PHILOSOPHY (PHIL)

PHIL 001 Introduction to Philosophy
Philosophers ask difficult questions about the most basic issues in human life. Does God exist? What can we know about the world? What does it mean to have a mind? How should I treat non-human animals? Do I have free will? This course is an introduction to some of these questions and to the methods philosophers have developed for thinking clearly about them.
For BA Students: Humanities and Social Science S
Taught by: Forbes
One-term course offered either term
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit
Notes: Also fulfills General Requirement in History & Tradition for Class of 2009 and prior. Freshman Seminar sections offered.

PHIL 002 Ethics
Ethics is the study of right and wrong behavior. This introductory course will introduce students to major ethical theories, the possible sources of normativity, and specific ethical problems and questions. Topics may include euthanasia, abortion, animal rights, the family, sexuality, bioethics, crime and punishment and war.
For BA Students: Society Sector
Taught by: S.Meyer, Tan, Lord, M.Meyer
One-term course offered either term
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 003 Ancient Greek Philosophy
What is philosophy? How does it differ from science, religion, literature, and other modes of human discourse? This course traces the origins of philosophy as a discipline in the Western tradition, looking to thinkers of Ancient Greece and Rome. We will examine how natural philosophers such as Thales, Anaximander, and Heraclitus distinguished their inquiries from the teachings of poets such as Homer and Hesiod; how ancient atomism had its origins in a response to Parmenides’ challenge to the assumption that things change in the world; how Socrates reoriented the focus of philosophy away from the natural world and toward the fundamental ethical question, how shall I live? We will also examine how his pupil, Plato, and subsequently Aristotle, developed elaborate philosophical systems that address the nature of reality, knowledge, and human happiness. Finally, we will examine the ways in which later thinkers such as the Epicureans and Stoics transformed and extended the earlier tradition.
For BA Students: History and Tradition Sector
Taught by: Meyer
Course usually offered in fall term
Also Offered As: CLST 103
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 004 History of Modern Philosophy
This course is an introduction to a few central themes in philosophy in the 17th and 18th centuries, and to some of the crucial thinkers who addressed those themes. Topics to be covered may include, among others, the nature of the human being (including the human mind), the relationship between God and the created world, the nature of freedom, and the relations among natural sciences, philosophy and theology in this rich period of human history.
For BA Students: History and Tradition Sector
Taught by: Hatfield, Detlefsen, Chignell
Course usually offered in spring term
Also Offered As: GSWS 006
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 005 Formal Logic I
This course provides an introduction to some of the fundamental ideas of logic. Topics will include truth functional logic, quantificational logic, and logical decision problems.
Taught by: Singer
One-term course offered either term
Also Offered As: LGIC 010, PHIL 505
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit
Notes: This is a Formal Reasoning course.

PHIL 006 Formal Logic II
An introduction to first-order logic including the completeness, compactness, and Lowenheim-Skolem theorems, and Godel's incompleteness theorems.
Taught by: Weinstein
Course usually offered in spring term
Also Offered As: PHIL 506
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 007 Critical Thinking
This course will provide the student with informal techniques for identifying and analyzing arguments found in natural language. Special attention will be paid to developing the ability to assess the strength of natural language arguments, as well as statistical arguments.
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 008 The Social Contract
This is a critical survey of the history of western modern political philosophy, beginning from the Early Modern period and concluding with the 19th or 20th Century. Our study typically begins with Hobbes and ends with Mill or Rawls. The organizing theme of our investigation will be the idea of the Social Contract. We will examine different contract theories as well as criticisms and proposed alternatives to the contract idea, such as utilitarianism. Besides the above, examples of authors we will read are Locke, Rousseau, Hume, Mill and Marx.
For BA Students: Society Sector
Taught by: Tan
Course usually offered in spring term
Also Offered As: PPE 008
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit
PHIL 010 Topics in Philosophy I
The emergence of animal life marks a pivotal moment in our planet's natural history. Animal consciousness also raises complex and perplexing questions for scientists and philosophers alike. This course sets out to address some of these questions in a systematic fashion, placing the interdependent disciplines of science and philosophy into close dialogue with one another. The central theme of the course will address the question, 'What is life?': in particular, how to understand its particular expression in 'animacy', or what it is to be an animal, and the emergence and concept of humanity within the context of that natural history. In the background of diverse world cultures and faith traditions, seminar participants will also consider the possible role of creative deity within the evolution of creaturely life. The scientific component of this course will therefore focus on theories of evolution, life, language, and death. The philosophical component of the course will begin with ancient approaches to questions about nature and the structure of reality, change and motion, causation, and the idea of ‘essential kinds’, while also considering modern and contemporary sources for understanding the relationship between life sciences and philosophical thought. No prior knowledge is required. Students will evaluate the topics and arguments of this course through close examination of primary texts, material artifacts, audio-visual sources, and contemporary philosophical and scientific scholarship.
Taught by: Tan
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 011 Knowledge, Religion and Values
This First Year Undergraduate Seminar is an introduction to Philosophy organized around the topics of knowledge (epistemology), religion (metaphysics) and values (ethics). We will examine questions such as what is the difference between true knowledge and mere beliefs, the challenge of skepticism, the nature of the human mind, the nature of God and arguments for and against the existence of God, and ethical questions such as how should I live and what do I owe to others. We will draw on a range of philosophical writings, historical and contemporary, from different philosophical traditions. Examples of authors we will read include Plato, Descartes, Hume, Zhuangzi and Mengzi.
Taught by: Tan
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 012 Introduction to Moral Philosophy
Four sorts of questions belong to the study of moral philosophy in the analytic tradition: (1) Practical ethics discusses specific moral problems, often those we find most contested (e.g. abortion, euthanasia, killing noncombatants in war). (2) Ethical theory tries to develop systematic answers to moral problems, often by looking for general principles that explain moral judgments and rules (e.g. consequentialism, contractarianism). (3) Meta-ethics investigates questions about the nature of moral theories and their subject matter (e.g. are they subjective or objective, relative or non-relative, related to a deity or not?). (4) Finally, there are questions about why any of this does, or should, matter to us (e.g. what kind of reason for acting is a moral reason and how is it related to a prudential reason?). We will investigate all four of these types of questions. A large part of the course will be focused on two highly contentious moral problems, abortion and killing noncombatants in war. The central aims of the required readings and discussion are: a) to develop each question deeply and sharply enough for us to understand why it has been contentious; b) to see what new evidence could change the nature of the problem; and c) to suggest how to seek that further evidence. We will focus on how to read complex contemporary philosophical prose in order to outline and evaluate the arguments embedded within it. This will provide the basis for writing papers in which you defend a position with evidence and arguments. These skills are central to the practice of Philosophy. This course does not presuppose that students already have these skills. It is intended to teach them and presupposes a willingness on the part of students to do what is necessary to learn them. What this involves is detailed in "Success in this Course". You should read this note to understand the commitment this course involves.
Taught by: Meyer
Course usually offered in fall term
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 015 Logic and Formal Reasoning
This course offers an introduction to three major types of formal reasoning: deductive, inductive (probabilistic and statistical), and practical (decision-making). The course will begin with the study of classical sentential and predicate logics. It will move on to elementary probability theory, contemporary statistics, decision theory and game theory.
For BA Students: Formal Reasoning and Analysis
Taught by: Domotor
Course usually offered in spring term
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 021 First Year Seminar: Philosophy and Autobiography
In this course, we will study the interaction of autobiography and philosophy. We will read some autobiographies written by philosophers to understand how their philosophical thinking and commitments arose and how these commitments shaped their lives. We will also read texts that examine philosophical issues related to the phenomenon of writing autobiographies, including the nature of the self, questions surrounding interpretation and understanding, the paradoxes of self-deception, and the meaning and narrative structure of human life.
Taught by: Detlefsen
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit
PHIL 025 Philosophy of Science
What counts as a scientific theory? What counts as evidence for a scientific theory? Are scientific inferences justified? Does science give us truths or approximate truths about a world that exists independently of us? How can we know? Does it matter? These are all perennial questions in the philosophy of science, and the goal of this course is to look at how philosophers have answered these questions since the scientific revolution. In addition to reading classic work by philosophers of science, we will read material from living and dead scientists in order to gain a deeper appreciation of the philosophical questions that have troubled the most brilliant scientists in Western science.
For BA Students: Natural Science and Math Sector
Taught by: Weisberg, Spencer
One-term course offered either term
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 026 Philosophy of Space and Time
This course provides an introduction to the philosophy and intellectual history of space-time and cosmological models from ancient to modern times with special emphasis on paradigm shifts, leading to Einstein’s theories of special and general relativity and cosmology. Other topics include Big Bang, black holes, stellar structure, the metaphysics of substance, particles, fields, and superstrings, unification and grand unification of modern physical theories. No philosophy of physics background is presupposed.
For BA Students: Natural Science and Math Sector
Taught by: Weisberg, Spencer
One-term course offered either term
Also Offered As: STSC 026
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 028 Introduction to Feminist Philosophy
This course is an introduction to feminist thought, both in theory and in practice. We will consider how feminist thought emerged and evolved, as well as how feminist theories respond to various intellectual, social and political challenges. Questions we will address include: What exactly is feminism? How does one’s gender identity impact one’s lived experiences? How should we revise, reformulate, or rethink traditional answers to political and ethical issues in light of feminist theories? How can feminist analyses contribute to the development of better science, and our conceptions of knowledge? Prerequisite: Offered through the College of General Studies.
Taught by: M.Meyer
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: GSWS 028
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 029 Philosophy of Sport
This is an introductory philosophy course that uses philosophical tools to understand and answer questions that arise in and about sports. Is there a principled basis for determining which methods of performance enhancement are acceptable? Developing a framework to answer this question will take us through: 1) questions about rules: what is their point in sports and what are appropriate reasons to change them; 2) questions about the point of participation in a sport; 3) questions about the kinds of virtues sports participants can demonstrate; and 4) questions about integrity of participants and a sport itself. A related set of questions concerns the appropriate competitors in sporting events: Should competition be restricted to single sex categories; Should competition be divided into disabled and non-disabled categories?
Taught by: M.Meyer
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 030 Ethics and Contemporary Policy Debates
A central value of liberal democracy is the free and robust exchange of ideas. However, the polarized nature of contemporary public discourse threatens to undermine our democracy. On a variety of pressing moral issues, we disagree more and do so more strongly. How can we better engage with each other on the problems that affect us as democratic citizens? In this CWiC seminar, we will examine the most pertinent policy problems we face today that generate deep ethical disagreement. Topics include: immigration policy, climate change, eating meat, taxation, reparations, racial and gender injustice, access to healthcare, gun control, social media’s effect on democracy and artificial intelligence. Students will read philosophical writings on these topics. They will then engage in a group-based class debate with their peers on a chosen topic. The debate will likely be supplemented by other oral assignments, such as an individual presentation, audience participation during the debate, and general class participation. By having students debate with their peers and uncover the underlying ethical complexities of these problems, this CWiC critical speaking seminar aims to highlight the importance of practicing toleration and civility if we are to overcome deep ethical disagreement.
Taught by: Cetty
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 034 Philosophy of Religion
An introductory philosophical examination of questions regarding the nature of religious experiences and beliefs; arguments for and against the existence of God; the problem of evil; the relationships of faith, reason and science, the possibility of religious knowledge, the role of religious communities, etc. Readings from the history of philosophy, 20th century and contemporary philosophy.
Taught by: Steinberg
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit
PHIL 035 The Self: Aspiration and Transformation
Novels, memoirs, and aisles of self-help books attest to our desire to transform ourselves. Yet, the idea of self-transformation is puzzling. If a person decides to embark on a new adventure in the hopes of transforming herself, can she really become a new self or is she merely exhibiting her preexisting adventurousness? What about the aspiring college student who is hoping that college will change him? How can we make sense of his aspiration? In this class, we will critically examine the idea of aspiration and transformation. Readings for this course will be drawn from philosophy, fiction, and literary criticism.
Taught by: Morton
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 040 Machine Fairness: the Ethics of Algorithms
Artificial intelligence is causing unprecedented disruptions in many sectors of society, raising fundamental ethical and philosophical questions. Researchers across a variety of disciplines are currently studying how tasks can be automated efficiently to produce the best outcomes for society. This course offers a non-technical introduction to an emerging area of research at the intersection of philosophy, machine learning, computer science, statistics, and psychology. It focuses on a number of applications, including criminal sentencing, predictive policing, self-driving vehicles, autonomous weapons, and healthcare. Although these areas of application are different, they all involve handing over decisions formerly made by humans to machines. This presents the possibility of improving on human decision making, leading to a fairer society, but also threatens to undermine longstanding traditions and raises new ethical questions. What biases might enter into algorithms, and what are their origins? How should we evaluate whether the outcomes of an algorithmic process are fair? When things go wrong, who should be held accountable? And what standards of transparency, if any, can be demanded of the algorithms that shape our lives? The course addresses these questions by developing and applying methods and theories from philosophical ethics.
Taught by: Humphreys
One-term course offered either term
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 043 Markets and Morality First-Year Seminar
Market exchange, where the seller provides a good or service at a price the buyer accepts, serves as a basic element of our society. It embodies certain values of freedom of exchange, and, when well-functioning, promotes economic efficiency. We also know there are illegal markets for human organs, an enormous amount of money is spent to influence our democratic elections, and that giving a friend a loan can change the dynamics of your relationship. Should everything be for sale? How should we balance the benefits and values of free market exchange with other values? What influence do markets have in shaping the way we relate to one another? This course will consider questions like these to explore when and what kind of moral limits should be placed on markets.
Taught by: Paletta
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 044 Introduction to Cognitive Science
How do minds work? This course surveys a wide range of answers to this question from disciplines ranging from philosophy to neuroscience. The course devotes special attention to the use of simple computational and mathematical models. Topics include perception, learning, memory, decision making, emotion and consciousness. The course shows how the different views from the parent disciplines interact and identifies some common themes among the theories that have been proposed. The course pays particular attention to the distinctive role of computation in such theories and provides an introduction to some of the main directions of current research in the field. It is a requirement for the BA in Cognitive Science, the BAS in Computer and Cognitive Science, and the minor in Cognitive Science, and it is recommended for students taking the dual degree in Computer and Cognitive Science.
For BA Students: Natural Science and Math Sector
Course usually offered in fall term
Also Offered As: CIS 140, COGS 001, LING 105, PSYC 207
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit
Notes: This counts as a Formal Reasoning course for College students.

PHIL 050 Introduction to Indian Philosophy
This course will take the student throughout the major topics of Indian philosophy by first introducing the fundamental concepts and terms that are necessary for a deeper understanding of themes that pervade the philosophical literature of India—arguments for and against the existence of God, for example the ontological status of external objects, the means of valid knowledge, standards of proof, the discourse on the aims of life. The readings will emphasize classical Hindu, Buddhist, and Jain philosophical articulations (from 700 B.C. E. to 16th century CE) but we will also supplement our study of these materials with contemporary or relatively recent philosophical writings to modern India.
For BA Students: History and Tradition Sector
One-term course offered either term
Also Offered As: RELS 155, SAST 050, SAST 603
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 051 Yoga and Philosophy
"Yoga" means to yoke in Sanskrit. Metaphorically, this is often interpreted as union, or integration. This course will explore central aspects of yogic philosophy and practice, and how they relate to, and might be integrated with, contemporary analytic philosophy, college life, and beyond. We will focus on three key issues: (1) What is yogic philosophy? How does it relate to the western philosophical tradition more commonly taught in philosophy departments in the U.S.? (2) What does the practice of yoga have to do with theoretical understanding? (3) Is it possible to integrate a yogic worldview and a scientific worldview? Is there scientific evidence that yoga “works”? What does that even mean? This course will contain both a theoretical component and a practice component. In addition to writing analytical essays on these topics, students will maintain a yoga practice and a reflective journal throughout the course. No prior experience with yoga is required.
Taught by: Miracchi
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit
PHIL 067 19th Century Philosophy
Selected topics in nineteenth century European Philosophy. Works of philosophers such as Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, and Kierkegaard.
Taught by: Jarosinski
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: COML 268, GRMN 248
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 072 Biomedical Ethics
This course is an introduction to bioethics, focusing on ethical questions arising at the beginning and end of life. Topics will include procreative responsibilities, the question of wrongful life, and prenatal moral status as well as questions of justice related to markets for sperm, eggs and gestation. We will also attend to dilemmas at the end of life, including the authority of advance directives, euthanasia and the allocation of life-saving therapies.
For BA Students: Society Sector
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: PPE 072
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 074 Business Ethics
We will examine practical ethical issues facing businesses, and the philosophical tools for addressing them. Topics may include corporate responsibility, shareholders vs. stakeholders, whistle blowing, raiding and restructuring, the morality of markets, fair hiring practices, workers rights, sexual harassment, environmental impact.
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 076 Political Philosophy
An introduction to some central issues in social and political philosophy: liberty, equality, property, authority, distributive justice. Readings may be from Hobbes, Locke, Mill, Marx, and more recent theorists such as Rawls and Nozick.
Taught by: Freeman
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 077 Philosophy of Law
This course is an introduction to some of the central philosophical problems of law: What is law? What makes law? What is the relationship between law and morality? Can laws be unjust? Is there a moral obligation to obey the law? We will look at different theories of law, such as positivism and natural law theory, and discuss topics like civil disobedience, liberty and the law, and punishment and the law. The third and final section of the course will consider an unusual and particularly significant kind of law: constitutional law. We will consider the purpose(s) of constitutions, how constitutionalism relates to democracy, and how constitutions ought to be understood and interpreted, in light of our answers to these first two questions. Throughout the course, we will engage with both classic and contemporary work, reading work by Michelle Alexander, Jeremy Bentham, Angela Davis, Ronald Dworkin, John Hart Ely, H.L.A. Hart, Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, John Stuart Mill, Robert Nozick, Martha Nussbaum, Richard Posner, Jeremy Waldron, and others.
For BA Students: Society Sector
Taught by: Hutler
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 079 Environmental Ethics
In this course we will investigate some of the ethical issues that arise from our relationship with the environment. Topics may include: What are our responsibilities toward the environment, as individuals and as members of institutions? How do our responsibilities toward the environment relate to other ethical considerations? Do non-human animals/species/ecosystems have intrinsic value? What should conservationists conserve?
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 080 Aesthetics
This course examines philosophical issues centering on the nature and value of the arts. Some questions we'll consider are: What is art? What does it mean to have an aesthetic experience? How are aesthetic experiences different from non-aesthetic ones? What is the relation between art and truth? How do the moral qualities in a work of art affect its aesthetic qualities? Why are emotions important in our interpretations of artworks? What is the relation between art and expression? Do forgeries necessarily have less aesthetic value than original artworks? What are aesthetic judgments, and are they merely expressions of taste? Lecture and discussion will center on both classical and contemporary works in aesthetics.
For BA Students: Arts and Letters Sector
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit
PHIL 118 Benjamin Franklin and His World
Benjamin Franklin was a preternaturally talented Renaissance man. He was a world-famous scientist whose insights into electricity are still relevant today; a leading citizen and civic leader; a first-class printer who helped define and expand the world of letters; a preeminent journalist, essayist, and aphorist; a skilled politician and diplomat. His tremendous legacy of political, cultural, scientific and civic organizations continues to influence his city and his country. His Autobiography is an essential feature of the American literary canon. But Benjamin Franklin's life also raises deep and disturbing questions for students. He owned slaves and profited from the sale of enslaved persons. He copied and reworked many of his most famous phrases. His sexual habits and behavior are incompatible with the character of the "Me Too" era. He broke promises, circulating - knowing they would become public- personal letters of great political import, which he had pledged to keep private. Through examining Franklin's life, we will consider weighty questions in history, citizenship, ethics, and science. This course will explore the life and ethos of Benjamin Franklin. We will study the history of the 18th century, including the American Revolution, the details of Franklin's life and accomplishments, and six major ethical issues he confronted. Over the course, students will follow Franklin's own advice for establishing order in life. Students will keep a detailed moral diary modeled on Franklin's. For a 5-day period, students will emulate the diet he had as a young and low-paid-adult. The course will encourage students to critically examine the 18th Century, the "great man" theory, and the ability to make moral evaluation of people living in other times. They will critically examine the relevance of the life of a world historical figure for how to lead their own civically engaged, ethical life.
Taught by: Emanuel
Activity: Seminar
0.0 Course Units

PHIL 148 Public Philosophy & Civic Engagement
In recent years professional philosophy has witnessed numerous efforts to break down the barriers that stand between the academy and its neighboring communities. Such work has invited a lively debate across the discipline about the role philosophy can and should play outside the classroom. This course gives students the opportunity to make a substantive contribution to this timely issue both by reflecting upon and by engaging in 'public philosophy.' Undergraduates will have the opportunity to read, discuss, and distill philosophical texts on a range of topics in moral and political philosophy, especially topics that pertain to civic life in democratic society. Topics include duties and obligations (e.g., the duty to vote), oppression and injustice, cosmopolitanism, patriotism, civil disobedience, propaganda, and political liberalism. Students will also engage with public-facing work done by philosophers on these topics, with the aim of preparing students from a West Philadelphia high school (details TBA) to produce a written piece of public philosophy of their own at the end of the semester. Guest speakers will on occasion visit the seminar to discuss public philosophy or pre-college pedagogy. This course is an Academically Based Community Service course.
Taught by: Vazquez
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit
Notes: This course is an Academically Based Community Service course. Students are encouraged to reach out to the instructor, Michael Vazquez (vazm@sas.upenn.edu), with any questions.

PHIL 155 Continental Philosophy
This course is an introduction to 20th-century continental European philosophy, focusing on the origins and development of phenomenology, existentialism, hermeneutics, and deconstruction. The centrality of phenomenology to an understanding of these movements and other contemporary trends in European thought will be emphasized throughout. No previous background in philosophy is required.
Taught by: Steinberg
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 157 Repairing the Planet: Tools for the Climate Emergency
This course is a comprehensive introduction to the climate emergency and the tools with which we can fight it. It will integrate natural science, social science, philosophy of science, history, ethics, and policy. The course opens with an overview of the historical discovery of global warming and our contemporary understanding of climate change. We then turn to the framework that the United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has developed to study climate risks, focusing on both general issues and case studies throughout the world. The existence and severity of these risks raises questions of climate justice at many levels: individuals to individuals, countries to countries, and the present generation to future generations. We will study these issues in detail, and then examine the policy tools developed to address them. Although we will discuss national and sub-national policy and policy proposals such as the Green New Deal, special attention will be given to global policy tools, especially the Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement. In addition to standard writing assignments, students will have a chance to develop policy proposals that address the core issues of the class.
Taught by: Weisberg
Also Offered As: ENVS 157
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 205 What is Meaning?
This course will survey several central topics in philosophy of mind and language, as well as investigate how these areas of philosophy interact with the scientific study of the mind. Questions addressed may include: What is it to have a mind? What is consciousness? What is it to think, to perceive, to act, to communicate, to feel emotions? What is the relationship between the mind and the brain? Can there be a science of the mind? Of language? What can it tell us? What can philosophy contribute to cognitive science? We will look for more precise ways of asking these questions, and we will study some canonical answers to them.
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 209 Introduction to Plato
A survey of selected dialogues of Plato, an Athenian philosopher of the fourth century BCE. Works read may include the Euthyphro, Crito, Gorgias, Laches, Charmides, Phaedo, Philebus, Statesman, and Plato's last dialogue, the Laws. The course will be run as a seminar. All works will be read in English translation. Topics to be discussed may include metaphysics, epistemology, psychology, ethics, and political theory.
Taught by: S.Meyer
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit
PHIL 210 Introduction to Aristotle
Aristotle (384-323 BCE) was one of the most important philosophers in Classical Greece, and his legacy had unparalleled influence on the development of the Western philosophical thought through the medieval period. We will study a selection of his works in natural philosophy, metaphysics, epistemology, psychology, ethics and politics. All texts will be read in English translation. No background in Greek philosophy or knowledge of Greek is required.
Taught by: S. Meyer
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 211 Greek and Roman Moral Philosophy
A survey of ethical philosophy in the Ancient Greek tradition. We will study the work of Plato, Aristotle, Epicurus, and the Stoics, including writings of later Roman authors such as Cicero, Seneca, Epictetus, and Marcus Aurelius. The class will be run as a seminar. All works will be read in English translation.
Taught by: Meyer
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: CLST 211
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 221 Philosophy East and West
Our goal in this course is to bring Western Philosophy and Eastern Philosophy into dialogue. Topics we will cover include skepticism and knowledge, ethics and the good life, moral responsibility and personal relationships, and political obligations and justice. Do the Western and Eastern philosophical traditions approach these topics in the same way? Do they even share an understanding of what the problems and issues at stake are? And what can we learn from comparative philosophy? This seminar does not presuppose prior knowledge of philosophy. Examples of authors we will study include Descartes, Aristotle, Mencius, and Confucius.
Taught by: Tan
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 223 Philosophy and Visual Perception
In this course, we'll use the biology, psychology and phenomenology of vision to explore philosophical questions about color, such as these: Color vision helps us get around in our environments, but in what sense is it a window onto reality, if it is? Are colors properties of objects, or are they inherently private, subjective properties of minds? What can non-human forms of color vision teach us about the nature of color, and how should we empirically study color vision? Do we need to see in color to understand it? How do our ordinary ways of talking and thinking about colors relate to the experiences we have in color? How does color vision figure in aesthetic judgment? And to what degree can it be influenced by learning, or by social biases like sexist or racist prejudices?
Taught by: Hatfield, Connolly
Also Offered As: VLST 223
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 226 Philosophy of Biology
This course consists of a detailed examination of evolutionary theory and its philosophical foundations. The course begins with a consideration of Darwin's formulation of evolutionary theory and the main influences on Darwin. We will then consider two contemporary presentations of the theory: Richard Dawkins' and Richard Lewontin's. The remainder of the course will deal with a number of foundational issues including adaptation, the units of selections, the evolution of altruism, and the possibility of grounding ethics in evolutionary theory. Prerequisite: Application required through Penn Global: https://global.upenn.edu/pennabroad/pps
For BA Students: Natural Science and Math Sector
Taught by: Weisberg
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: PHIL 521, PPE 225
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit
Notes: Application required through Penn Global: <a href='https://global.upenn.edu/pennabroad/pps'>https://global.upenn.edu/pennabroad/pps</a>

PHIL 228 Philosophy of Social Science
This course is about the foundations of contemporary social science. It focuses on the nature of social systems, the similarities and differences between social and natural sciences, the construction, analysis, and confirmation of social theories, and the nature of social explanations. Specific topics may include: What are social norms and conventions? What does it mean to have one gender rather than another, or one sexual orientation rather than another? Should social systems be studied quantitatively or qualitatively?
Taught by: Weisberg, Bicchieri
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: PPE 314
Prerequisite: PHIL 008 OR PHIL 025 OR PPE 153 OR ECON 001 OR ECON 002
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 231 Epistemology
Two basic assumptions of academic research are that there are truths and we can know them. Epistemology is the study how knowledge, what it is, how it is produced, and how we can have it. Metaphysics, the study of the basic constituents of reality, the study of being as such. In this introduction to metaphysics and epistemology, we will ask hard questions about the nature of reality and knowledge. No philosophy background is required for this course.
Taught by: Singer
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit
PHIL 233 Philosophy of Economics
In this course, general philosophy of science issues are applied to economics, and some problems specific to economics are tackled. While analytical questions like "What is economics?" or "What is an economic explanation" must be pursued, the ultimate goal is practical: What is good economics? How can economists contribute to a better understanding of society, and a better society? How can we make economics better? Topics to be discussed include the following: specific object and method of economics as a social science; its relationship with other disciplines (physics, psychology and evolutionary theory); values in economics (welfare, freedom, equality and neutrality); the role of understanding and possible limits of a quantitative approach to human behavior (purposefulness, freedom, creativity, innovation); prediction, unpredictability and the pretension of prediction; causation in econometrics and in economic theory (equilibrium); selfishness and utility maximization (cognitive and behaviorist interpretations); economic models and unrealistic assumptions (realism and instrumentalism); empirical basis of economics (observation and experiment); microeconomics and macroeconomics (reductionism and autonomy); pluralism in economics (mainstream economics and heterodox schools).
Taught by: Pereira Di Salvo, Carlos
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: PPE 233
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 243 Topics in Metaphysics
In this class we employ science fiction thought experiments as a means of reflecting on questions like: What is reality? What is the nature of the self and mind? Might you be in a computer simulation (e.g., as in The Matrix)? Is time travel possible? Can your mind survive the death of your brain by uploading? Is time real or is it merely an illusion?
Taught by: Domotor
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 244 Introduction to Philosophy of Mind
This course will survey several central topics in philosophy of mind, as well as investigating how philosophy of the mind interacts with scientific study of the mind. Among the questions we'll be asking are: What is it to have a mind? What is the relationship between the mind and the brain? Can there be a science of the mind? What can it tell us? What can philosophy contribute to a science of the mind? What is consciousness? What is it to think, to perceive, to act? How are perception, thought, and action related to one another?
Taught by: Domotor, Miracchi
One-term course offered either term
Also Offered As: PPE 244, VLST 221
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 247 Free Radicals: Marx, Marxism, and the Culture of Revolution
* A spectre is haunting Europe—the spectre of Communism*: This, the famous opening line of The Communist Manifesto, will guide this course's exploration of the history, legacy, and potential future of Karl Marx's most important texts and ideas, even long after Communism has been pronounced dead. Contextualizing Marx within a tradition of radical thought refarding politics, religion, and sexuality, we will focus on the philosophical, political, and cultural origins and implications of his ideas. Our work will center on the question of how his writings seek to counter or appeal to many of the same fantasies, desires, and anxieties encoded in the literature, arts and intellectual currents of the time. In examining his legacy, we will focus on elaborations or challenges to his ideas, particularly within cultural criticism, postwar protest movements, and the cultural politics of the Cold War. In conclusion, we will turn to the question of Marxism or Post-Marxism today, asking what promise Marx's ideas might still hold in a world vastly different from his own. All readings and lectures in English.
For BA Students: Humanities and Social Science S
Taught by: Jarosinski
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: COML 247, GRMN 247
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 248 High School Ethics Bowl
In this course, teams of undergraduate students, each joined by a graduate student in philosophy, will coach teams of high school students for participation in the National High School Ethics Bowl, an annual competitive yet collaborative event in which teams analyze and discuss complex ethical dilemmas. Cases for the 2019-20 Ethics Bowl will be released in September 2019, and these will serve as a foundational starting point for the undergraduate students’ investigations into ethical theory and the study of the ethics bowl itself, to develop the capacities to provide coaching and mentorship to the teams of high school students from schools in West Philadelphia and across the city. Undergraduates will travel to these school as part of the course, and there will be one or two Saturday sessions when all high school convene on Penn's campus for practice scrimmages. This course will introduce the ethics bowl to many new Philadelphia School District schools and students, and it will provide Penn students with the opportunity to develop their teaching and communication skills, build collaborative relationships with community schools, and solidify their knowledge of ethical theory through coaching.
Taught by: Detlefsen
Also Offered As: GSWS 248
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit
Notes: This is an Academically-Based Community Service course. Enrollment in the course is by permit only following an interview with the instructor. Please be in touch with Professor Detlefsen <detlefsed@sas.upenn.edu> to schedule an interview.
**PHIL 249 Philosophy of Education**

We sometimes see philosophy as an inaccessible subject and the philosopher a solitary academic musing about abstract concepts from her office chair. However, philosophical thinking lies at the heart of many aspects of human life. Anyone who has pondered over questions regarding goodness, value, personal identity, justice, how to live well, or how to determine the right course of action has thought philosophically. These issues are of great interest and importance not just to adults, but also to children and teenagers. Introducing younger students to philosophical thought consists, in part, of showing them the ways in which they are already thinking philosophically. In this course, we will study a variety of topics in philosophy with the aim of developing curricula and lesson plans for delivery in middle school (6th through 8th grades). Course participants will work with the instructor and with help from a curricular planner from Penn’s Graduate School of Education to develop a series of one-hour lessons in philosophy, which participants will then teach to the middle school students in a local school. Part of the course will be held on Penn’s campus, and part of the course will be held on-site with one of our partner schools. This course is an Academically Based Community Service course. Registration in this class requires a permit, following an interview with the instructor.

For BA Students: Humanities and Social Science S

Taught by: Detlefsen

Course not offered every year

Also Offered As: EDUC 576, GSWS 249

Activity: Seminar

1.0 Course Unit

**PHIL 260 World Philosophies**

In this course, we will study philosophies or thought systems from around the world. Placing these philosophies within historical, cultural and political contexts, we will study the theoretical bases (including questions regarding the nature of reality, human nature, claims about knowledge and memory) of practical engagement with the world (including concerns with individual human interactions, social-political structures, educational theory, the nature of history, the nature of the arts and the like). Philosophies or thought systems we will study will come from across Africa, across Asia, and from native peoples of the Americas, the South Pacific, New Zealand and Australia.

For BA Students: Humanities and Social Science S

Taught by: Detlefsen

Course not offered every year

Activity: Seminar

1.0 Course Unit

**PHIL 271 Global Justice**

This course is an introduction to some of the central problems in global justice. Samples of these topics include: What are our duties to respond to world poverty and what is the basis of this duty? Is global inequality in itself a matter of justice? How universal are human rights? Should human rights defer to cultural claims at all? Is there a right to intervene in another country to protect human rights there? Indeed can intervention to protect human rights ever be a duty? Who is responsible for the environment? We will read some influential contemporary essays by philosophers on these topics with the goal of using the ideas in these papers as a springboard for our own further discussion and analysis.

Taught by: Tan

Course not offered every year

Activity: Seminar

1.0 Course Unit

**PHIL 277 Justice, Law and Morality**

The course will focus on the philosophical background to the individual rights protected by the U.S. Constitution, including 1st Amendment freedoms of religion, expression, and association; the 14th amendment guarantee of Due Process and the rights of privacy, abortion, assisted suicide, and marriage; the Equal Protection clause and equal political rights and the legitimacy of affirmative action; and the Takings and Contract clauses and their bearing on rights of private property and economic freedoms. In addition to Supreme Court decisions on these issues, we will read works by political philosophers and constitutional theorists, including J.S. Mill, Ronald Dworkin, Cass Sunstein, Martha Nussbaum, Katherine MacKinnon and others.

Taught by: Freeman, Allen

Course not offered every year

Also Offered As: PPE 277

Activity: Lecture

1.0 Course Unit

**PHIL 281 Philosophical Issues around Love and Sex**

This is a course on philosophical topics surrounding love and sex. We will touch on issues in all areas of philosophy including ethics, political philosophy, metaphysics, philosophy of language, and epistemology. You will develop the sorts of skills fundamental to philosophy: understanding and reconstructing arguments, evaluating arguments, and developing your own argumentative abilities. You will also acquire theoretical tools that might be useful for thinking about your own love and sex lives, and the lives of those around you.

Taught by: Hirji

Course offered spring; even-numbered years

Activity: Seminar

1.0 Course Unit

**PHIL 291 Philosophy of Race**

Historically, philosophical questions about race have been about the nature and reality of race, the nature of racism, and social or political questions related to race or racism. In fitting with that history, the first part of the course will focus on the nature and reality of race, as understood in biology and as understood by ordinary people. We will begin by looking at biological race theories from Francois Bernier in 1684 to Pigliucci and Kaplan in 2003. Next, we will look at the philosophical work that has been done on the nature and reality of race as ordinarily understood in the contemporary United States. We will discuss racial anti-realism, social constructionism about race, and biological racial realism from well-known philosophers of race like Anthony Appiah, Sally Haslanger, and Joshua Glasgow. The second part of the course will focus on the nature of racism and social or political questions related to race or racism. In our discussion of racism, we will cover, at least, intrinsic racism, extrinsic racism, and institutional racism. In our discussion of social or political issues related to race or racism, we will look at whether any US racial groups should be used to diagnose, study, or treat genetic disorders.

Taught by: Spencer

Course not offered every year

Activity: Seminar

1.0 Course Unit
PHIL 292 Racial Justice
This course will focus on contemporary philosophical debates around racial justice. Some of the themes for this course are quite obvious: the nature of racism and discrimination, for example, will recur. But the main focus of the course will be on debates about politically pertinent policy issues, such as racial segregation, reparations, and mass incarceration. A guiding question in the course will be whether in these areas we should think that certain moral duties are owed to racial groups, or only to particular individuals.
Taught by: Wodak
Course not offered every year
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 299 Independent Study
Student arranges with a faculty member to pursue a program of reading and writing on a suitable topic.
One-term course offered either term
Activity: Independent Study
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 301 Directed Honors Research
Open only to senior majors in philosophy. Student arranges with a faculty member to do an honors thesis on a suitable topic.
One-term course offered either term
Activity: Independent Study
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 325 Topics in Philosophy of Science
A seminar for philosophy majors on selected topics in the Philosophy of Science. In Spring 2019, the course will explore some of the relationships between philosophy and computer science, with a focus on connections with computational complexity theory. Topics will include the bearing of computational learning theory on the problem of induction and the philosophical explication of the notion of randomness. The readings will come from articles in journals made available via Canvas.
PREREQUISITES: The course is entirely self-contained: All topics in computational complexity theory that are necessary for understanding the pertinent philosophical problems will be reviewed in class.
Taught by: Weinstein
One-term course offered either term
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit
Notes: Department Majors Only

PHIL 330 Philosophy of Perception
Taking our perceptual experience as a given, what causes it? In a realistic mood, we accept that objects in the environment, or in the "external world," cause us to have the perceptual experiences that we do (as of a table with food, or as of a garden with flowers in it). Yet on this realistic view, our perception is the result of a causal chain that leads from object to eye to brain to experiences, and we are only given the last element: the experience. So how do we really know how our experiences are caused, and where do we get the idea that they are caused by an external world of physical objects? The seminar will focus on the problem of the external world as examined by David Hume, Thomas Reid, G. E. Moore, and Bertrand Russell, along with recent authors.
Taught by: Hatfield
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit
Notes: Department Majors Only

PHIL 334 Philosophical Issues Surrounding the Ethics of Social Media
In this course, we will look at some of the key moral issues that are raised by our current social media landscape: topics include moral epistemology and echo chambers, civility and cancel culture, authenticity and self-construction, sex work and OnlyFans, and the effects of Instagram culture on body image.
Taught by: Hirji
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit
Notes: Department Majors Only

PHIL 343 Philosophy of Mind
This majors seminar will focus on selected topics in Philosophy of Mind.
Taught by: Miracchi
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit
Notes: Department Majors Only

PHIL 359 Topics in Theoretical Philosophy
This majors seminar will cover selected topics in metaphysics, epistemology, philosophy of mind, philosophy of science, or philosophy of language. Topics will vary from term to term.
Taught by: Spencer
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit
Notes: Department Majors Only

PHIL 361 Ancient Philosophical Figures
A study of selected topics, texts, and figures from classical Greek philosophy. Topics will vary from term to term.
Taught by: S.Meyer
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit
Notes: Department Majors Only

PHIL 362 Modern Philosophical Figures
A study of selected topics, texts, and figures from 17th and 18th century European philosophy. Figures studied may include Descartes, Leibniz, Locke, Berkeley, Hume, or Kant. Topics will vary from term to term.
Taught by: Hatfield, Detlefsen
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: GRMN 363, PHIL 565
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit
Notes: Department Majors Only

PHIL 366 Topics in Ethics
This majors seminar will cover selected topics in ethics. The content will vary from semester to semester.
Taught by: Freeman
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit
Notes: Department Majors Only
PHIL 373 Philosophy of Food and Fat
This majors seminar will explore some of the philosophical issues related to obesity and food. We'll discuss a number of related topics, such as the nature and causes of obesity, how food relates to personal identity, gender, and religion, questions about whether the government or society as a whole should be trying to fix the obesity epidemic, whether corporations are responsible for the problem, and the ethics and possible outcomes of different kinds of food fetishism (such as only eating locally-produced food). Because of the interdisciplinary nature of the topic, the readings will come from philosophy as well as other fields including sociology, public health, and complex systems research. There will be popular pieces as well as full philosophy articles. The class will be structured as a cooperative learning seminar, where everyone in the class is expected to help everyone else learn. The course will push you to understand and communicate clearly about material that is often difficult to understand. Along with introducing you to some topics in philosophy, this course will help students become better skilled in understanding and intelligently questioning sophisticated arguments, which can come in handy in a large number of pursuits.
Taught by: Singer
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 376 Justice
This majors seminar will focus on contemporary works on liberalism, democracy, capitalism, and distributive justice. Questions to be discussed may include: Which rights and liberties are fundamental in a constitutional democracy? What is equality and what requirements does it impose? Are economic rights of property and freedom of contract equally important as personal liberties of speech, religion, and association? Does capitalism realize a just distribution of income and wealth? What is socialism and is it potentially just, or necessarily unjust? Readings from works by John Rawls, Robert Nozick, Milton Friedman, and others.
Taught by: Freeman
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 379 Topics in Political Philosophy
This majors seminar will focus on various topics in political philosophy. Topics will vary from term to term.
Taught by: Pereira Di Salvo
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit
Notes: Department Majors Only

PHIL 380 Marx’s Moral, Social, and Political Philosophy
A majors seminar in Philosophy. Karl Marx is one of the most politically and intellectually influential philosophers of the modern period. Even today, in the aftermath of Soviet Communism, but also in the aftermath of the Great Recession, his ideas continue to be debated in academic circles, in the financial press, and among pundits, activists, and politicians. This seminar will survey his canonical writings roughly in chronological order. We will focus thematically on: Marx’s views on morality and ideology; his theories of history, the modern capitalist economy, and the modern state; his views on political change and political agency; and on the few but suggestive passages in which he imagined what a post-capitalist society might look like. Readings will span from the Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of his youth to the Ethnological Notebooks written during the last decade of his life.
Taught by: Pereira Di Salvo
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit
Notes: Department Majors Only

PHIL 405 Philosophy of Language
This course provides an overview of 20th century analytic philosophy of language. Questions we will ask may include: How do words refer? How do they combine to express thoughts? How do words relate to concepts or to thoughts more generally? What do words and sentences mean? How do we use them to communicate with each other? How does word and sentence meaning depend on the contexts in which they are spoken or heard, or on stable features of environments of linguistic speakers? Must have taken at least one philosophy course before enrolling.
Taught by: Miracchi
Course not offered every year
Prerequisite: PHIL 005 OR PHIL 505
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 407 Aristotle
A study of Aristotle’s main writings on language, reality, knowledge, nature and psychology. All texts will be read in English translation. No background in Greek philosophy or knowledge of Greek is required, although previous work in philosophy is strongly recommended.
Taught by: S.Meyer
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 409 Plato’s Selected Dialogues
A study of selected dialogues of Plato. All texts will be read in translation. No prior experience in Plato is required, but students should have some background in philosophy. Dialogues studied will vary from term to term.
Taught by: S.Meyer
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit
PHIL 410 Introduction to Logic and Computability
Taught by: Weinstein
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: LGIC 310, MATH 570
Prerequisite: MATH 371 OR MATH 503
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 412 Topics in Logic
The course focuses topics drawn from the central areas of mathematical logic: model theory, proof theory, set theory, and computability theory.
Taught by: Weinstein
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: LGIC 496, MATH 671
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 413 Logic II
The second semester of a two-semester course on the fundamental results and techniques of mathematical logic. Topics will be drawn from model theory, proof theory, recursion theory, and set theory. Connections between logic and algebra, analysis, combinatorics, computer science, and the foundations of mathematics will be emphasized.
Taught by: Scedrov, Towsner, Weinstein
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: LGIC 320, MATH 571
Prerequisite: PHIL 410 OR MATH 570
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 414 Philosophy of Mathematics
The course will focus on the development of the foundations and philosophy of mathematics from the late nineteenth-century through the present day. Topics may include logicism, formalism, intuitionism, and the foundations of set theory. Ample consideration will be given to some of the fundamental results of mathematical logic, such as the Godel incompleteness theorems and the independence of the Continuum Hypothesis from Zermelo-Fraenkel set theory, that have had a profound impact on contemporary approaches to the philosophy of mathematics.
Taught by: Weinstein, Ewald
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 423 Philosophy and Visual Perception
Central issues in the philosophy of perception from the modern period, including: what we perceive, the meaningful content of perception, and its relation to a mind-independent external world. Additional topics may include: (1) color perception and color metaphysics; (2) object perception in its interplay between Gestalt organizational factors and background knowledge; (3) the role of ecological regularities in the formation of our visual system and in the ongoing tuning of the system to the environment; (4) the geometry of visual space and the phenomenology of visual appearances of size and shape; (5) the problem of how visual scenes are experienced by means of images. Readings from authors such as Bertrand Russell, R. W. Sellars, Tim Crane, Evan Thompson, Robert Swartz, Wolfgang Metzger, Nelson Goodman, Richard Wollheim, and William Hopp, among others.
Taught by: Hatfield
One-term course offered either term
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 425 Philosophy of Science.
An advanced introduction to the central philosophical questions concerning the nature of scientific knowledge and its relation to experience, and the metaphysical assumptions underlying the natural sciences. Topics to be covered include: science versus pseudoscience, laws of nature, causation, determinism and randomness, theories and models in science, scientific explanation, underdetermination of theories by observation and measurement, realism and antirealism, reductionism and intertheory relations, objectivity and value judgments in science, hypothesis testing and confirmation of scientific theories, and classical paradoxes in scientific methodology. Prerequisite: Background in elementary logic and some rudiments of science.
Taught by: Domotor
One-term course offered either term
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 426 Philosophy of Psychology
An examination of major trends of thought in experimental psychology in relation to philosophy and the philosophy of science. What is the subject matter and object of explanation of experimental psychology? What is the relation between psychology and neuroscience? How is scientific psychology related to traditional philosophical investigations of the mental? The course covers the classical systems and schools of psychology (Wundt, James, behaviorism, Gestalt psychology, cognitive and perceptual psychology, and cognitive science) and such contemporary problems as consciousness, philosophical foundations of cognitive science; theories of the extended and embodied mind; and the relation between neuroscience and psychology.
Taught by: Hatfield
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit
PHIL 428 Norms and Nudges
Social norms are the rules we live by, and we encounter them in any area of our life. Social norms often guarantee the smooth functioning of a group or organization. Sometimes, however, these norms are inefficient or do not benefit society at large. What can we do to change these harmful collective behaviors? Social psychology, philosophy, sociology, rational-choice, legal theory, and even economics, are investigating and theorizing pro-social behavior, justice motivation, and moral and social norms. In this course, we will examine the latest and best in this emerging multidisciplinary field. Students will be encouraged to apply its findings and methods to their area of interest.
Taught by: Bicchieri
Also Offered As: BDS 502
Prerequisite: ECON 212 OR MATH 432 OR PSCI 552 OR PSYC 253 OR PSYC 170
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 429 Sports as Legal Systems: An Investigation into Law and Legal Thinking
Formal organized sports - from the NFL to NASCAR to the LPGA - are either genuine legal systems of a specialized kind or close analogues to legal systems. Like ordinary legal systems, they use general rules, promulgated by rule-making bodies and enforced by impartial adjudicators, to facilitate or incentivize desired behaviors and to prevent or deter undesired behaviors. As such, sports are proper subjects of study by legal scholars and philosophers. A standard course on "sports law" examines the regulation of sports by law. This course, in contrast, examines sports as legal systems in their own right. A small sample of the topics to be addressed includes: (1) What are sports, and what is their relationship to games? (The IOC has determined that bridge and chess are sports. Is this correct? Does it matter?) (2) What form should the rules take? (For example, should sports rules contain "mens rea" terms? Should they be more "rule-like" or more "standard-like"?) (3) How much discretion do and should officials have? (Chief Justice Roberts said that "judges are like umpires." Is this true? In what ways?) (4) Should on-field decisions be appealable and, if so, what should the procedures and standards of appellate review be? (For example, is the "indisputable visual evidence standard" of review in the NFL and NCAA football justified?) (5) What is cheating? (Did the badminton players at the London Olympics who tried to lose "cheat"? Do baseball players cheat when they falsely claim to be hit by a pitch?) (6) What should the rules of eligibility be? (Should women be allowed to compete against men? Should MTF transgender athletes be allowed to compete against cisgender women? Should double amputees like the South African Oscar Pistorius be allowed to compete against non-disabled runners?) In exploring questions like these, the course will, where appropriate, draw upon, and examine possible lessons for, ordinary law. The course is therefore both an in-depth and rigorous investigation into sports and a vehicle for deepening one's understanding of law. It is appropriate for law students and for non-law students seeking an engaging and accessible introduction to legal systems and legal analysis.
Taught by: Berman
Also Offered As: LAW 715
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 430 Philosophy of Mind
This course studies particular topics in contemporary philosophy of mind and cognitive science. Examples include: the nature of consciousness, naturalistic accounts of intentionality, the nature scope of scientific explanation in studying the mind, the intersection of philosophy of mind and epistemology, and theories of agency. Typically, readings include both philosophy and empirical work from relevant sciences.
Taught by: Miracchi
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 431 Theory of Knowledge
Selected topics in Epistemology such as: bridging the gap between mainstream and formal epistemology, the familiar tripartite definition of knowledge (knowledge as justified true belief), basic logical and probabilistic models of knowledge (Hintikka, Aumann, and Bayesian) and their multi-agent variants, logical omniscience and other problems (including the epistemic closure principle), attempts at formalizing joint and common knowledge, resource-bounded knowledge, knowledge under limited logical powers, and empirical knowledge obstructed by system complexity.
Taught by: Domotor
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 432 Existence in Black
Racial, colonial, and other political formations have encumbered Black existence since at least the fifteenth-century. Black experiences of and reflections on these matters have been the subject of existential writings and artistic expressions ranging from the blues to reggae, fiction and non-fiction. Reading some of these texts alongside canonical texts in European existential philosophy, this class will examine how issues of freedom, self, alienation, finitude, absurdity, race, and gender shape and are shaped by the global Black experience. Since Black aliveness is literally critical to Black existential philosophy, we shall also engage questions of Black flourishing amidst the potential for pessimism and nihilism.
Taught by: Amponsah
Course usually offered in spring term
Also Offered As: AFRC 406, HIST 406, PHIL 555
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 465 Kant I
The course will concentrate on the Critique of Pure Reason and discuss in detail Kant’s conception of knowledge and experience, his criticism of traditional metaphysics and the resulting project of a system of transcendental philosophy.
Taught by: Horstmann
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: GRMN 551
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit
PHIL 466 Kant II
This course is a study of Kant’s moral and political philosophy. Texts may include Kant’s Lectures on Ethics, Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals, Critique of Practical Reason, Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason, and Metaphysics of Morals.
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: GRMN 552
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 468 Hegel
A study of Hegel's philosophy, focusing primarily on his Phenomenology of Spirit, with attention to relevant passages in other works such as Hegel’s Logic and Philosophy of Right. Topics may include: (1) Hegel’s conception of philosophy, (2) the development of his system, (3) the problem of an introduction to his system (Phenomenology of Spirit), (4) Hegel’s criticism of traditional metaphysics, (5) his notion of a ‘concept’ (Begriff), his theory of the Idea. The seminar will focus primarily on some of Hegel’s early Jena writings, his Phenomenology of Spirit, on passages from different versions of Hegel’s Logic and (maybe) on aspects of his Philosophy of Right. Topics that are dealt with include: (1) Hegel’s conception of philosophy, (2) the development of his system, (3) the problem of an introduction to his system (Phenomenology of Spirit), (4) Hegel’s criticism of traditional metaphysics, (5) his notion of a ‘concept’ (Begriff), his theory of the Idea. Other topics might become of interest as well.
Taught by: Horstmann
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: GRMN 583
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 472 Survey of Ethical Theory
This course is an investigation of the main questions and problems in metaethics since the turn of the 20th century. We will investigate questions about the metaphysics of morality, the philosophy of language of moral talk, the philosophy of mind of moral thought, the epistemology of morality, and the objectivity of morality.
Taught by: Lord
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 474 Normative Ethics
Some particular acts are morally right; other acts are morally wrong. The task of normative ethics is to provide a general account of which acts are morally right or wrong and why they are morally right or wrong. The primary goal of this course is to provide an advanced survey of two theories that dominate contemporary ethics: consequentialism and deontology. Consequentialists - such as, most famously, the British utilitarians: Bentham, Mill and Sidgwick - hold that acts are right or wrong because of their good or bad consequences. Consequentialism faces numerous objections: that it is wrong to make trade-offs between benefits and harms to different individuals; that it requires us to violate rights; that it is too demanding; and that it does not respect our special obligations to our friends and family. These objections are used to motivate deontology. We will explore Immanuel Kant’s influential version deontology, and the challenges that it faces in relation to the prohibition on lying, on how we should treat the risk of wrong-doing, and on the moral status of animals. The secondary goal of this course is to develop the philosophical skills that we use to understand, evaluate, and defend moral theories.
Taught by: Wodak
Course usually offered in spring term
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 479 Modern Political Philosophy
A survey of several works in modern political philosophy, including Thomas Hobbes’s, Leviathan; John Locke’s, Second Treatise on Government and Letter Concerning Toleration; David Hume’s ‘Of the Original Contract’ and ‘On Justice’, John Stuart Mill's Utilitarianism, On Liberty, and The Subjection of Women; excerpts from Karl Marx's Capital and other writings; and John Rawls's A Theory of Justice.
Taught by: Freeman
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 480 Topics in Aesthetics
Topic title for Spring 2018: Walter Benjamin. Walter Benjamin (1892-1940) is a philosopher whose writings on art, literature, and politics have had tremendous influence on many disciplines in the Humanities and Social Studies. He has been variously described as one of the leading German-Jewish thinkers, and a secular Marxist theorist. With the publication of a four-volume collection of this works in English, many more of his writings have been made accessible to a wider public. Our seminar will undertake a survey of his work that begins with his studies on language and allegory; and continues with his autobiographical work, his writings on art and literature, and on the imaginary urban spaces of the nineteenth-century.
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: ARTH 560, COML 582, GRMN 580, JWST 582
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit
PHIL 489 Ethnicity, Identity and Nationhood
This MLA seminar will deepen our understanding of the role that political and cultural ideologies — such as liberalism, conservatism, nationalism, totalitarianism, fundamentalism, etc. — play in contemporary public discourse and the psychology of ideological thinking that makes political conflicts so difficult to resolve. Drawing on a series of case studies in contemporary political, social and cultural conflict such as recent political campaigns and nationalist movements around the globe, we will identify and examine the ideologies driving such conflicts, and from these we will draw out the common philosophical characteristics and psychological features of ideological thinking. We will begin by considering a series of case studies in contemporary political, social and cultural conflict, drawn from contemporary events such as the 2012 political campaigns, the 2011 debt ceiling debate in Congress, nationalist movements around the globe, etc. We will identify and examine the ideologies driving such conflicts, and from these we will draw out the common philosophical characteristics and psychological features of ideological thinking. Throughout, we will seek to understand the deep attraction of ideological commitments and why they tend to push public discourse and behavior to extremes and even violence. Finally, we will consider efforts to reduce or resolve ideological conflicts through strategies of political compromise, dialogue, toleration, and democratic deliberation.
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 491 Metaphysics of Race
Historically, philosophical questions about race have been about what race is and whether it exists, the nature of racism, and social or political questions related to race or racism. This course focuses squarely on what race is and whether it exists. The first part of the course will focus on race theories and race-related debates by biologists, anthropologists, and philosophers of biology. The second part of the course will focus on race theories from philosophers of race and sociologists about race from an ordinary folk perspective. We will begin by looking at biological race theories from Francois Bernier in 1684 to J.F. Blumenbach in 1795. Next, we will study the epistemological debate about Samuel Morton's craniometry. Finally, we will explore folk race theories from W.E.B. DuBois in 1897 to present-day work from philosophers of race like Sally Haslanger, Michael Hardimon, and Joshua Glasgow. Topics covered will include, but not be limited to, classical biological race theories, experimentation and measurement in race science, biological anti-realism about race, biological realism about race, non-biological realism about race, and meta-metaphysical issues about race theory.
Taught by: Spencer
Course offered spring; even-numbered years
Prerequisite: PHIL 005
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 506 Formal Logic II
An introduction to first-order logic including the completeness, compactness, and Lowenheim-Skolem theorems, and Godel's incompleteness theorems. UNDERGRADUATES NEED PERMISSION
Taught by: Weinstein
Course usually offered in spring term
Also Offered As: PHIL 006
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit
Notes: Undergraduates Need Permission.

PHIL 511 Aristotle's Ethics
A study of Aristotle's ethical works, with emphasis on the NICOMACHEAN ETHICS. Topics may include moral psychology, practical reasoning, the nature of the good, emotion and reason, responsibility, and friendship.
Taught by: Meyer
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit
Notes: Undergraduates Need Permission

PHIL 512 A Survey of Aristotle's Teleology
The course examines the role teleology plays in Aristotle's metaphysics, his natural science, and his ethical theory, and investigates the relationship between being and goodness.
Taught by: Hirji
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 521 Philosophy of Biology
This course consists of a detailed examination of evolutionary theory and its philosophical foundations. The course begins with a consideration of Darwin's formulation of evolutionary theory and the main influences on Darwin. We will then consider two contemporary presentations of the theory: Richard Dawkins' and Richard Lewontin's. The remainder of the course will deal with a number of foundational issues including adaption, the units of selection, the evolution of altruism, and the possibility of grounding ethics in evolutionary theory. UNDERGRADUATES NEED PERMISSION
Taught by: Weisberg
One-term course offered either term
Also Offered As: PHIL 226, PPE 225
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit
Notes: Undergraduates Need Permission
PHIL 525 Topics in the Philosophy of Science
For the last four centuries, scientific research has provided our most reliable understanding of the world. Although the scientific revolution started modestly with attempts to understand stellar movement, we now know the age and constitution of the universe, the basis of heredity, and we can make and break chemical bonds at will. By all appearances, science seems to have made substantial progress from the scientific revolution to the global scientific enterprise of the 21st century. This course is about how science has generated this knowledge, and whether it has been as progressive and reliable as it seems. We will consider methodological issues such as the sources of scientific knowledge, objectivity, the growing importance of computation in the natural sciences, and the nature of modeling. We will examine products of scientific research: explanations, models, theories, and laws of nature. And we will discuss questions about science and values, including whether non-scientific values can and should enter scientific research, the relationship between science and religion, and the role of the public in guiding the scientific enterprise.
Taught by: Hatfield, Miracchi
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
Notes: Undergraduates Need Permission.
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 526 Philosophy of Psychology
An investigation of issues that arise from scientific psychology and are investigated philosophically or have implications for philosophy. Specific topics vary by semester. In Spring 2019 the seminar will examine various instances of appealing to appearances in analyzing perception and its relation to an external world. Authors to be studied include Descartes, Hume, Russell, Sellars, and Chisholm.
Taught by: Hatfield
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: GRMN 527
Activity: Seminar
Notes: Undergraduates Need Permission.
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 530 Philosophy of Mind
This course explores core issues in philosophy of mind, such as: the nature of mental states and events, the mind-body problem, and the relationship between philosophy of mind and related disciplines, such as cognitive science. We approach these issues through more specific topics, depending on the interests of the instructor. Topics may include: identity theories, grounding physicalism, functionalism, computationalism, disjunctivism and knowledge-first theories, internalism and externalism, consciousness, self-knowledge, perception, emotion, action, representationalism, mental causation, and intersections with psychology, artificial intelligence, linguistics, and neuroscience. For details in a specific year, consult with the instructor and/or department.
UNDERGRADUATES NEED PERMISSION.
Taught by: Hatfield, Miracchi
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
Notes: Undergraduates Need Permission.
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 531 Social Norms
This is a graduate research seminar covering interdisciplinary research in psychology, philosophy, sociology and behavioral economics related to social norms. Social norms are informal institutions that regulate social life. We will devote particular attention to the following questions: 1. What is a good, operational definition of social norms? 2. Is there a difference between social and moral norms? 3. How can we measure whether a norm exits, and the conditions under which individuals are likely to comply with it? 4. Are behavioral experiments a good tool to answer questions 3? 5. How do norms emerge? 6. How are norms abandoned? 7. What is the role of trendsetters in norm dynamics?
Taught by: Bicchieri
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
Notes: Undergraduates Need Permission.
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 532 Topics in Epistemology
This seminar will cover topics of interest to contemporary epistemologists. Possible topics may include skepticism, accounts of knowledge and justification, virtue epistemology, formal epistemology, social epistemology, feminist epistemology, meta-epistemology and epistemic normativity.
Taught by: Lord, Errol
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
Notes: Undergraduates Need Permission.
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 536 Stoicism
A study of some major texts in Ancient Greek Stoicism, the school founded by Zeno of Citium in the post-Aristotelian period. Topics may include: ethics, natural philosophy, epistemology, and metaphysics. Authors may include: Cicero, Seneca, Epictetus, and Marcus Aurelius. Against the Ethicists will be the other major texts studied in this course. All readings will be in English translation. No knowledge of Greek or Latin is required.
Taught by: S. Meyer
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
Notes: Undergraduates Need Permission.
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 537 MLA Seminar Philosophy & Psychoanalysis: Freud & the Interpretation of Culture
MLA proseminar. More than a century after Sigmund Freud transformed - for better or worse - our understanding of what it means to be human, Freudian psychoanalysis still exerts a profound influence in our culture. This seminar course is an exploration of the philosophical issues raised by Freudian psychoanalysis as a theory of mind and culture. After a close reading of Freud's theoretical writings on the nature of the mind and human behavior, we will explore why Freud's theories - despite more than a century of criticism - remain highly influential as a framework for the interpretation of art, literature, religion, society, politics, and history. Readings from Freud's "meta-psychological", cultural, and social writings, Paul Ricoeur's Freud and Philosophy, and other contemporary authors in philosophy, psychoanalysis, and other fields. No previous knowledge of psychoanalysis, psychology, or philosophy required.
Taught by: Steinberg
Activity: Seminar
Notes: Undergraduates Need Permission.
1.0 Course Unit
PHIL 540 Topics in Philosophy of Language
This course explores core issues in philosophy of language, such as: meaning, reference, truth, communication, speech acts, the norms governing language use, and the relationship between philosophy of language and related disciplines, such as linguistics. We approach these issues through more specific topics, depending on the interests of the instructor. Topics may include: the nature of propositions, truth, context-sensitive expressions, the relationship between logical structure and linguistic structure, the relationship between mental and linguistic meaning, the mechanisms of communication, the semantic/pragmatic distinction, the norms of assertion, relativism, expressivism, injustice in linguistic communication. For details in a specific year, consult with the instructor and Course not offered every year Activity: Seminar 1.0 Course Unit Notes: Undergraduates Need Permission

PHIL 545 Plato and Aristotle in the Renaissance
In one of the most evocative frescoes of the Renaissance, Raphaël juxtaposes Plato and Aristotle. The pairing would seem obvious, since the two thinkers had been for centuries symbols of philosophy and wisdom. But only the recent revival of Plato, begun in the mid-fifteenth century, had allowed Latin West to gain a better understanding of Platonic philosophy and therefore to compare Plato’s doctrines directly to those of Aristotle. Were master and disciple in harmony? And if not, which of the two should be favored? Such questions were less innocent than one might think, and the answers to them had implications directly for philosophy, theology, speculation on the natural world, and even politics. The course will offer an overview of Renaissance philosophy and culture by focusing on the different ways in which Plato and Aristotle were read, interpreted and exploited between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries. The course will be conducted in English; a basic knowledge of Latin is desirable but not required.
Taught by: Del Soldato
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: CLST 540, COML 545, ITAL 540
Activity: Seminar 1.0 Course Unit Notes: Undergraduates Need Permission.

PHIL 549 Equality, Justice, and Inclusion in Higher Education
Higher education has recently been a topic of intense discussion and attention. While many more people are entering colleges and universities, these institutions have come under scrutiny for perpetuating and entrenching inequality even as students turn to them as sites of social mobility. In this class, we will look at empirical and philosophical work on higher education to consider questions such as: What are the aims of higher education? How should we conceptualize the role of universities in colleges in promoting (or undermining) justice? Who should universities serve (and who have universities typically served)? Are universities sites of upward mobility or do they entrench existing inequalities? Do elite universities have special civic or political obligations? How should we balance academic freedom and inclusivity on college campuses? We will read recent work from Sigal Ben-Porath, Harry Brighouse, Anthony Jack, Amy Gutmann, Sara Goldrick-Rab, Michael Sandel, Gina Schouten, Nicole Stephens, Paul Tough, among others.
Taught by: Morton
Activity: Seminar 1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 550 Topics in Philosophy of Education
In this course, we will examine problems in contemporary philosophy of education, including: how much control over a child’s education ought to be allocated to parents and how much to the state; what role, if any, ought religion to play in education; how do race and gender impact individuals’ educational experiences and how should such issues should be addressed in the classroom; what sort of (if any) civic education ought to be taught in schools (especially in wartime such as in the post 9-11 USA); and how should schools be funded? We will deal with a number of case studies, mostly recent, but some crucial historical cases as well. Our readings will be primarily philosophical texts, supplemented with those from other fields, such as psychology, history and sociology, in order to provide empirical context to the theoretical problems facing education today.
Taught by: Detlefsen
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar 1.0 Course Unit Notes: Undergraduates Need Permission.

PHIL 551 Topics in Early Modern Philosophy
125 A seminar in philosophy of the early modern period (roughly 1600-1800), covering specific figures and/or examples. Examples of figures studied include (but are not limited to) Descartes Cavendish, Astell, Locke, Hume, Du Chatelet, or Kant. Examples of topics studied include (but again are not limited to) substance, causation, freedom, natural philosophy, education, the human being, the private, and the public, or political authority.
Taught by: Detlefsen, Chignell
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar 1.0 Course Unit Notes: Undergraduates Need Permission.

PHIL 552 MLA Seminar in Philosophy of Education
In this MLA proseminar course, we will examine some of the most pressing problems in contemporary philosophy of education. These problems include: how much control over a child’s education ought to be allocated to parents and how much to the state; what role, if any, ought religion to play in education; how do race and gender impact individuals’ educational experiences and how should such issues should be addressed in the classroom; what sort of (if any) civic education ought to be taught in schools (especially in wartime such as in the post 9-11 USA); and how should schools be funded? We will deal with a number of case studies, mostly recent, but some crucial historical cases as well. Our readings will be primarily philosophical texts, supplemented with those from other fields, such as psychology, history and sociology, in order to provide empirical context to the theoretical problems facing education today. As a seminar, the instructor welcomes student participation, including students bringing their own interests in educational theory to the classroom. At the same time, the instructor will lecture to the extent necessary to make classroom discussion especially rich.
Taught by: Detlefsen
Activity: Seminar 1.0 Course Unit
PHIL 554 Contemporary Continental Philosophy
This MLA seminar is an introduction to 20th-century continental European philosophy, focusing on the origins and development of phenomenology, existentialism, hermeneutics, and deconstruction. No previous background in philosophy is required. We will begin with an introduction to the phenomenology of Edmund Husserl and the contemporary debate over its proper interpretation. Then we will examine three existentialist critics of Husserl, whose philosophies have influenced much of recent continental thought: Martin Heidegger, Jean-Paul Sartre, and Maurice Merleau-Ponty. Finally, we will examine the important influence of phenomenology and existentialism on contemporary trends in continental philosophy as exhibited in works by Paul Ricoeur, Hans Georg Gadamer, Jacques Derrida, Hannah Arendt, and Emmanuel Levinas. Finally, we will examine the important influence of phenomenology and existentialism on contemporary trends in continental philosophy as exhibited in works by Paul Ricoeur, Hans Georg Gadamer, Jacques Derrida, Hannah Arendt, and Emmanuel Levinas. Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit
Notes: Undergraduates Need Permission

PHIL 555 Existence in Black
Racial, colonial, and other political formations have encumbered Black existence since at least the fifteenth-century. Black experiences of and reflections on these matters have been the subject of existential writings and artistic expressions ranging from the blues to reggae, fiction and non-fiction. Reading some of these texts alongside canonical texts in European existential philosophy, this class will examine how issues of freedom, self, alienation, finitude, absurdity, race, and gender shape and are shaped by the global Black experience. Since Black aliveness is literally critical to Black existential philosophy, we shall also engage questions of Black flourishing amidst the potential for pessimism and nihilism.
Taught by: Amphonsah
Course usually offered in spring term
Also Offered As: AFRC 406, AFRC 506, HIST 406
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 556 Constitutional Inte
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: LAW 946
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 562 MLA Proseminar in Philosophy: World Philosophies
Most philosophy as it is taught in universities in the USA focuses on western philosophy. But people across the globe practice philosophy, often in a wide variety of genres and using a range of methods, and sometimes to grapple with problems and questions that grow out of local lived experience. This course focuses on a range of philosophies from around the world, including texts from Latin America, Indigenous North and South America, Africa and Asia. In addition to gaining a broader understanding of how philosophy has been practiced, and continues to be practiced, around the world, we will spend time interrogating the nature of philosophy itself, and what we can learn about our discipline by expanding our view of its practitioners and the modes in which it is practiced.
Taught by: Detlefsen
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

Although the starting point for the Anthropocene is still under discussion, there is broad agreement that the Industrial revolution and the turn to fossil fuels mark an intensification of humanity’s impact on the Earth. It may not be a coincidence that Kant’s proclamation of the Copernican revolution in philosophy, according to which human reason replaces the natural light of traditional metaphysics, falls roughly in the same period. Human finite cognition became the measure for God and his creation. The dawn of the era of human freedom and the ramped up exploitation of resources coincide. It is against this background that the Naturphilosophie of F. W. J. Schelling can become particularly interesting. The genesis of German idealism is closely related with the opposition between freedom and necessity that lies at the heart of Kant’s critical project. Kant associated the former with man and the latter with nature. In trying to bridge the gap between them, Schelling reinstates nature as an autonomous actor in its own right. Schelling’s thinking about nature chimes with the literary and empirical-scientific work of his contemporary Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. In the productive interplay of poetry, science, religion, and philosophical thought, Goethe and Schelling offer a critical alternative to philosophy in the aftermath of the Copernican revolution that may be viable or useful today as humanity tries to come to terms with anthropogenically induced climate change. This co-taught interdisciplinary seminar will focus on works by Schelling (Ideas for a Philosophy of Nature, First Outline of a System of the Philosophy of Nature, On the World Soul) and Goethe (scientific writings, Faust I & II), in addition to engaging recent scholarship of Schelling and Goethe in relation to environmental humanities.
Taught by: Richter/Hahmann
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: COML 547, GRMN 525
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit
Notes: Undergraduates Need Permission

PHIL 572 Contemporary Ethics
Selected topics in contemporary ethical theory. Recent topics have included rationality and sources of normativity. Semester-specific description available in course syllabus.
Taught by: Freeman, Meyer
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit
Notes: Undergraduates Need Permission

PHIL 573 Virtue Ethics, Ancient and Modern
This will be a survey of Ancient Greek theories of virtue ethics, as well as an examination of contemporary Neo-Aristotelian developments of the virtue ethical tradition.
Taught by: Hirji
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit
PHIL 574 Law and Philosophy
This graduate seminar explores recent work at the forefront of legal philosophy and adjacent fields, particularly moral, social, and political philosophy. In two-week units, seminar participants will discuss a recently published paper (in the first week) and in the second week, participants (along with other faculty) will meet with the paper's author for further discussion in which students will be given priority. The goal is to explore new work in the field in great depth, and in so doing develop students' analytic skills and their knowledge of the present state of the literature.
Taught by: Wodak
Course usually offered in fall term
Also Offered As: LAW 574
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit
Notes: Undergraduates Need Permission

PHIL 576 Rationality, Morality and Law
This class will be dedicated to investigating topics related to rationality in its many forms. Potential areas of study are metaethics, epistemology, moral psychology, and the philosophies of mind, language and action. UNDERGRADUATES NEED PERMISSION.
Taught by: Freeman, Lord
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit
Notes: Undergraduates Need Permission.

PHIL 577 Topics in Philosophy of Law
This seminar will examine leading academic theories of constitutional interpretation, starting with classic texts by (for illustration) Thayer, Wechsler, Ely, Bobbitt, Dworkin, and Scalia, and emphasizing current debates within originalism and between originalists and their critics. While the focus will be on American constitutional interpretation, we will also see how that literature is currently running up against, and possibly contributing to, more "philosophical" or "jurisprudential" accounts of the contents of law. Consistent with the nature of the material, the reading load is likely to be somewhat heavier and more demanding than in the average seminar. Students will be expected to read the assigned material carefully and to participate actively in class discussions; they will have the option of submitting either a single research paper or several shorter papers.
Taught by: Perry, Berman, Finkelstein
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit
Notes: Undergraduates Need Permission

PHIL 578 MLA Seminar: The Idea of Nationalism
Nationalism has been the most important geo-political phenomenon of the past two hundred years. This MLA proseminar course will explore the ideology of nationalism, what it means, its philosophical foundations, underlying assumptions about the nature of human identity, moral implications, and political consequences. What is a nation? Does every identifiable ethnic or national group have a valid claim to a nation-state of its own? How are claims to national self-determination justified? How do nations differ from states, peoples, groups, communities, and citizenries? How does nationalism relate to notions of "chosenness" or ethnic and cultural superiority? Why do nationalist movements seem to so often engender political extremism and violent ethno-political conflicts? Is national self-determination compatible with our commitments to individualism, rationality, and universal human rights?
Taught by: Steinberg
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 581 Hannah Arendt: Literature, Philosophy, Politics
The seminar will focus on Arendt's major work, The Origins of Totalitarianism (and its three parts, Anti-Semitism, Imperialism, Totalitarianism). We will also discuss the reception of this work and consider its relevance today.
Taught by: Weissberg
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: COML 612, ENGL 612, GRMN 612, JWST 612
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 587 MLA Seminar in Political Philosophy
This is a topics-based MLA proseminar in political philosophy. Examples of topics we can examine in this course include distributive justice, liberty, equality, and global justice. Course readings will be drawn from a combination of seminal and more recent works on the selected topics.
Taught by: Tan
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 588 MLA Seminar: The Idea of Nationalism
Nationalism has been the most important geo-political phenomenon of the past two hundred years. This MLA proseminar course will explore the ideology of nationalism, what it means, its philosophical foundations, underlying assumptions about the nature of human identity, moral implications, and political consequences. What is a nation? Does every identifiable ethnic or national group have a valid claim to a nation-state of its own? How are claims to national self-determination justified? How do nations differ from states, peoples, groups, communities, and citizenries? How does nationalism relate to notions of "chosenness" or ethnic and cultural superiority? Why do nationalist movements seem to so often engender political extremism and violent ethno-political conflicts? Is national self-determination compatible with our commitments to individualism, rationality, and universal human rights?
Taught by: Steinberg
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 600 Proseminar
An intensive seminar for first-year doctoral students, with readings drawn from recent and contemporary epistemology and metaphysics, broadly construed. Students will develop their abilities to present and discuss philosophical texts, and to write and revise their own papers.
Taught by: Singer, Daniel
Course usually offered in fall term
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit
Notes: Graduate Students Only

PHIL 601 Consortium Course
For graduate students taking courses at other institutions belonging to the Philadelphia area Philosophical Consortium.
One-term course offered either term
Activity: Lecture
1.0 Course Unit
Notes: Graduate Students Only
PHIL 611 Plato and Aristotle on Human Nature
The place of humans in the order of things was a perennial question for ancient philosophers. The puzzle typically begins with questions of humans’ place within a hierarchy, setting them between inanimate things and non-human living things on the one side, and the divine on other. These categories, along with others like metabolism, growth and decay, death, sentence, cognition, and knowledge, will form the background against which we look closely at Plato’s and Aristotle’s views. We will read sections of Phaedo, Republic, and Timaeus, along with On the Soul, On the Motion of Animals, and On Divination During Sleep. The course will invite both broad synthetic thinking, and focused textual analysis. Students will be responsible for a class presentation, a stint as lead questioner, a presentation of work toward a research paper, and a final research paper.
Taught by: Struck
Course not offered every year
Also Offered As: GREK 601
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 612 Topics in Hellenistic Philosophy
The ancient Stoics famously rejected the tripartite psychology of Plato and the Aristotelian division of the psyche into rational and non-rational parts. Everything we think, say, feel, and do is an exercise of reason, specifically, an assent to an impression. This includes the pathē—emotions such as fear, anger, and pity and love. According to the Stoic doctrine of apatheia, we should eradicate the pathē from our lives. But there are some emotions of which the Stoics approve: the so-called “good feelings” (eupatheiai) which include joy, reverence, and goodwill. We will examine the difference between the pathē and the eupatheiai in the context of their Stoic doctrine of “impulse” (horme), and of their ethical theory more generally. All texts will be read in translation, and will include selections from: Cicero: Tusculan Disputations, On Ends, On Duties, Epicctetus: Discourses, Seneca: Letters, Stobaeus: Eclogues, Galen: On the Doctrines of Hippocrates and Plato.
Taught by: S.Meyer
Course not offered every year
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 699 Independent Study
Directed readings in consultation with individual faculty members.
One-term course offered either term
Activity: Independent Study
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 700 Dissertation Workshop
Registration required for all third-year doctoral students. Third-year students and beyond attend and present their dissertation work or their preliminary exam prospectus. From time to time, topics pertaining to professional development and dissertation writing will be discussed.
Taught by: Weinstein, Scott
Two terms. student must enter first term.
Activity: Seminar
1.0 Course Unit

PHIL 990 Masters Thesis
Taught by: Staff.
One-term course offered either term
Activity: Masters Thesis
1.0 Course Unit