

Winter 2019

Philosophy Department Course Descriptions

Philosophy 101 Philosophical Problems—GEs

Two sections: MTWR 0900-0950 in 189 PLC & MTWR 0900-0950 in 276 ED

Living a human life poses certain problems for each of us: Who am I? Is there some meaning to my life? How should I act? Using short philosophical readings, we will reflect on issues such as the role of reason in our lives, the nature of religious belief, whether human existence makes any sense, how our personal identity is shaped, and how we construct meaning in our lives. 4 credits (3 lectures plus discussion section). Grades based on written essays and discussion participation.

Philosophy 102 Ethics—Professor Koopman

MWF 1400-1450 180 PLC

This course will offer an introduction to central concepts of ethical inquiry and moral philosophy. What is of paramount importance for us as individuals and as a society? To guarantee equal rights for all? To provide better lives, or at least opportunities, for those less fortunate? To treat well those with whom we interact? And can all of these be of paramount importance at once? In this course you will develop a vocabulary for addressing these questions using the frameworks of the most influential moral theories shaping contemporary ethical and political discourse. In the first weeks of the course we will begin by studying the basic concepts of the most influential classical moral theories. Here we will read selections from Aristotle and Epicurus on virtue ethics, from Immanuel Kant on rights-focused universalist moral theory, from John Stuart Mill on outcome-centered utilitarian moral theory, and from William James on pragmatist approaches to the very project of moral philosophy. Following this background exposure to the basic organizing concepts of contemporary moral theory, you will then learn how to utilize, enrich, and critique these theories by examining some of the most pressing ethical conflicts we face today. Critical moral issues we will consider in this part of the class will include economic inequality, racial injustice, and the ethics of emerging technologies of surveillance. Here we will read, among others, selections from Ta-Nehisi Coates, Martha Nussbaum, Elizabeth Anderson, John Rawls, and Peter Singer.

Philosophy 103 Critical Reasoning—GE

MTWR 0900-0950 106 FR

Introduction to thinking and reasoning critically. How to recognize, analyze, criticize, and construct arguments. Through the practice of argumentation in relation to current and classic controversies, this course is designed to improve your reasoning skills as well as your critical writing capabilities. Along the way, students will also explore informal fallacies, basic rules of deduction and induction, issues pertaining to the ethics of belief, and some general reflections on the political dimensions and promise of argumentation. Typical assignments include argumentative journals, homework sets, and in-class exams. Class time involves a mixture of lecture, discussion, and group work.

Philosophy 110 Human Nature—GEs

Two sections: MTWR 0900-0950 in 105 FEN & MTWR 1300-1350 in 199 ESL

What does it mean to be human? What makes us “human”? What is the place of humans in the world? Much of the history of philosophy wrestles with these questions in one way or another. Religion, science, politics, and ethics are all informed by the various answers these questions have received and they, in turn, inform the answers. In this course we will look specifically at how some of the answers to these questions have resulted in legacies of sexism, racism, and speciesism with which we still live today. This means we will be addressing sensitive topics that demand respectful discourse.

Philosophy 120 Ethics of Enterprise & Exchange—GE

MTWR 0900-0950 199 ESL

In a free market world, what are the limits that a society or government should impose on the corporate world? In the absence of universal ethical standards in business ethics, how should we hold individual entrepreneur players responsible? What is ethically problematic about Gordon Gecko’s famous proclamation “greed is good”? Is self-interested behavior determined by an individual’s character, or is it more the product of the capitalist system in which individuals operate? Are there moral obligations that go beyond legal restrictions? This course provides a moral examination of business by considering the nature of enterprise and exchange. Topics will include corporate and consumer responsibility, meaningful work, and leadership.

Philosophy 130 Philosophy & Popular Culture—Professor Brence
MWF 1400-1450 240A MCK

This course enables students to engage in the critical reflection central to the discipline of philosophy--that which would facilitate living an “examined life” -- about, in, and through popular culture. What is popular or mass culture? Is it something merely “manufactured” by special interests, or is it still in any way genuine culture, the product of free and spontaneous human interaction? Are the products of popular culture (movies, music, games, sports, etc.) merely sources of entertainment or distraction, or might they serve other purposes such as providing for a sense of community and identity? Do they serve merely to bypass (or even undermine) reflection to inculcate particular perspectives or values into those who are exposed to or who participate in them? Might they rather, upon scrutiny, provide the basis for the kind of critical reflection commonly regarded as facilitated only by “high” culture? By way of testing the last of these perspectives, of the capacity for popular culture to facilitate genuinely critical reflection, a range of products of popular culture will be examined alongside texts that seek to illuminate and reveal the ideas at work in them, and in relation to some works of classical philosophy, ancient and modern. As a result, students should expect to develop an enhanced capacity for intelligent reflection upon popular culture and upon a range of central issues that have been the subject of considerable philosophical examination.

Philosophy 170 Love & Sex—GE
MTWR 0900-0950 303 GER

Love and sex are so central to human life that many would argue that our intimate relationships are the key to self-esteem, fulfillment, even happiness itself; in fact, our intimate relationships are probably more important to our sense of well-being than our careers. Yet we spend remarkably little time thinking about love and sex, even as we spend years preparing ourselves for the world of work. In this course you will be asked to reflect on the most intimate sphere of human existence. We will draw on historical, sociological, religious, feminist and philosophical work to shed critical light on a variety of questions, including: What is love exactly? Why do we continually associate love and sex with happiness and pleasure when they often make us so utterly miserable? Is there, or should there be, an ethics of love and sex? What is moral, what is normal, and who gets to decide? What happens to sex when it is associated with “scoring” (the conquest model of sex)? How are our understandings of masculinity and femininity tied in with what we believe about love and sex?

Philosophy 199 World Philosophy—Professor Vallega
TR 1200-1350 122 MCK

This course is an introduction to philosophy through the reading of non-Western thinkers. Rather than introducing various doctrines, the course raises the very question of the sense and configurations of “philosophy” in distinct contexts. The issue is that thought that articulates existence may happen in many ways that are not always continuous with the Western philosophical traditions and cultural and epistemic expectations about identity, experience, intersubjectivity, the objects of knowledge, and the means to gain knowledge. The course includes close reading of texts, lectures, and guest lecturers who are specialists on specific traditions being studied (i.e., Latin America, Asia, and Africa).

Philosophy 211 Existentialism—Professor Warnek
TR 1600-1720 282 LIL

In the 1950s, Existentialism was a cutting edge perspective on the world (European nihilism after World War II), a lifestyle for intellectuals (in smoke-filled coffee houses), and a glamorous corner of academic philosophy itself (Jean-Paul Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir). But the origins of Existentialism go back to at least the nineteenth century in the Western tradition---Dostoevsky, Nietzsche, and Kierkegaard. Is existentialism relevant today? Yes, if there are philosophical truths about human life that have to be lived, if individual subjectivity is important, and if we are responsible for our lives. The course will survey all of the figures just mentioned, and more. Our main work will be to address questions such as: Am I free? Is it my fault? Does life have a purpose? What does death mean? All required reading will be from *Existentialist Philosophy*, ed. Oaklander, 2nd ed. Prentice Hall isbn 0-13-373861-2 pbk. Work will consist of reading (about 30 pp a week) student participation (despite a large class) and 5 very short (2pp) papers out of a choice of 10.

Philosophy 216 Philosophy & Cultural Diversity—GE
TR 1600-1720 253 STB

Cultural events and cultural differences are created by individuals, but exceed individual intentions and actions. Because there are strong group differences within societies and between societies, culture is a constant process of negotiating diversity. There are two senses of culture—products such as books, paintings, music, and how people act and react in society. Our focus will be on how people act and react in society with readings about: policy, ideology, business, race and ethnicity, art, discourse, gender and sexuality, class, popular cultural products, and transnationalism. Course work will consist of Ten 1-2 page papers (no exams), with normal letter grading. The course can be applied to the Arts & Letters group requirement and the University multicultural requirement (as an “AC” or American Culture course).

Philosophy 220 Food Ethics—Professor McKenna
MW 1000-1150 303 GER

Every time we eat, we either eat in a way that coincides with other ethical commitments we have about the environment, animals, and other humans, or we eat in a way that contradicts these commitments. This course will examine a variety of food related issues from animal welfare to labor justice and challenge students to examine their own ethical commitments and choices. This course will introduce the moral theories of virtue ethics, utilitarian ethics, deontological ethics, pragmatist ethics, and care ethics and apply these theories to a range of issues related to what, who, and how we eat.

Philosophy 308 Social & Political Philosophy—Professor Brence
TR 1000-1150 303 GER

Major historical and contemporary social/political theorists. Inquiry into such ideas as freedom, ideology, identity, social/political reconstruction and revolution. We will focus primarily upon the social/political dimension and consequences of problems confronting human agency. How do we act in a world as organized, complex, and controlled as our own? Is there any possibility for meaningful self-determination in a globalized and technologically managed economy? Can we regard contemporary free-market capitalism as still democratic without a positive answer to that question? What is the nature of contemporary ideology such that these questions and their answers are often obscured?

Philosophy 311 History of Philosophy: Modern—Professor Stawarska
TR 1200-1320 242 GER

This course is the second of a three-course introduction to the history of western philosophy. The purpose of this course is to examine the history of western philosophy in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as well as to consider the importance and relevance of the history of philosophy for us today. The course will focus on three key subjects relevant to the history of philosophy in this period. Primarily, we will engage with readings from canonical figures in the modern traditions of Rationalism (selections may be from Descartes, Spinoza, and Leibniz) and Empiricism (selections may be from Locke, Berkeley, and Hume). Additionally, we will also consider works from figures not normally in the canon (most notably early modern women philosophers) who played a more central role in the development of these philosophical traditions than is often acknowledged.

Philosophy 315 Introduction to Feminist Philosophy—GE
MW 1200-1350 303 GER

This course examines basic concepts and important texts in feminist philosophy. We will talk about what the great philosophers have said about women's ability to do philosophy, what it means to do philosophy as women, how feminism has challenged the most basic assumptions of the Western philosophical tradition, and contemporary issues in feminist philosophy. This course is a prerequisite for some upper division courses in feminist philosophy.

Philosophy 323 Moral Theory—Professor Zack
TR 1200-1320 276 ED

The aim of this course is to understand the thought of key figures in the history of moral philosophy, including existentialism and feminism. We will focus on key ideas in the moral systems developed by Aristotle, Immanuel Kant, J.S. Mill, Friedrich Nietzsche, and Jean-Paul Sartre and Simone De Beauvoir. Our reading and writing will engage primary sources and students will be encouraged to provide contemporary examples and applications of the main ideas. The course will begin with what morality and conscience are, in general ways that are independent of particular moral systems. The course will conclude with Feminist Ethics. Course work will consist of reading, class participation and discussion, and three 3-page papers and one final 5-page paper.

Philosophy 335 Medical Ethics—GE
MW 1400-1550 199 ESL

The French writer Albert Camus opens one of his major writings, *The Myth of Sisyphus*, as follows: "There is but one truly serious philosophical problem, and that is suicide. Judging whether life is or is not worth living amounts to answering the fundamental question of philosophy. All the rest...comes afterwards." In a biomedical society like ours, the value of life and our relation to it becomes one of the most relevant factors for understanding who we are as human beings. From the question of informed consent to the very recent debate on health care, this course spans some of the most important social questions of our time: Could an embryo be called a person? Is abortion immoral? In a more secular society, are there arguments concerning the morality of abortion (pro and con) that make no appeal to a transcendent form of goodness (God)? Would it be moral to use embryos for the production of basic materials, such as stem cells, for medical research? Is there any moral difference between active and passive euthanasia? Should we experiment on human beings? If so, what are the necessary conditions to ensure the moral permissibility of such procedures? If one day humans can engineer themselves, should they do it? In a society of bionic human beings, what would be the place of disability? Lastly, do we, as members of an advanced society, have a right to health care? The goal of this course is to provide the essential elements for students to assess future difficult life situations in a critical manner.

Philosophy 343 Critical Theory (On Debt)—Professor Zambrana

MW 1400-1550 121 MCK

Debt has received cosmological, theological, and economic articulation for centuries. Yet, at its core, debt is a form of social binding, hence a social bond. Contemporary critical theories explore debt as a social relation in order to articulate a critical perspective on capitalism and modernity. This course will examine debt as an economic, social, and historical relation in order to consider its critical function, thereby exploring the very idea of a critique of debt. It will thus provide an introduction to major texts and themes in critical theories of various stripes through the case of debt. We will read texts by Marx, Nietzsche, Walter Benjamin, David Graeber, Maurizio Lazzarato, Federica Gregoratto, Marieke de Goede, Angela Mltropolous, Paula Chakravartty and Denise Ferreira da Silva, Angela Davis, Fred Moten, and Saidiya Hartman.

Philosophy 372 Teaching Children Philosophical Inquiry—Professor Bodin

MW 1600-1750 117 ED

This is a course that will ask students to apply their understanding of philosophical ideas in ethics, epistemology, political and environmental philosophy, and aesthetics towards the goal of leading effective and engaging discussions with children in grades 2 through 5 in local Eugene public school classrooms. Working alone or in a two-person team, seminar students will show children how they can practice philosophy through collaborative circle discussions around topics that connect to their curiosity and sense of wonder about the world. Discussion questions will include: Is it always wrong to lie? What does it mean to be a girl or a boy? Do animals have rights? What does it mean to have an identity, to change over time, or belong to a community? Can we define beauty or understand the quality of an artistic experience? During the process of leading eight weekly classroom discussions under the guidance of the instructor, the course GE and an elementary classroom teacher, seminar students will hone their skills as discussion facilitators. They will model with children the importance of framing a coherent opinion supported with reasons, showing empathy and respect for a diversity of ideas, constructing counter examples that challenge claims made by peers, and accepting discomfort when dealing with complexity and ambiguity.

Philosophy 399 Plants & Philosophy—GE Kerr

MW 1400-1550 303 GER

This course is an introduction to the philosophy of plant life. What is a plant? What does it mean to "vegetate," our name for the activity of life in its most basic form? Why have philosophers been so eager to speak of inanimate objects, human beings, and even animals, but so hesitant to speak about plants? What challenges do plants pose to traditional philosophical conceptions of life, identity, time, etc.? This course will explore these questions and others through texts from a variety of times, places, and traditions. Our goal will be to consider the ways in which the philosophy of plants invites us to reconfigure broader philosophical issues and concerns. We will focus throughout on both (a) the difficulties philosophy has in approaching plant life and (b) the potential plant life has for transforming philosophy.

Philosophy 407/507 Advanced Logic—Professor Pratt

Main lecture: M 1600-1850, undergrad section 0900-0950 F & grad section 1500-1550 F, all meet in 105 FEN

This course will study classical and non-classical logics using An Introduction to Non-Classical Logic (Second Edition) by Graham Priest and a variety of supplementary readings. The first four weeks will be an accelerated review of propositional and predicate logic using the 'tableaux' proof method and the introduction of basic modal logic. We will then consider the "non-normal" logics of strict implication, conditional logics, many-valued logics, and first degree entailment. We will conclude by considering constant and variable domain logics. Throughout the course we will also consider the philosophical issues raised by (and also motivating) these diverse logics. The course will satisfy the graduate logic requirement and can serve as a course in the Analytic Tradition. The course may be taken for a grade or P/NP.

The prerequisite for the undergraduate version of the course (407) is PHIL 325, Logic, Inquiry and Argumentation, or its equivalent.

Philosophy 433/533 17th & 18th Century Philosophers: Descartes & Locke—Professor Zack

TR 1600-1750 121 MCK

Descartes is usually considered the leading early modern rationalist, Locke, the leading early modern empiricist. Each is foundational for subsequent philosophical methodologies. The aim of the course is to consider Descartes' and Locke's metaphysics and epistemology, both separately and comparatively. We will also consider the predecessors and successors of D and L, and relate their concerns to contemporary issues. (Assignments for this supplementary material will be built into the syllabus and emphasized in your written assignments, with the material available on Canvas.) Short papers will be required of all students.

Philosophy 433/533 17th & 18th Century Philosophers: Schelling—Professor Warnek
W 1600-1850 123 MCK

The course offers an introduction to the work and thought of F. W. J. Schelling. Schelling is now gaining attention as a thinker who anticipated many of the developments of philosophy in the 20th Century. We will begin with readings from his early period and move chronologically to his later works. The central text will be Schelling's controversial essay on human freedom. Important questions will be asking include: the relation between art and poetry and philosophical inquiry, the relation between human life, nature and the divine, the limits of rationality and language, and the extent to which a philosophical system is possible. We will also consider Schelling's relation to other key historical figures, such as Kant and Hegel.

Philosophy 463/563 20th Century Philosophers: Beauvoir—Professor Mann
TR 1000-1150 101 LIB

This course will center on a close reading of as much as we can get to of a single text, Simone de Beauvoir's most famous work, *The Second Sex*. This is the text that is often credited with setting off the second wave of the feminist movement internationally, and has recently been studied as a text that revolutionizes phenomenology. After 50 years, in 2010 a new English translation of *The Second Sex* was finally prepared and released by Alfred Knopf. This translation, by two American linguists living in Paris, replaces the 1953 translation by a Zoology professor, and restores the more than 15% of the original text that was cut, paraphrased, or rewritten by the first translator without acknowledgement. We have a historic opportunity then, to finally read the entire text in English. We will attend closely to Beauvoir's philosophical method and its place in post-WWII European philosophy. We will read a good deal of secondary work on the text by Beauvoir scholars, and may read some additional literary or philosophical work by Beauvoir. Expect a heavy reading schedule. Graduate students will be required to do a presentation on one section of the text.

Philosophy 607 Seminar: Philosophy and Teaching—Professor Vallega-Neu

This course is offered for philosophy graduate students who are also in their first year of service as graduate teaching fellows. The course runs for the entire year, each quarter offering a different focus. The first quarter concerns pedagogical technique, the second course design, and the third broader issues in the philosophy of education. During the fall quarter, the goal is to improve teaching effectiveness and to provide new teachers with a forum for discussing some of the challenges they face in the classroom. Note that this is a one credit course that meets weekly.

Philosophy 607 Professional Seminar: Feminist Philosophy—Professor Mann
W 1000-1250 250C SC

Feminist philosophy is philosophical thought that emerges out of and in relation to social movements for women's emancipation. It works toward the recuperation of women's and feminist thought in the history of philosophy, an understanding of the human condition as it is lived by women, an articulation of women's ways of knowing in relation to epistemologies that have implicitly or explicitly excluded women, and interrogating political and ethical practices from a feminist perspective. Though we commonly think of "feminist philosophy" as a recent development, scholars agree that philosophical work that exhibits a feminist sensibility has been a critical counter-voice to the mainstream Western tradition since its inception. Nevertheless, philosophy today is often referred to as "the physics of the humanities" since it remains the most male dominated field in the humanities. Yet feminist philosophers have been passionate in their claims that the discipline of philosophy prepares us to ask the questions we need to ask and address the problems that we confront—even as philosophy is transformed in the process. These are some of the questions we will explore in the course: How does feminist thinking both appropriate and change the practice of philosophy? What questions are opened up by feminist philosophical inquiry that are not opened by more traditional approaches? How does feminist philosophy invite us to challenge some of our most deeply held assumptions about knowledge, human nature, and political and ethical practices?

I employ a variety of strategies to engage students in classroom discussions and reflection about the topics for the course. In addition to listening to lectures, you can expect to participate in small group discussions in class, to be called on to explain key concepts to a group of your peers, to do short, in-class writings as a kick-off for discussion, and to actively respond to lectures. This term we will start each class with a student led discussion (the first ½ hour), this will generally be followed by a lecture, with more discussion at the end of the class period.

Philosophy 607 Seminar: Hermeneutics of Difference—Professor Vallega
T 1800-2050 121 MCK

This course takes hermeneutics as a way to engage senses of "appearance," "tradition," "difference," and "meaning" by remaining with their configuration, passages, and transfiguration. This occurs in taking language as the elusive and ephemeral elucidation of them; an elusiveness distinctly attested by the very question of the sense and movement in understanding indicated by the word "language." Central to the course are the roles emotion, affectivity, memory, and physicality play in understanding. Readings will include Heidegger, Charles Scott, Nancy Tuana, and Gloria Anzaldúa.