

Philosophy Courses Spring 2012

All philosophy courses satisfy the Humanities requirement -- except 120, which counts as one of the two required courses in Math/Logic. Many philosophy courses (e.g., Business Ethics, Philosophy of Law) complement other major programs. For those with a sustained interest in philosophy there are both a *major* and a *minor* in philosophy.

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.

CRN 21477	PHIL 101 - INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY	Hough	TR	9:25 – 10:40
CRN 21478	PHIL 101 - INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY	Williams	TR	12:15 – 1:30
CRN 21479	PHIL 101 - INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY	Williams	TR	1:40 – 2:55
CRN 21480	PHIL 101 - INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY	Neufeld	MWF	11:00 – 11:50
CRN 21481	PHIL 101 - INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY	Neufeld	MWF	12:00 – 12:50
CRN 22681	PHIL 120 – SYMBOLIC LOGIC	Leses	MWF	9:00 – 9:50
CRN 23928	PHIL 120 – SYMBOLIC LOGIC	Leses	MWF	10:00 – 10:50
CRN 21482	PHIL 155 – ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS	Hettinger	MWF	9:00 – 9:50
CRN 23924	PHIL 155 – ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS	Hettinger	MWF	10:00 – 10:50
CRN 23926	PHIL 160 – ETHICS & SPORTS	Krasnoff	TR	9:25 – 10:40
CRN 21483	PHIL 170 – BIOMEDICAL ETHICS	Perlmutter	TR	10:50 – 12:05
CRN 23931	PHIL 175 - BUSINESS & CONSUMER ETHICS	O'Dowd	MWF	12:00 – 12:50
CRN 23932	PHIL 175 - BUSINESS & CONSUMER ETHICS	O'Dowd	MWF	1:00 – 1:50
CRN 21484	PHIL 202 – HISTORY OF MODERN PHILOSOPHY	Boyle	MWF	1:00 – 1:50
CRN 21485	PHIL 203 – PHILOSOPHY OF HUMAN NATURE	Williams	TR	9:25 – 10:40
CRN 23930	PHIL 206 – TOPICS: LESBIAN, GAY, & TRANSGENDER RIGHTS	Nunan	TR	10:50 – 12:05
CRN 23927	PHIL 250 - MARXISM	Krasnoff	MW	2:00 – 3:15
CRN 23923	PHIL 260 – PHILOSOPHY OF BIOLOGY	Grantham	MWF	11:00 – 11:50
CRN 23933	PHIL 275 – FEMINIST THEORY	O'Dowd	MWF	9:00 – 9:50
CRN 21492	PHIL 298 – SPECIAL TOPIC: PHILOSOPHY & MUSIC	Neufeld	MW	3:20 – 4:35
CRN 23925	PHIL 304 – NINETEENTH CENTURY PHILOSOPHY	Hough	TR	12:15 – 1:30
CRN 23929	PHIL 305 – TOPICS: HISTORY OF MEDIEVAL PHILOSOPHY	Nunan	TR	1:40 – 2:55
CRN 21496	PHIL 450 – SENIOR SEMINAR: NATURAL BEAUTY	Hettinger	MW	2:00 – 3:15

PHIL 101: Introduction to Philosophy

Prof. Hough

CRN 21477 (TR 9:25 – 10:40)

NO PREREQUISITE

What is a human being? Our beliefs about the human constitution necessarily shape our sense of what is good for us (indeed, the realization, actualization or fulfillment of our nature is usually the aim of an ethical account). Do human creatures have immortal souls, or souls of a very different sort? Are we essentially rational? Political? Products of our culture, or beings already equipped with knowledge? Do our lives mean anything? Is human life part of a grand cosmic scheme, or is it a meaningless series of actions and accidents? Is the cosmos moral and just? Can a life that ends in calamity be redeemed? What is redemption?

In order to answer these questions, we will read from a number of influential accounts of human nature, both ancient and modern. These philosophical models of the self will guide our exploration of what it means to be human, and what the best kind of life for a human truly is.

PHIL 101: Introduction to Philosophy

Prof. Williams

CRN 21478 (TR 12:15 – 1:30)

CRN 21479 (TR 1:40 – 2:55)

NO PREREQUISITE

This course is primarily concerned to explore the limits and possibilities of human knowledge in the areas of religion, science, and ethics. In the first section of this course, we will examine classical arguments regarding the existence of G-d and the problem of evil. We will learn how to recognize and evaluate different types of arguments. In the second section, we will look at science, which most of us assume has provided the paradigmatic model for human knowledge. In the third section of my class, we will focus on moral philosophy, investigating both classical and contemporary sources. Once we have considered two systematic ethical theories, we will consider whether we have reason to think that there is a fundamental difference between the methods of coming to know in science and ethics.

PHIL 101: Introduction to Philosophy

Prof. Neufeld

CRN 21480 (MWF 11:00 – 11:50)

CRN 21481 (MWF 12:00 – 12:50)

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 120: Symbolic Logic

Prof. Lesses

CRN 22681 (MWF 9:00 – 9:50)

CRN 23928 (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 help satisfy the minimum degree requirement in mathematics.

PHIL 155: Environmental Ethics

Prof. Hettinger

CRN 21482 (MWF 9:00 – 9:50)

CRN 23924 (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 culturally 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.

Course requirements: midterm, final, term paper, reading quizzes, class participation (including an oral presentation to the class), and attendance.

PHIL 160: Ethics & Sports

Prof. Krasnoff

CRN 23926 (TR 9:25 – 10:40)

NO PREREQUISITE

An examination of ethical and philosophical issues arising in the context of athletics. We will discuss the nature and purpose of sports, and their role in social life. We will consider what actions are acceptable in the pursuit of athletic excellence, and what limits there are on the pursuit of victory.

PHIL 170: Biomedical Ethics

Prof. Perlmutter

CRN 21483 (TR 10:50 – 12:05)

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 175: Business & Consumer Ethics

Prof. O'Dowd

CRN 23931 (MWF 12:00 – 12:50)

CRN 23932 (MWF 1:00 – 1:50)

NO PREREQUISITE

This course offers an introduction to some of the most pressing moral issues in business, construed broadly to encompass our actions as workers, consumers, and citizens. We begin with a very brief overview of ethical theory and then proceed to apply those theories to issues such as downsizing, corporate social responsibility, (over)consumption, development, and whistleblowing.

PHIL 202: History of Modern Philosophy

Prof. Boyle

CRN 21484 (MWF 1:00 – 1:50)

PREREQUISITE: Three semester hours in philosophy or permission of the instructor

The early modern period (the 17th and 18th centuries) saw the rise of modern science, when medieval and Aristotelian conceptions of knowledge, nature, and our place in the world began to be rejected. In this course we will read, discuss, and critically evaluate the works of Descartes, Spinoza, Locke, Hume, and Kant, important philosophers from the early modern era who sought to find new understandings of the world, our place in it, and our knowledge of it.

Some of the issues we will focus on are: whether there is any innate knowledge, or whether all knowledge derives from experience; proofs for the existence of God; what kinds of substances exist in the universe (are there such things as souls?); the nature of animal minds; and whether or not humans have free will.

PHIL 203: Philosophy of Human Nature

Prof. Williams

CRN 21485 (TR 9:25 – 10:40)

NO PREREQUISITE

This course offers a comparative study of the problems of human nature and moral agency. We will explore the ways in which metaphysical presuppositions about human nature come to bear on the normative structure of ethical thought in Euro American moral frameworks. We will explore contemporary research directly relating to questions such as: What is the nature of human existence? To what extent are persons autonomous? These and similar questions will be broached as you will be invited to exercise your thoughts about human nature and moral responsibility, especially as these issues relate to ideas about community and the common good.

PHIL 206: Topics in Law & Morality: Lesbian, Gay, & Transgender Rights

Prof. Nunan

CRN 23930 (TR 10:50 – 12:05)

NO PREREQUISITE

What is the legal status of lesbian and gay relationships in our society today, and the history behind that legal status? And what about legal protections for transgender identity, and other transgender rights? Closely related to the latter, but distinct in important ways, are questions about the rights of intersexed individuals. In exploring these questions, this course does not presuppose a prior background in philosophy, specifically. But it does assume that students will have at least some relevant background in cognate disciplines. Thus, in addition to philosophy majors and minors, this material may be of special interest to majors in Women's & Gender Studies, Political Science, Sociology, Psychology, and American History. It will also be of interest to pre-law students in any major.

PHIL 250: Marxism

Prof. Krasnoff

CRN 23927 (MW 2:00 – 3:15)

NO PREREQUISITE

A study of the Marxist intellectual tradition from its antecedents to the present. Though we will pay special attention to Marx's own writings, we will also examine the work of Marx's predecessors, subsequent Marxist thinkers, and critics of Marxism.

PHIL 260: Philosophy of Biology

Prof. Grantham

CRN 23923 (MWF 11:00 – 11:50)

NO PREREQUISITE

This course will introduce you to some of the central issues in the philosophy of biology. We'll look at a variety of questions at the intersection of biology (particularly evolutionary biology) and philosophy. Possible topics include: What are species? Are they "real"? Why value species diversity? Can natural selection ("survival of the fittest") explain altruistic behaviors during which an animal puts itself at risk in order to help others? Is evolution progressive? Should evolutionary biology inform our explanations of human behavior? Should it influence our understanding of ethics? This course does not presuppose previous course work in philosophy or biology but some background in one of these fields would be helpful.

PHIL 275: Feminist Theory

Prof. O'Dowd

CRN 23933 (MWF 9:00 – 9:50)

NO PREREQUISITE

In this course, we will consider how gender has shaped language, knowledge, ethics and politics. Some of the questions we will ask include the following: is our very language gendered, and if so, what should or could we do about it? Are our theories of knowledge infected by unexamined masculinist assumptions, e.g. about what we take to be paradigmatic knowledge, or whose testimony is to be trusted, or what objectivity means? What could "feminist science" mean? Is there a distinctive "women's morality" that emerges from the historical role of women as primary caregivers? Are mainstream theories of justice oblivious to difference? In all of these areas, how does gender interact with other lines of difference, including class and race?

PHIL 298: Special Topic: Philosophy & Music

Prof. Neufeld

CRN 21492 (MW 3:20 – 4:35)

NO PREREQUISITE

In this course, we will focus on three broad interlocking problems in the philosophy of music: (1) Musical Meaning and expression: How does music mean? It seems like a kind of language, but I couldn't translate a piece of music into another language without fundamentally changing what it means. Some have said that music is "the language of the emotions." Does music express emotions? How? Whose? The composer's? The listeners? (2) Ontology and Performance: What kind of the thing is a piece of music (song, quartet, symphony)? How is that thing related to its performances? How does the answer to this question affect the way we evaluate music? (3) Music and Politics: Music plays a central role in a number of social activities and often finds itself at the center of political movements and controversies (Wagner in Nazi Germany; folk music in the 30s; rock music in the 60s; hip-hop and rap in the 80s; just to name a few). What, if anything, does the music itself have to do with political movements? No specialized knowledge of music is required, but we will do some listening.

PHIL 304: Nineteenth Century Philosophy

Prof. Hough

CRN 23925 (TR 12:15 – 1:30)

PREREQUISITE: *Either six semester hours in philosophy (other than 215, 216, or 120) or permission of the instructor.*

The metaphysical ambitions of the nineteenth-century continue to inform many modern (and indeed postmodern) philosophical concerns. We will begin by discussing a central source of nineteenth-century thought, the work of Immanuel Kant. In Hegel's idealism we see philosophy and history converge; Schopenhauer, Kierkegaard and Marx provide critiques of this Hegelian convergence. Finally, Nietzsche raises fundamental questions about the very notions around which this century revolves, e.g. the self (consciousness, the will, the scope of reason) and the world (scientific and ethical realism).

In addition to these central texts we will also read excerpts from other nineteenth-century thinkers such as Fichte and Feuerbach.

PHIL 305: Topics in the History of Philosophy: History of Medieval Philosophy

Prof. Nunan

CRN 23929 (TR 1:40 – 2:55)

PREREQUISITE: *Either six semester hours in philosophy (other than 215, 216, or 120) or permission of the instructor.*

A thematic examination of some of the main issues addressed by major philosophical figures in period ranging from Augustine to Galileo & Descartes, following some preliminary material on the Aristotelian/Ptolemaic two-sphere universe and Epicurean & Stoic views about the nature of matter and the issue of free will versus determinism. (Much of Medieval philosophy was conducted in response to ancient "authorities", and focuses heavily on the interplay between philosophy, science, and theology.) We will also watch three films outside of class over the course of the semester, both for fun & to make the historical backdrop a little more vivid: *Agora* (2010) [Hypatia of Alexandria, 5th Century]; *Stealing Heaven* (1988) [Heloise & Abelard, 12th Century]; *Name of the Rose* (1986) [Monkish virtue vs. Aristotelian humanism; 14th century].

PHIL 450: Senior Seminar: Natural Beauty

Prof. Hettinger

CRN 21496 (MW 2:00 – 3:15)

PREREQUISITE: Junior or senior philosophy major with at least nine previous semester hours in philosophy (other than 215, 216, or 120), one of which must be a 300-level course, and permission of the instructor.

This seminar examines issues at the intersection of aesthetics and environmental philosophy. Topics include: Relationships between the aesthetic appreciation of nature and art; the role of knowledge, imagination, emotion, and engagement in the aesthetic appreciation of nature; the claim that nature is always beautiful and never ugly; whether there can be better and worse environmental appreciation; whether harmful environments can be beautiful; everyday aesthetics and the aesthetic appreciation of human-altered environments; and aesthetic value as a rationale for environmental protection.