethical models such as Yang Zhu's egoism and Xunzi's naturalism. Throughout the course we also consider whether non-Western philosophy can be translated using the vocabulary and conceptual resources of Western philosophy, and—when such translation projects prove to be problematic—how best to overcome these linguistic and conceptual barriers.

PHIL 280: Aesthetics

Prof. Hettinger

CRN 11837 (MW 3:25 – 4:40)

NO PREREQUISITE

This course explores philosophical issues in the aesthetic appreciation of art (and nature). Questions include: What is art? (For example: Can food be art? Can a urinal be art?) Must good art be beautiful? Must it express emotion? Is it crazy to be moved by events we know to be fictional or to enjoy art that terrifies or disgusts us? If an artist intends her work to mean something and critics disagree, who is right? Can we distinguish between good and bad—or better and worse—art? Does it make sense to ask if the Beatles are as good as Beethoven? We will also examine political and moral questions about art. For example, should art be publicly funded? Should it ever be censored or controlled by the public? Do moral values ever (usually, always?) trump aesthetic values? Can aesthetic values ever trump moral values? In the aesthetics of nature we ask how it differs from the aesthetic appreciation of art. For example, should the aesthetic appreciation of nature be scientifically-informed (unlike art appreciation)? Is all nature beautiful (again, unlike art, where some is presumably ugly). Is environmental art “an aesthetic affront to nature” or does it have a positive contribution to environmental sensibility?

PHIL 285: Philosophical Issues in Literature

Prof. Hough

CRN 13337 (MWF 12:00 – 12:50)

NO PREREQUISITE

In his essay “The Philosophy of Composition” Edgar Allan Poe remarks, “the death...of a beautiful woman is, unquestionably, the most poetical topic in the world” because death “is most poetical when...it most closely allies itself to Beauty.” We will consider the implications of Poe's aesthetic claim by thinking about a deeper issue: what genre best allows humans to reflect on the fragility of life and their own transience? How do literary accounts of our impermanence differ from philosophical ones? In what way does literature enhance (or diminish) the arguments provided by the philosophers? How can these genres be fruitfully, or therapeutically, read in tandem?

We will consider these questions by reading a number of philosophical texts (Plato, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Husserl) and a variety of literary works (Euripides, Woolf, Poe, Barth).

PHIL 298: Special Topic: Practical Ethics

Prof. Kipnis

CRN 12228 (TR 3:05 – 4:20)

NO PREREQUISITE

A survey of tools and strategies for doing ethics consultation outside of the academic setting. The focus will be upon difficult dilemmas in professional work. Topics include the post-Katrina euthanasias in New Orleans, non-treatment decisions for extremely low-birthweight newborns, surgical “normalization” of infants with ambiguous genitalia, doing “expert witness” work in ethics-related court cases, and confidentiality exceptions in medical practice.

PHIL 301: Topics in Ethics: Three Ethical Theories

Prof. Baker

CRN 13331 (MW 2:00 – 3:15)

PREREQUISITE: *Either six semester hours in philosophy (other than 120) or permission of the instructor.*

In this course we study the various options when it comes to ethical theory (Kantianism, consequentialism, and virtue theory) by turning to book length presentations of each. This ensures that we will delve into the detail of each view. It also allows us to learn, through the example of these books, how ethical theorists develop their approaches. Because these books attempt to ward off criticisms (current and prior), we will become familiar with the debates over ethical theory.

The goal is for students to develop their own criteria for an adequate approach. We will consider issues of justification (these sorts of concerns are commonly raised by critics of the above three approaches), but we will also focus on other sorts of desiderata: How applicable is the theory? What sort of guidance does the theory provide? How viable is the moral ideal? What do we want in an ethical theory?

PHIL 305: Topics in the History of Philosophy: Women in Modern Philosophy

Prof. Boyle

CRN 13334 (TR 12:15 – 1:30)

PREREQUISITE: *Either six semester hours in philosophy (other than 120) or permission of the instructor.*

PPLW 400: PPLW Seminar: Psychopathology and the Law

Prof. Nadelhoffer

CRN 11838 (TR 1:40 – 2:55)

PREREQUISITE: Declared Philosophy or Political Science major; instructor permission.

The goal of this interdisciplinary course is to examine the relationship between traditional conceptions of moral and legal responsibility and recent advances in neuroscience, genetics, and psychiatry when it comes to our understanding of psychopathology. Along the way, we will explore both the salient empirical work (e.g., we will discuss mental disorders ranging from psychopathy and antisocial personality disorder to schizophrenia and post-traumatic stress disorder) and the salient philosophical work on agency, moral desert, and punishment. By exploring issues such as the insanity defense and civil commitment from multiple vantage points, students will be in a better position to develop informed opinions of their own when it comes to the complex relationship between science and the criminal law.

Note: Those who have declared enrollment in the Politics, Philosophy, and Law concentration will be given priority in Registration.