

Spring 2022

Philosophy Department Course Descriptions

Philosophy 103 Critical Reasoning—Professor Brown **MW 1200-1320**

Introduction to thinking and reasoning critically. How to recognize, analyze, criticize, and construct arguments.

Philosophy 110 Human Nature—Professor Stawarska **MW 1200-1320**

Human nature can be defined using terms from natural science ('a human is a bipedal primate mammal'), but humans are also subjects endowed with rights which cannot be simply found in nature. Furthermore, even if we assume a perspective of universal humanism wherein all humans bear certain inalienable rights, for example, the right to liberty or freedom, we note that many humans have been historically confined to unfreedom and excluded from full membership in the human family. This course grapples with this paradoxical divide between the theory and the practice of what it means to be human by considering key texts in the history of philosophy. It is divided into three segments: 1. Modern Humanity: the mind and the body; 2. The Social Contract: from human nature to society and the state; 3. Freedom and unfreedom: contemporary perspectives on the body, gender, and race.

Philosophy 135 Ethics of the Life Sciences—Professor Morar **MW 1200-1320**

Research in the life sciences raises numerous ethical issues about the use of human cells and non-human animals in experiments; about the potential harms associated with development of biotechnologies such as CRISPR-Cas 9; about synthetic biology and the production of genetically modified organisms, or about the role of conservation biology in environmental debates, among many others. In addition, this course will explore how recent findings emerging in microbial biology provide new ways for understanding ourselves. Are our physiological capacities the single product of our evolution? Are our psychological states and emotions, in a word our personality, nothing else than the expression of our organic properties? Today, microbial biology calls into question the most traditional understandings of human beings and, thus has a direct impact on our ethical conceptions of who we are.

Philosophy 170 Love & Sex—Professor Mann **MWF 1000-1050**

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 220 Food Ethics—Professor McKenna **TR 1200-1320**

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. Students in this class should bring their own questions and concerns about food to shape the reading and discussion. Some questions might include: Does it make sense to love dogs and eat pigs? If I am concerned about the environment, should I eat packaged food? Should I buy food from companies that don't pay a fair wage? How should we grow, harvest, transport, and prepare food? How are race, class, and gender connected to food production and consumption? Who is responsible for our food habits? Are choices about food simply personal choices, or are there ethical, social, and political implications we should take into account?

Philosophy 223 Data Ethics—Professor Alvarado

MW 1000-1120

In this course we will explore fundamental aspects of the ethical implications particular to data science practices such as artificial intelligence, machine learning and big data analytics. This course will survey recent efforts to elucidate the challenges of bias, error and opacity found in these technologies and practices. However, we will also delve in to more fundamental issues related to (moral and epistemic) agency, (social and individual) autonomy and accountability, which persist even when bias, error and transparency are accounted for.

Philosophy 225 Introduction to Formal Logic—Waldkoenig

MTWR 0900-0950

Logic can broadly be understood as an organizational system for our thinking. As it works, logic describes and directs effective reasoning and argumentation. This course will cover basic concepts and analysis through formal, symbolic logic: deductive and inductive reasoning, validity and cogency, propositional and quantificational logic – as well as explore metalogical questions such as “What is logic for?” and “What are the social-political ramifications of logic?”. Using deductive skills, students will practice the symbolization of claims and proof theory to evaluate those claims. Though this course employs mathematical techniques, it is still deeply philosophical in that it inquires into the patterns of effective human thought: How are we to make claims and draw correct inferences from them? How can we avoid drawing unwarranted conclusions? What makes a good argument convincing?

Philosophy 308 Political/Social Philosophy II—Professor Brence

MW 1400-1550

This course offers a focused study of major social and political theorists, usually with an emphasis on twentieth-century critical political thought, drawing on figures such as the pragmatists (John Dewey) and/or critical theorists (Hannah Arendt). Topics can include such ideas as justice, democracy, law, natural rights, and the social contract.

Philosophy 312 History of 19th Century—Professor Warnek

MW 1600-1720

An introduction to the historical development of philosophy in Europe, beginning with Kant. Philosophical work in the 19th century will be considered not simply as a response to Kant but as it opens up new questions and concerns, beyond the limits of modern thought. Authors include Hegel, Schelling, Kierkegaard, Marx and Nietzsche.

Philosophy 322 Philosophy of the Arts—Professor Vallega

TR 1200-1350

Survey of classical and contemporary theories of art and aesthetic experience, with examples from various arts.

Philosophy 323 Advanced Moral Theory—Bitton

MTWR 0900-0950

Study of the most important traditional ethical theories; modern philosophical analysis of moral terms and statements.

Philosophy 332 Philosophy of Film—Professor Brence

MW 1000-1120

In its relatively brief history (scarcely more than a century), film has arguably developed into the most significant art form and medium for the origination and transmission of culture in our time. Perhaps because of the brevity of this history, or perhaps due to its dismissal as merely “popular” culture (a form of cultural production often deemed unworthy of serious reflection), it has received relatively little attention from philosophers. When, however, philosophers have attended to film, they have commonly sought only to adapt accepted “philosophical” problems to their study of the subject (traditional metaphysical and epistemological problems concerned with the relationship between experience and reality, for example, take the form of the examination of the relationship of film to reality), or worse still, they have regarded film as capable only of shallow, but perhaps more accessible illustration of already charted philosophical ground (regarding “The Truman Show” as crudely illustrative of Plato’s Cave Allegory). This course, premised upon the view that philosophy is a disciplined practice of criticism and does not have its own particular subject matter, will, instead, endeavor to examine films philosophically. That is to say, the films themselves will be regarded as subject matter for philosophical analysis. They will be allowed to raise their own problems, advance their own claims, and propose their own solutions, all to be carefully examined, interrogated, and evaluated.

Philosophy 339 Philosophy of Science—Burns

TR 1600-1750

This course provides a basic introduction to the main philosophical questions concerning scientific knowledge and methodology. It surveys a variety of positions in philosophy of science such as the recognition and dissemination of discoveries; the justification of scientific claims; the subject who formulates the scientific explanations; and the places of laws, models, and causal relations in scientific understanding. The course will be centered around four units. Unit one will consider what counts as science and whether the sciences differ fundamentally in aims and methods (i.e., what is specific to the

scientific method? How do we characterize scientific explanation?) Once we have a grasp on what is distinctive about the scientific inquiry, we will move to unit two, where we will question science's 'objectivity,' and explore criticisms of traditional scientific inquires as articulated by feminist philosophers of science. Unit three will address various issues about the laws of nature, most notably, what a law is, and the purpose these laws serve in our lives. Finally, unit four will explore the debates about scientific realism and the nature of scientific knowledge.

Philosophy 340 Environmental Philosophy—Kristensen

TR 1000-1120

Considers the nature and morality of human relationships with the environment (e.g., the nature of value, the moral standing of nonhuman life).

Philosophy 342 Introduction to Latin American Philosophy—Professor Vallega

TR 1600-1720

This course is an introduction to Latin American philosophy. As such its aims are: 1. To give a firm ground in the history of Latin American philosophy; 2. To introduce some of the crucial ideas, issues, problems, and forms of thinking that occur in some of the most important periods, movements, and figures in Latin American thought; 3. To cultivate the ability to read this tradition in its own right, and to recognize its distinct and meaningful contributions to world philosophies. The course will involve close reading and analysis of texts, background lectures, and class discussions. Some of the central issues broached in this class will be: ethnic identity, border culture, race, exile, social justice, history, time, writing, memory, the relationship between poetry and philosophy, the configuration of Latin American, Hispano American, and Afro-Hispanic-American identities, alternative temporalities, and the role diverse manners of discourse and experiences may play in the configuration of philosophical ideas. Beginning from the challenges opened to Latin American thought by Gabriel García-Márquez in his Nobel acceptance speech in 1982, we will look back to crucial moments in the history of Latin American thought and read from philosophical writings, essays, journals, and literary works of such figures as Felípe Guaman Poma de Ayala, Bartolomé de las Casas, Simón Bolívar, Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, José Martí, José Vasconcelos, Carlos Mariátegui, Leopoldo Zea, Augusto Salazar Bondy, Enrique Dussel, Jorge Luis Borges, Aníbal Quijano, Ofelia Schutte, Linda Alcoff, and Sub-Comandante Marcos.

Philosophy 407 Feminism & Authoritarianism—Professor Mann

MW 1400-1550

Given the global rise in authoritarianism, what does a feminist analysis of authoritarian politics have to offer? How is authoritarianism connected to masculinism, historically, in terms of its logics, and practically? Is the white nationalist version of authoritarian politics as enmeshed with gender-based commitments as it is with race-based commitments? Is there a politics of care at the heart of authoritarianism? With a particular (not exclusive) focus on the rise of authoritarianism in the United States, we will read some history (Ruth Ben-Ghiat for example) some philosophy (Hannah Arendt for example) and some affect theory (Sara Ahmed for example), in order to gain some footing for our analysis. This course will be interdisciplinary and exploratory. It will involve robust engagement with contemporary political life, but will not present a finished feminist philosophical analysis of authoritarianism so much as look for the tools and elements with which to build such an analysis.

Philosophy 415 Continental Philosophy—Professor Warnek

MW 1200-1350

This course serves as a survey of the major traditions that emerged within the 20th C. Continental philosophy. The course is organized topically around the following debates: should classical approaches to subjectivity developed in phenomenology be overcome by ontology? Or should both phenomenological and ontological approaches be displaced by an ethics? Is philosophical practice best described as reflection, or rather language-based interpretation? What is the value of a structure-based approach, which captures the larger than individual forces such as social determinations, unconscious processes, dominant discourses and myths? To what degree are structure-based approaches wedded to traditional conceptions of science and to the history of Western metaphysics - hence in need of deconstruction? Does deconstruction turn philosophy into a species of literature, and, if so, is this a problem? Can such a problem be resolved by a reconstruction of Modernity, and a turn to discourse ethics? Other questions and debates will be addressed, and participants are encouraged and expected to bring your own research interests into the conversation.

Philosophy 433 Descartes/Amo Author's Course—Professor Stawarska

T 1500-1750

This course engages two early Modern philosophers, René Descartes and Wilhelm Anton Amo, in a debate about mind and body relations. Descartes is largely considered to be the founder of the early Modern European philosophy insofar as he established independent rational principles of inquiry into philosophical knowledge. He is also regarded as a staunch mind-body dualist who opposed the infallible knowledge of the mind to the dubious knowledge of the body. We will read from Descartes' Meditations, and excerpts from Passions of the Soul, to evaluate these claims in light of key primary sources. We will then turn to Wilhelm Anton Amo, the first African (Ghanaian) philosopher of the early Modern period, who studied

and taught in European universities and made significant contributions to 17th and 18th C. philosophy, especially metaphysics and philosophy of mind. We will be reading Amo's philosophical dissertations (written in 1734, and published in July 2020), in which he re-examined the mind-body dualism, and ultimately provided an organismic (rather than mentalistic) view of human experience. We will consider the sources for Amo's argument in the Ghanaian Akan language and thought. This course showcases the importance of non-European language and thought in the development of philosophical Modernity.

Philosophy 452 Philosophy of Race—Professor Russell

TR 1000-1150

In this course, we will explore how various philosophers (and philosophically-adjacent scholars) have taken up questions of race and racism. The readings for this course have been chosen based on the idea that we are currently living through the United States' third "racial reckoning" (where Reconstruction is understood as the first and the Civil Rights Era as the second). The focus will therefore be primarily on anti-Black racism and resistance, rather than race and racism more broadly conceived, though students are welcome to take up questions beyond the "black-white binary" in their individual research. I hope that this class will help students to consider and analyze the current moment, which we might expect to be described in the future as the Black Lives Matter Era.

Philosophy 453 Hegel Author's Course—Professor Muraca

TR 1000-1150

The course offers an introduction to Hegel's philosophy in historical and systematic perspective. Students will engage with primary sources (selection of Hegel's works), analyze their historical development and background, and discuss contemporary interpretations, critique, and application of Hegel's thought, including, for example, decolonial and feminist perspectives.

Philosophy 463 Wittgenstein Author's Course —Showler

MW 1400-1550

This course serves as an advanced introduction to the philosophical thought of Ludwig Wittgenstein. Born in 1889, Wittgenstein remains one of the most influential—and controversial—philosophers of the twentieth century. We shall begin with a close reading of Wittgenstein's earliest work, the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, which he wrote as a prisoner during WWI. Topics covered will include logical atomism, the picture theory of meaning, the "sense/nonsense" and the "saying/showing" distinctions, as well as the author's conception of the nature and scope of philosophy. After a brief look at some of Wittgenstein's writings from the 1930's we shall turn to a close, critical reading of his *Philosophical Investigations*, which was published posthumously in 1953. Our focus will be on Wittgenstein's conception of meaning as use, his therapeutic understanding of philosophy, his conception of language games, as well as his views on private language and rule-following. Finally, we shall explore the relevance of Wittgenstein's thought to issues in epistemology and ethics.

Philosophy 507 Feminism & Authoritarianism—Professor Mann

MW 1400-1550

Given the global rise in authoritarianism, what does a feminist analysis of authoritarian politics have to offer? How is authoritarianism connected to masculinism, historically, in terms of its logics, and practically? Is the white nationalist version of authoritarian politics as enmeshed with gender-based commitments as it is with race-based commitments? Is there a politics of care at the heart of authoritarianism? With a particular (not exclusive) focus on the rise of authoritarianism in the United States, we will read some history (Ruth Ben-Ghiat for example) some philosophy (Hannah Arendt for example) and some affect theory (Sara Ahmed for example), in order to gain some footing for our analysis. This course will be interdisciplinary and exploratory. It will involve robust engagement with contemporary political life, but will not present a finished feminist philosophical analysis of authoritarianism so much as look for the tools and elements with which to build such an analysis.

Philosophy 533 Descartes/Amo—Professor Stawarska

T 1500-1750

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Philosophy 607 Animal Ethics—Professor McKenna
MW 1800-1950

This course will examine ethical concerns related to a number of ways human and other animal beings relate and we will examine some of the connections between these relationships and questions within environmental ethics. There are many underlying assumptions connected with human relationships with "pets," "livestock," and "wild" animal beings. We will explore how ontological views about human and other animal beings have informed these relationships and how challenging those ontological assumptions may open new and more ethical ways of relating. To do this the readings for this course will address philosophy, biology, and ethology. The course is posited on the idea that it is important to get to know something about particular animal beings in relations with particular human beings in order to have an informed and productive discussion of the ethics of how they might relate in more informed and ethical ways. Human beings' relationships with other animal beings are of ethical concern in their own right. They also have consequences for a host of other issues, many of which relate to environmental concerns. For example, raising animal beings for food (for humans and "pets") has consequences for the environment and climate change; hunting and fishing have consequences for ecosystem health; waste from "pets" can result in disease transfer to "wild" animal beings and polluted waterways; feeding free living birds can result in increased predation. But does this mean we are ethically required to adopt a vegan diet, refrain from all hunting and fishing, stop living with "pets," and never assist wildlife? This course will explore the complexity of such issues and examine competing perspectives on how such issues might best be approached. Students will be asked to bring their own particular interests/concerns to the course to shape our readings and discussion.

Philosophy 607 Pedagogy Seminar—Professor Koopman
W 1100-1150

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 core focus. All three quarters provide opportunity for reflection on pedagogical technique and philosophy of education. The first quarter offers ample opportunity for consideration of these themes. The second quarter also includes attention to curriculum, course design, and syllabus construction. The third quarter extends to a wider range of issues in the philosophy of education. Throughout the year, 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 and involves a few additional assigned meetings outside of our regular meetings (for example, class observation visits that can be scheduled to fit each student's calendar).

Philosophy 614 Cyber Ethics—Professor Alvarado
T 1200-1450

The internet was originally designed not for people to communicate with one another, but for computers to do so. It didn't take long, however, for people to figure out social purposes for it and a way to send humanly intelligible messages to one another and not just machine-readable instructions. It was then that cyberspace emerged from the cables, computers, and formal communication protocols. This course is designed to introduce students to the ethical and political intersection between society and the new digital dimension reshaping our lives that emerges from internet technologies. We will examine particular cases and frameworks related to the development of data extraction algorithms, recommender systems, cyber weapons, data exchanges, facial recognition, the internet of things, etc., in order to think about the normative considerations that ought to guide the development of novel digital communication technology.