

Fall 2022 Electives - Description List

Course: Philosophical Perspectives on Science (PHIL2150)

Professor: Marius Stan

Time: TTH 3:00PM-4:15PM

Description: This course is an examination of the scientific enterprise with the tools of modern analytic philosophy. Topics include: the structure of a scientific theory; evidence and knowledge in science; the nature of scientific explanations; and the role of values in science. As paradigmatic examples, we will examine major breakthroughs by Archimedes, Newton, Darwin, and Einstein. Open to science and pre-med majors.

Level: Undergraduate Elective

Course: Values in Social Services and Health Care (PHIL2233)

Professor: David Manzo

Time: TH 4:30PM-6:50PM

Description: Through readings, lectures, discussions, field placements, and written work, we will attempt the following: to communicate an understanding of the social services and health care delivery systems and introduce you to experts who work in these fields; explore ethical problems of allocations of limited resources; discuss topics that include violence prevention, gangs, homelessness, mental illness, innovating nursing initiatives, economy inequality, community wealth ventures, and the law; and consider possibilities for positive changes in the social service and health care system.

Level: Undergraduate Elective

Course: Logic (PHIL2264)

Professor: Maxwell Wade

Time: MWF 10:00AM-10:50AM

Description: This course will consider the principles of correct reasoning together with their application to concrete cases.

Level: Undergraduate Elective

Course: Philosophy in Literature: The Lord of the Rings and The Brothers Karamazov (PHIL2266)

Professor: Peter Kreeft

Time: TTH 9:00AM-10:15AM

Description: Exploring the Philosophy ideas found in The Lord of the Rings trilogy and The Brothers Karamazov.

Level: Undergraduate Elective

Course: Philosophy and Theology of Community I (PHIL2291)

Professor: Meghan Sweeney

Time: W 3:00PM-5:45PM

Description: This seminar explores the nature of community, with particular focus on community in the American context. Some of the central historical, cultural, political and

religious forces that have shaped both the American community and the American understanding of community are examined. These questions are initially approached from an historical perspective with an assessment of philosophical ideas which were dominant in the political thinking of the American founders. The seminar then considers the historical development of those ideas in light of the way they are concretized in political practice, arriving at an assessment of contemporary American thinking on community.

Level: Undergraduate Elective

Course: The Vegetative Soul: The Hidden Life of Plants (PHIL2444)

Professor: Holly Vandewall

Time: MW 1:00PM-2:15PM

Description: By weight, more than 80% percent of the living things on the earth are plants, and without them the earth's animals, including humans, would perish within weeks. But philosophy has spent a vanishingly small part of its efforts in considering this form of life, generally relegating plants to the status of minimally alive, but essentially uninteresting. As Michael Pollan notes, "plants are so unlike people that it's very difficult for us to appreciate fully their complexity and sophistication. Yet plants have been evolving much, much longer than we have, have been inventing new strategies for survival and perfecting their designs for so long that to say that one of us is the more 'advanced' really depends on how you define that term, and what 'advances' you value'." This class will consider how humans have historically regarded the plant kingdom, what we can learn from the challenging imaginary exercise of attempting to understand how they live, and how we might reconsider the world if we came to regard the plant kingdom not as passive subjects of human actions, but as powerful and vital actors in their own right.

Level: Undergraduate Elective

Course: Philosophies of Happiness (PHIL2450)

Professor: Anne Davenport

Time: TTH 1:30PM-2:45PM

Description: How do philosophers approach happiness? Is happiness defined by well-being, pleasure, emotional state, life satisfaction, or is it best approached through some kind of hybrid account? What are, moreover, the sources of happiness? We start with the challenge of human tragedy in Shakespeare's King Lear, drawing on Walter Kaufmann and on Stanley Cavell. We then compare and contrast Thomas More's utopian imagination with the skepticism of Michel de Montaigne. We return to utopian imagination with Francis Bacon and compare his views to Descartes (rationalist), Hobbes (materialist), and Pascal (pragmatist), raising the question of how Faith and reason enter into happiness. We consider John Ray's influential argument for God by design. We read Voltaire's Candide and Emilie du Châtelet's Discourse on Happiness. We examine Diderot's formulation of happiness and Rousseau's contrasting view. We look at the distinctive way in which Rousseau privileges beauty and we pursue the topic of aesthetics in John Ruskin and Jane Addams. We end with Freud and Jean-Louis Chrétien.

Level: Undergraduate Elective

Course: Energy Justice: Ethics, Economics, and the Environment (PHIL3690)

Professor: David Storey

Time: TTH 3:00PM-4:15PM

Description: Energy justice has recently emerged as a name for the moral challenges that lie at the intersection of climate change, geopolitics, and economic development. While the study of energy generally focuses on economics and STEM perspectives (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics), this course approaches energy through a more integral framework that includes humanities perspectives such as history, ethics, and philosophy. We will consider energy as a physical, biological, and social phenomenon, examining the role of energy throughout human history and how societies' mode of energy capture shapes their values and culture. In particular, we will scrutinize the history and nature of modern energy transitions, notably from human and animal muscle, windmills and watermills to coal, oil, nuclear, natural gas and, today, to renewable energy sources such as solar, wind, and geothermal. We will challenge the distinction between dirty and clean energy sources, exploring the social and environmental risks and harms in renewable energy supply chains. We will look at the moral and logistical challenges of just transitions from fossil-fuel based to renewable economies. Above all, we will grapple with how energy justice involves balancing climate justice, the global North decarbonizing to protect the global South and future generations and economic justice helping the global South meet its development needs.

Level: Undergraduate Elective

Course: Feminisms and Philosophies of Difference (PHIL4001)

Professor: Cherie McGill

Time: MW 1:30PM-2:45PM

Description: What does it mean to call oneself (or someone else) a 'feminist'? In attempting an answer to this question, we will consider efforts to reveal, unravel, and remedy the conceptual, psychological, and economic dimensions of the oppression of women. We will discuss a variety of feminisms--liberal, existential, radical--and their differing approaches to such 'feminist' issues as marriage and domestic violence, reproduction and pregnancy, work and sexual harassment, and the science of gender and gender difference. We will examine the relationship of sexism to racism, heterosexism, and class exploitation, and investigate the role of the concept of difference in creating and maintaining structural inequalities.

Level: Undergraduate Elective

Course: Philosophical Hermeneutics on Race and Justice (PHIL4040)

Professor: Stanley Anozie

Time: MW 3:00PM-4:15PM

Description: Philosophical Hermeneutics on Race and Justice examines fundamental questions about the nature of justice, retribution, the relationship between justice and fairness, contemporary debates on issues of race, and how race is a factor in people's experience of injustice, inequality, discrimination, prejudice, structural violence, and various theoretical and practical issues of law, ethics and public policy. Hermeneutics as a philosophical discipline deals with interpretation and understanding of different perspectives on reality and human affairs. For instance, the idea of race and justice in private and public life, its significance in politics and

domestic and international affairs, and its contentiousness and changeability over time. As an instrument of human liberation, the discourse on race and justice is rich for intellectual study, especially in using the tools of philosophical hermeneutics to arrive at inner and higher meanings. Students will explore enduring questions of race and justice, as well as contemporary debates over moral and legal responsibility, punishment, civil disobedience and revenge and their relation to race and justice. As part of the semester's work students will analyze theories of justice, theories of race, race as a social construct, racial prejudice, examine specific case studies in relation to race and justice/injustice, research topics of individual interest, evaluate arguments, and defend positions of their own through the fusion of horizons. Emphasis will be placed throughout the course on readings some texts by Hans-Georg Gadamer, Martin Heidegger, Tsenay Serequeberhan, Paulo Freire, Frantz Fanon, and other scholars; on lively discussions, careful research and writing, the formulation of well-reasoned stances on various hermeneutical and philosophical issues, and clarity in reasoning and argument.

Level: Undergraduate Elective

Course: Major Figures: Sartre and Merleau-Ponty (PHIL4050)

Professor: David Johnson

Time: TTH 1:30PM-2:45PM

Description: This course focuses on the nature of consciousness and the question of intersubjectivity in the work of Sartre and Merleau-Ponty. We look at what each takes from the phenomenology of Husserl and Heidegger in these respects as well as where each makes a break with their predecessors. We consider the meaning and significance of Sartre's concepts of nothingness and non-positional self-consciousness and Merleau-Ponty's notion of incarnated consciousness. We then investigate the significance of the relation between self and other for Sartre and examine Merleau-Ponty's understanding of intersubjective relations as a primordial, pre-subjective field. The course concludes by turning to consider the way that Renaud Barbaras draws on the work of Merleau-Ponty to break through to a new phenomenology of life.

Level: Undergraduate Elective

Course: Epistemology (PHIL4387)

Professor: Richard Atkins

Time: TTH 12:00-1:15PM

Description: Philosophy is full of wonderfully perplexing arguments aimed at undermining our claims to knowledge. Like this one: If I know I have two hands, then I know I'm not just a brain in a vat. But, I don't know I'm not just a brain in a vat. So, I don't know I have two hands. Or this one: A claim is known only if it is justified. Claims cannot rest on themselves for justification, cannot depend on nothing for justification, and cannot be justified by an infinite series of propositions. But as those are the only options, we must not know anything. Or this one: I believe that God exists, but many of my epistemic peers and superiors believe that God does not exist. Therefore, I have a strong countervailing reason to believe God does not exist such that my belief is not justified. This course will examine these and other puzzling arguments about knowledge, justification, and disagreement.

Level: Undergraduate Elective

Course: Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Philosophy (PHIL4408)

Professor: Elisa Magri

Time: MWF 1:00PM-1:50PM

Description: In this course, we will explore the sources, forms, and implications of the concept of alienation, as this emerged in the nineteenth century and developed over twentieth century philosophy. We will start, in the first part of the course, with an overview of the challenges brought about by Kant's philosophy with particular regard to the relation between nature and freedom. Particular attention will be given to the role of education and the re-evaluation of the finitude of human spirit in Fichte, Schiller, and Hegel. We will examine how the concept of alienation is related to the principle of moral autonomy, and how the ideal of self-determination advocated by philosophers of German Idealism shaped pedagogical programs of social and political reform. In the second part of the course, we will explore the relation between alienation and reification in social and political philosophy, starting with Marx and continuing with Arendt and the Frankfurt School. This theoretical journey will offer the basis to investigate alienation in relation to self-estrangement, environmental racism, and gender discrimination in selected classics of the twentieth century. We will also consider ways of resisting alienation by applying methodological frameworks inspired by Lugones' concept of world-traveling.

Level: Undergraduate Elective

Course: Freud and Philosophy (PHIL4429)

Professor: Vanessa Rumble

Time: TTH 1:30PM-2:45PM

Description: The course is designed to acquaint students with the scope and evolution of Freud's thinking and with significant developments in psychoanalysis since his time. Students will study and assess Freud's and Breuer's first formulation of the nature of hysteria; Freud's groundbreaking work in dream interpretation and the nature of unconscious processes; Freud's attempt to apply his novel theory of unconscious mechanisms to cultural anthropology as well as individual psychology; and the implications of the ongoing revisions in Freud's classification of the drives. Above all, we'll focus on Freud's attempt, over the course of many years, to account for the origin of human morality and guilt, and his ongoing assessment of the role of Judaism in his life and in his culture.

Level: Undergraduate Elective

Course: Ethical Principles in Comparative Perspectives (PHIL4477)

Professor: You Jiang, SJ

Time: MW 4:30PM-5:45PM

Description: The course will explore the major concepts of and current trends in Eastern and Western values, beliefs, and practices. It will also illustrate the diversity of their social, cultural and philosophical life by means of a cross-cultural perspective in order to communicate to students the importance of global changes, dialogue and exchanges.

Level: Undergraduate Elective

Course: Modern Philosophy (PHIL5295)

Professor: Jean-Luc Solere

Time: TTH 4:30PM-5:45PM

Description: From the early 17th to the end of the 18th century, reason asserted its autonomy and triumphed in the Age of Enlightenment, but at the same time reflected on its own limits. Through a series of themes and problems, the course presents the major philosophies (roughly, from Descartes to Kant) that have accompanied the development of scientific knowledge, the rise of the modern mind, and the transformation of Western societies. This comprehensive survey covers metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, and political philosophy, paying attention to the interconnection between ideas in these different domains (with for instance the centrality of the notion of law: laws of nature, political laws, moral law). It particularly highlights the logical development in the succession of questions and answers that characterize the evolution of philosophy in the modern times. The course will provide you with the central concepts of modern thought, so as to grasp the bases of today's understanding of the world and of ourselves. Analysis of representative texts, class discussions, and writing assignments are designed to develop rigorous argumentation and expression skills. (NB: This course was previously offered as PHIL 4406; you cannot take it if you took PHIL 4406)

Level: Graduate Elective

Course: Philosophy of Law (PHIL5500)

Professor: Christopher Berger

Time: MWF 11:00AM-11:50AM

Description: This course aims to provide an overview of a number of core debates in contemporary philosophy of law. The primary concern will be to examine the relation between legal validity and the moral normativity of the law, that is, answers to the questions 'What is the law?' and 'Is there a (moral) duty to obey the law?' In addition to these more general questions, we will focus on several more specific questions pertaining to constitutionalism, including 'What is the relationship between a constitution and the rule of law?', 'What is the ground of judicial review?' and 'What connection, if any, is there between questions of legal theory and broader debates in contemporary political philosophy?'

Level: Graduate Elective

Course: How to Save the World: Ethics of Climate Change (PHIL5515)

Professor: David Storey

Time: TTH 12:00 Noon-1:15PM

Description: Climate change is arguably the defining issue of our time and the hardest problem humanity has ever faced. It raises an array of moral questions, e.g.: What values should guide global and national climate policies? What responsibilities do we have toward the poor, future generations, nonhuman species, and our planet? The course is an introduction to environmental ethics and the moral challenges posed by climate change. In particular, we examine the philosophical and ethical questions that underlie climate science, public policy, energy systems and policy, and economics. The goal is to cultivate an integral understanding of the climate problem through an interdisciplinary inquiry.

Level: Graduate Elective

Course: Kant's Critique of Pure Reason: The Doctrine of Method (PHIL5566)

Professor: Giovanni Basile

Time: M 3:00PM-5:45PM

Description: Immanuel Kant's Critique of Pure Reason (CPR) represents one of the most significant texts in the history of philosophy. Kant himself defines it as a treatise of method (CPR, B XXII). The second part of the work --The Transcendental Doctrine of the Method-- particularly insists on this aspect. It consists of four sections. The first is The discipline of pure reason that deals with the distinction between the method of the mathematics (construction of concepts) and the method of the logic (analysis of concepts). It also treats of the two main forms of theoretical philosophy: the mere opinion (Meinen) and the knowledge (Wissen). The topic of the second section --The canon of pure reason -- is the elucidation of a specific method (Glauben) for the practical use of reason. How a unified whole of metaphysics can be built up as a system from the connection of the theoretical and the practical use of reason is the theme of third section - The Architectonic of Pure Reason ---, the art of systems (KrV A 832/B860). The last section --The History of Pure Reason --can be seen as the temporal counterpart of the spatial consideration of the system of pure reason in the Architectonic. In addition, some pre-critical writings that prepared the development of The Transcendental Doctrine of Method will also be considered in the course.

Level: Graduate Elective

Course: Phenomenology of Value: Husserl, Scheler, Lonergan (PHIL5933)

Professor: Andrew Barrette

Time: MW 12:00-1:15PM

Description: What does it mean to value something or someone? How do these appear valuable to us at all? And how would we know if we have the best values, a rightly ordered scale of values, or even if we are valuing in the right and best way? This course approaches questions like these through its two main aims: (i) to understand some basic terms and relations in the method of a phenomenology of values; (ii) to investigate critical matters eg., feelings, values, and the ordering and disordering of values broached by thinkers in this tradition. These two aims together will also prepare us to attend to and to analyze specific values phenomenologically for ourselves and, in so doing, to participate in an on-going conversation. Our main readings will be from Edmund Husserl's Introduction to Ethics (1920/1924), Max Scheler's Ressentiment, and from Bernard Lonergan's writings on the human good and feelings. We will also read shorter selections, including pieces from Franz Brentano, Dietrich von Hildebrand, and Edith Stein, as well as from contemporary thinkers, like Anthony Steinbock, Sara Heinmaa, and Patrick Byrne.

Level: Graduate Elective

Course: Augustine (PHIL6605)

Professor: Sarah Byers

Time: MW 3:00PM-4:15PM

Description: In this course we examine questions in epistemology, ethics and metaphysics using major works of Augustine (354-430 AD/CE), supplemented by works of contemporary

philosophers on related themes (Kretzmann, Matthews, MacDonald, VanInwagen). We will aim at depth of understanding and breadth of knowledge, contextualizing Augustine as a philosopher of late antiquity in dialogue with the Hellenistic schools (Stoicism, Skepticism, Neo-Platonism) whose philosophy is still of interest today. Topics include the nature of faith, skepticism, the problem of evil, the nature of God, moral development and conversion, the origin and characteristics of the natural world, including the human soul and body.

Level: Graduate Elective

Course: Hermeneutics of Christian Life (PHIL6633)

Professor: Jeffrey Bloechl

Time: W 4:00PM-6:45PM

Description: The course will proceed in four parts. 1. Methodological clarification and concentration on the question of a phenomenality proper to Christian life; 2. Hermeneutical phenomenology of faith; 3. Hermeneutical phenomenology of hope; 4. Hermeneutical phenomenology of love. A range of philosophical and theological texts will be studied (Heidegger, Augustine, Marion, Rahner, etc.).

Level: Graduate Elective

Course: Medieval Christian Mystical Philosophy: Eriugena, Eckhart, Cusanus (PHIL7224)

Professor: Dermot Moran

Time: T 1:00PM-3:30PM

Description: In this course, I plan to read key texts in the Christian Neoplatonic mystical tradition, focusing in particular on Johannes Scottus Eriugena (c. 800-877), Meister Eckhart of Hochheim (1260-1328), and Nicholas of Cusa (1401-1464). The class will begin with readings from St. Augustine and Dionysius the Areopagite, the two most influential figures for medieval Christian Platonism. We shall then read sections of Eriugena Periphyseon and Homily on the Prologue to St. John's Gospel, selections from Eckhart's sermons and tracts, and parts of Nicholas of Cusa's On Learned Ignorance and De li non aliud (On God as Not Other). The course will consider the Neoplatonic context, affirmative and negative theology, and the nature of the human being in the context of the dialectics of knowledge and ignorance, immanence, and transcendence.

Level: Graduate Elective

Course: Philosophy and the Pedagogy of Service (PHIL7400)

Professor: Patrick Byrne, Marina McCoy

Time: F 10:00AM-12:30PM

Description: Graduate PULSE (3 credits per semester, two semester sequence): In this two-semester course, the student will learn both the theory and practice of teaching a Philosophy service-learning course. The student will attend an undergraduate section of PULSE, doing the same readings as the undergraduates and working in a service placement for four hours a week. The student will also attend a bi-weekly seminar with other graduate students in the course and the graduate PULSE instructor, doing readings in the pedagogy of service learning, philosophy of education, and related fields. In consultation with the section instructor, the student will also serve as a writing mentor to undergraduates in the class.

Requirements will include short reflection and exploratory papers, similar to the undergraduates, and a final research paper each semester. The first semester will focus on philosophy of education and on the pedagogy of service-learning; the second semester will focus on applied philosophical issues raised by specific service placements, either in the ethics of engaged service work or on policy questions connected to the service. Enrollment requires the permission of the undergraduate section instructor, the instructor for the graduate course, and the Director of the PULSE Program.

Level: Graduate Elective

Course: Hegel (PHIL7630)

Professor: John Sallis

Time: T 4:30PM-7:15PM

Description: This course will be devoted to a reading of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*, interpreted as the dialectic ascent from mere sense-experience to absolute knowing. Special attention will be given to the famous Preface (to Hegel's entire system) and to the portion of the text dealing with Lordship and Bondage, the ethical, moral, and political orders, and religion as natural, as art, and as revealed.

Level: Graduate Elective

Course: Plato's *Republic* (PHIL7704)

Professor: Marina McCoy

Time: TTH 10:30AM-11:45AM

Description: In this course, we will explore in depth Plato's *Republic*, with particular attention to parallels between the *Republic* and the literary works of Plato's predecessors, including Homer, the tragedians, and Aristophanes. The focus of our reading will be on the role of poetry, imagination, and narrative in the dialogue.

Level: Graduate Elective

Course: Soren Kierkegaard (PHIL7762)

Professor: Vanessa Rumble

Time: TH 4:30PM-7:15PM

Description: This course will deal primarily with the early pseudonymous writings of Soren Kierkegaard. The following topics will be emphasized: (1) the function of irony and indirect communication in the pseudonymous works, (2) Kierkegaard's conception of freedom and subjectivity, and (3) the nature of the relationship which Kierkegaard posits between reason, autonomy, and faith.

Level: Graduate Elective

Course: Pragmatism (PHIL7822)

Professor: Richard Atkins

Time: TH 1:30PM-4:15PM

Description: From its beginnings in the 1870s to today, Pragmatism has exerted significant influence on philosophy, natural science, political and social thought, law, psychology, education, and economics. Generally, pragmatists maintain that we should eschew the task of

providing a conceptual analysis of our ideas, instead focusing on how we use them and how we can elucidate our ideas in light of our practices and expectations. This seminar will involve a close study of the works of some essential pragmatist philosophers, especially Charles S. Peirce and William James and more recent pragmatists such as Richard Rorty and Cheryl Misak. The course will be focused on issues related to truth and inquiry, exploring how a broadly pragmatic account of truth and inquiry bears on issues in philosophy of language, metaphysics, ethics, and social and political philosophy.

Level: Graduate Elective

Course: Medieval Theories of Mind and Cognition (PHIL8850)

Professor: Jean-Luc Solere

Time: TH 1:30PM-4:15PM

Description: How and what do we perceive? How does one form concepts? Who is the thinking subject? What do we know? This class will offer the opportunity to examine central issues of medieval philosophy: sense perception, realism versus representationalism, nature of the intellect, abstraction process, semantics and concepts. Through the study of some landmark thinkers, such as Avicenna, Averroes, Aquinas, Scotus, Ockham, we will observe the apparition of the modern conceptions of the cognitive subject and of knowledge. The course is especially designed for giving graduate students a strong and in-depth presentation of an essential moment of the development of medieval thought.

Level: Graduate Elective

Course: *The Summa Theologiae* of St Thomas Aquinas (PHIL8871)

Professor: Peter Kreeft

Time: TTH 10:30AM-11:45AM

Description: N/A

Level: Graduate Elective