

**PHILOSOPHY & HUMANITIES
SPRING 2010 COURSE DESCRIPTIONS**

PHI 101: Introduction to Philosophy
1:40pm-2:55pm TR

Dr. Gerald Nosich

The course will be an introduction to how to think philosophically, how to reason our way through philosophical arguments and issues. It will introduce philosophy not as a survey of all the areas of philosophical thought, nor as a historical survey of the great philosophers. Instead, we will work at reading, interpreting, analyzing and evaluating some important philosophical arguments. On the surface, we will be addressing two philosophical issues: (1) arguments for (and against) the existence of God, and (2) questions of knowledge, doubt and certainty. But that's just the surface. In the process, as we consider these two issues, we will explore underlying questions about right and wrong, infinity, free will, imagination, and logic.

PHI 101: Introduction to Philosophy
10:00am-10:50am MWF

Staff

Introduction to the literature and problems of philosophy

PHI 101: Introduction to Philosophy
12:00pm-12:50pm MWF

Staff

Introduction to the literature and problems of philosophy

PHI 102: Introduction to Social /Moral Philosophy
10:50am-12:05pm TR

Dr. John Draeger

This course explores a variety of social and moral questions. Should the public good outweigh private concerns? Do we have a duty to help those in need or is it enough that we leave them alone? Should the government sanction abortion, euthanasia, stem cell research, same sex marriage or capital punishment? This course will not resolve any of these important questions. However, in considering them, we will gain a better understanding of ourselves and the world around us.

PHI 102: Introduction to Moral/Social Philosophy
11:00am-11:50am MWF

Dr. Jason Grinnell

Ethics, according to one great philosopher, is the study of how we ought to live. We live in a rapidly changing and complex world that **forces** us to grapple with new issues on a regular basis. For each of these, we encounter conflicting claims about what is right or wrong, just or unjust, good or evil, and we are often forced to make a decision. Often, we already have beliefs (and strong feelings) about what we ought to do. As educated adults, our goal is to ensure that these opinions can be supported with reasons and arguments rather than mere prejudice or emotion. Ideally, we will be able to identify and adopt a principled framework we can use to resolve both current and future ethical tensions and dilemmas. The aims of this course are threefold: To help you to understand the moral issues which should inform you thinking about the world, to enable you to improve the critical skills that you will need to address them as responsible human beings, and to help you develop your own ethical views.

**PHI 107: Introduction to Mathematical Logic:
11:00am-11:50am MWF**

Dr. Julian Cole

This class will introduce two types of mathematical models for assessing the formal correctness of reasoning. In particular, Venn diagrams will be discussed as geometric models for assessing categorical syllogisms, while sentential and monadic predicate logics will be discussed as algebraic models for assessing the types of arguments associated with these logics.

**PHI 204: Philosophy of Religion
1:40pm-2:55pm TR**

Dr. Kimberly Blessing

Philosophy of Religion is the branch of philosophy that applies philosophical reasoning and methodology to matters concerning God and religion. We shall read selections from the works of the following philosophers: Aquinas, Anselm, Descartes, Pascal, Leibniz, Voltaire, Hume, Kierkegaard, William James, C. S. Lewis, Bertrand Russell, etc. We shall touch upon various topics and issues in philosophy of religion: traditional proofs of God's existence and critiques of these proofs; the problem of evil and various responses to this problem; alternatives to the traditional proofs (e.g., Pascal's Wager); miracles; faith; critiques of religion, etc. This course is not aimed at converting any student to any particular way of thinking concerning God and religion. Instead, the aim of this course (as with any course in philosophy) is to encourage students to earnestly and thoughtfully reflect upon these questions, and to equip students with the skills that are necessary to formulate their own views concerning God and religion. Emphasis will be placed upon reading and understanding these texts and these thinkers, clearly and coherently expressing ideas, both orally and in written form, and developing and evaluating arguments; i.e., clearly formulating a position, and examining the reasons that support the position in question. Course pre-requisite: The successful completion of at least one course in philosophy.

**PHI 300: Truth
1:00pm-1:50pm MWF**

Dr. Julian Cole

The question around which this class will be structured is; What role does the predicate 'is true' play in our intellectual economy? For example, does this predicate serve to ascribe a property to certain statements, beliefs, or propositions? If so, which one? Or does this predicate play some other role? If so, then what role is that? By way of answers to these questions we will explore at least the following conceptions of truth: correspondence, semantic, deflationary, coherence, pragmatic, instrumentalist, and pluralist. Along the way, we will also consider what it is for a statement, belief, or proposition to be *objectively* true.

**PHI 300: Biology, Values, and Society
3:00pm-4:15pm MW
Cross listed with BIO 389**

**Dr. Jason Grinnell
Dr. Amy McMillan**

Philosophy students have a great deal of exposure to conceptual and value analysis, but often very little exposure to the empirical foundations and practical consequences of that analysis. Biology students are trained to be good empirical scientists and carefully study various processes, systems, and theories. On the other hand, their training does not often emphasize the value issues informing or emanating from that study. This course is intended to provide both an exposure to value issues pertaining to biology, and an empirical foundation for the study of a wide array of contemporary ethical issues. Our subject matter will be ethical and social questions related to biology and biological investigation. Topics may include cloning, genetic engineering, reproductive technologies, the human genome project, evolutionary psychology, and the meaning(s) of and criteria for terms such as "life".

PHI 300: Problems of Philosophy: Philosophy of Natural Science
6:00pm-8:30pm T

Dr. Gerald Nosich

The central question we will explore in this course is, "What does science tell us about the nature of reality? What does it tell us about the way the world is?"

There are two main goals in the course:

1. To understand how science works. (What makes an explanation a scientific explanation? What is a scientific law? What's a theory?)
2. The second goal is to look at two individual branches of science and try to confront, philosophically, what each tells us about the way the world is. The two are quantum mechanics, and theory of evolution.

If they're right, each of these theories tells us a truly astounding story about reality—so astounding that, at least in the case of QM, it's difficult to see how such a story could possibly be true. It's hard to see how such a story even makes sense.

PHI 304: Philosophy of Law
9:25am- 10:40am TR

Dr. John Draeger

This course will explore a variety of questions. Why should we obey the law? Why should laws have authority over us? How are law and morality related? How are law and economics related? What is the difference between civil and criminal law? What is the relationship between legislators and the courts? This course will not resolve any of these important questions. However, in considering them, we should have a better understanding of the law as a complex social institution that helps govern our lives.

PHI 310: History of Ethics
6:00pm-8:30pm M

Dr. John Abbarno

Historical study of the writings of great Western philosophers as they examine ethical questions about self interest, freedom, duty, and happiness in regard to the moral life. Includes Plato, Aristotle, Kant, Mill, and Hume.

PHI 312: Philosophy of Mind
10:00am-10:50am MWF

Dr. Julian Cole

This class will investigate historical and contemporary thought about the so-called mind-body problem. In particular, we shall explore the positions known as substance dualism, behaviorism, the identity theory, functionalism, eliminative material, and emergent materialism. In the course of this investigation we shall concentrate on contemporary thought about the nature of intentionality and consciousness.

PHI 318: History of Philosophy II
10:50am-12:05pm TR

Dr. Kimberly Blessing

This course will survey the works of major figures in the early modern time period of philosophy. Modern Philosophy begins with the work of Rene` Descartes (early 17th century) and ends with the work of Immanuel Kant (late 18th century), including works by Spinoza, Leibniz, Locke, Berkeley and Hume. We shall focus attention on epistemology (the study of knowledge) and metaphysics (the study of reality). Emphasis will be placed upon slow and careful reading of primary philosophical texts, textual exegesis, recognizing and evaluating philosophical arguments, and critical and philosophical writing. PREREQUISITES: ENG 102 OR EQUIVALENT AND JR/SR, PHI 317 STRONGLY RECOMMENDED OR SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF ONE COURSE IN PHILOSOPHY

PHI 347: Western Thought: Homer to Alexander
10:00am-10:50am MWF

Dr. Jason Grinnell

Hellenic thought has had a tremendous influence on the modern world. This should come as no surprise, as the Greeks were grappling with many problems similar to those we face today. In this course we will study Greek thought from the archaic period to the Late Classical period. We will investigate the effects that war, political tensions, religion, and early attempts at physics had on the development of philosophy. We will also look at how these forces and developments laid the foundation for much later scientific, political, and religious thought.

REL 104: Introduction to Religious Studies
10:50am-12:05pm TR

Dr. Allen Podet

This is a general introduction to religious studies. We will examine what is important in religions generally, ethics, basic questions, philosophy, beliefs about good and evil, the afterlife, and why they work as they do. The emphasis is on religions in general rather than analyzing a specific religion.

REL 205: Introduction to the Old Testament
1:40pm-2:55pm TR

Dr. Allen Podet

The Old Testament, more correctly the Hebrew Bible, is a foundation document of all Western Civilization. Judaism, Christianity, and Islam are firmly built on it. Its ways of thinking have become the foundation of Western thought. With Shakespeare and the Book of Common Prayer, it gives shape to the English language. No book is better known, more quoted, or more influential.

This course will examine its history, composition, and philosophies.

REL 321: World Religions
8:00am-9:15am TR

Prof. Jean Thompson

Become enriched by the study of a variety of world religions! You will learn the interesting rituals based on intriguing scriptures of the East and the West. Understanding religion based world cultures can lead us to admiration and respect of others that educated persons strive to obtain.

REL 321: World Religions
8:00am-8:50am MWF

Dr. Elizabeth Lenegan

This course is designed to introduce the student to the major religions of the world- Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, Shinto, Judaism, Christianity and Islam. The values, rituals, doctrines and practices of these traditions will be explored.

REL 321: World Religions
Endres
4:30pm-7:00pm T

Prof. Andrea Tyrpak-

An Overview of the major religions of the world, this course will explore a variety of religious traditions including Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, Shinto, Judaism, Christianity and Islam. We will investigate the nature and purpose of religion in general as well as the influence of specific religions on history and culture.

REL 350: Holocaust
3:05pm-4:20pm TR

Dr. Allen Podet

This course examines the facts and causes of the Holocaust, one of the watershed events of modern times, whose effects are still very much with us. How is the Holocaust like and different from other genocides? How does it affect our thinking about human nature, about good and evil, about God in the world? Guest lecturers may include a survivor of the Holocaust.