

PHILOSOPHY (PHIL)

PHIL 0210 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.

1 Course Unit

PHIL 0220 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.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 0330 Seminar in 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.

Fall

1 Course Unit

PHIL 0340 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.

1 Course Unit

PHIL 0341 Ethics of Artificial Intelligence

This course surveys some ethical issues relating to artificial intelligence (AI) and related technologies. We'll investigate such questions as: Can a machine learning algorithm be fair? When is an AI trustworthy? What privacy and other rights do people have to their data? How much autonomy in weapons is too much? When AIs make mistakes, who should be held responsible? What risks are there for AI to exacerbate gender and racial oppression and how can we mitigate those risks? What are the potential benefits and risks of increased societal integration with social AIs and robots, for example in healthcare? How can policy keep up with rapidly advancing and changing technology?

1 Course Unit

PHIL 0430 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.

1 Course Unit

PHIL 0700 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.

1 Course Unit

PHIL 0710 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.

Spring

1 Course Unit

PHIL 0901 Philosophy for the Young

This Academically Based Community Service course brings philosophy to Philadelphia area schools (K-12). Anyone who has pondered questions about goodness, value, personal identity, justice, how to live well, or how to do the right thing, has thought philosophically. These issues are important not just to adults, but to children and teenagers. Introducing younger students to philosophical thought involves showing them the ways in which they are already thinking philosophically. In this course, Penn students will study selected topics in philosophy with the aim of developing curricula and lesson plans for delivery students in local Philadelphia schools. Part of the course will be held on the Penn campus and part will be held on site in our partner schools. Registration is by permit only, after an interview with the instructor.

1 Course Unit

PHIL 0902 High School Ethics Bowl

In this course, teams of Penn undergraduates, 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 Ethics Bowl will serve as a foundational starting point for the undergraduate students' investigations into ethical theory, and the study of the Ethics Bowl itself will develop the capacities to provide coaching and mentorship to the teams of high school students from West Philadelphia and across the city. Undergraduates will travel to these schools as part of the course, and there will be one or two Saturday sessions. 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.

1 Course Unit

PHIL 0903 Public Philosophy & Civic Engagement

In recent years professional philosophy has witnessed numerous efforts to breakdown 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.

1 Course Unit

PHIL 0990 Communicating in Philosophy

The subject of this CWiC seminar will vary. It stresses the comprehension and expression of philosophical ideas in both oral and written presentation. Grades will be based on at least two oral presentations, as well as general participation in other classroom activities.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 0991 Topics in Philosophy

This first-year seminar presupposes no background in philosophy. Topic will vary by semester.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 1000 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.

Fall or Spring

1 Course Unit

PHIL 1110 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.

Fall

Also Offered As: CLST 1501

1 Course Unit

PHIL 1111 Greek and Roman Moral Philosophy

A survey of ethical philosophy in the Ancient Greek and Roman tradition. Works studied will include those 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.

Not Offered Every Year

Also Offered As: CLST 1502

1 Course Unit

PHIL 1170 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.

Spring

1 Course Unit

PHIL 1180 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.

1 Course Unit

PHIL 1220 World Philosophies

In this Benjamin Franklin Seminar, 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 and Asia, and from native peoples of the Americas, the South Pacific, New Zealand, and Australia.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 1221 World Philosophies

In this seminar, 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 and Asia, and from native peoples of the Americas, the South Pacific, New Zealand, and Australia.

1 Course Unit

PHIL 1251 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.

1 Course Unit

PHIL 1252 Introduction to Indian Philosophy

This course will take the student through 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 in modern India.

Fall or Spring

Also Offered As: RELS 0055, SAST 0050

1 Course Unit

PHIL 1330 Ethics

Ethics is the study of right and wrong. 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.

Fall or Spring

1 Course Unit

PHIL 1342 Bioethics

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.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 1343 Environmental Ethics

We 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? What is the appropriate response to climate change?

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 1345 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.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 1360 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?

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 1380 Aesthetics

This course examines philosophical issues centering on the nature and value of the arts. 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.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 1430 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.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 1433 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.

Spring

1 Course Unit

PHIL 1439 Marx, Marxism, and the Culture of Revolution

Capitalist society is the object of Karl Marx's analysis and critique —a society that is the product of history and may one day vanish. This course will trace Marx's critique by moving between the fields of philosophy, economics, and politics. We will locate key interventions of Marx's thought that transform modern conceptions of history, the relation between economics and politics, and the limits of struggle and emancipation in capitalist society. We will consider the historical conditions of Marx's writing and the development of his thought to discover many sides of Marx and many divergent Marxisms (humanist, post-structuralist, feminist, and others) that follow, often at odds with each other. Further, we will ask about what kind of horizons Marx's and Marxist interventions open up for critique and analysis of capitalist society with respect to gender, race, class, and nation. "Theory becomes a material force when it has seized the masses," argues the young Marx; indeed, his theories have fueled emancipatory movements and propped up tyrannical regimes, substantiated scientific theories and transformed philosophical debates. In examining Marx's legacy, we will focus on the elaborations and historical limitations of his ideas by examining the challenges of fascism, the communist experiment in the Soviet Union and its collapse, as well as the climate and other crises currently taking place. In conclusion, we will turn to the question of whether and to what extent Marx's ideas remain relevant today, and whether it is possible to be a Marxist in the contemporary world dominated by global capital.

Not Offered Every Year

Also Offered As: COML 1020, GRMN 1020, REES 1172

1 Course Unit

PHIL 1440 Machine Fairness: Algorithms and the Theory of Justice

Artificial intelligence is causing unprecedented changes and disruptions in many sectors of society, raising fundamental ethical and philosophical questions. Although many researchers are currently studying how tasks can be automated efficiently, only a few have discussed how tasks can be automated fairly, to produce the best possible outcome for society. Machine Fairness is an emerging area of research at the intersection of philosophy, machine learning, computer science, statistics, and psychology. This course is designed as a non-technical introduction to the basic problems involved in answering questions about machine fairness. It focuses on a number of applications, including criminal sentencing, predictive policing, self-driving vehicles, autonomous weapons, and healthcare. Although these areas are quite different, they involve similar questions. What biases might enter into algorithms, and what is their origin? How should we evaluate whether the outcomes of an algorithmic process are just? When things go wrong, who should be held accountable? The course addresses these questions by using methods from philosophical ethics.

Fall or Spring

1 Course Unit

PHIL 1450 Philosophy of Law

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, and the special status of constitutional law. Readings from both classic and contemporary philosophers such as 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, and Jeremy Waldron.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 1510 Black Philosophy

This is a survey course that will cover issues in the Black and African American philosophical tradition. The course will give an overview of the ethics, political theory, epistemology, metaphysics, and philosophy of language relevant to the experience of Black people with an aim of understanding the distinctive and important contributions of the Black intellectual tradition. Topics covered may include race, culture, racism, justice, oppression, agency, violence, class, identity, nationalism, white supremacy, intersectionality, and power. Readings may include work by Martin Delaney, Frederick Douglass, Sojourner Truth, W.E.B. DuBois, Marcus Garvey, Alain Locke, Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X, James Baldwin, Angela Davis, Anthony Appiah, Bernard Boxill, Cornell West, Tommie Shelby, bell hooks, Charles Mills, and related authors.

1 Course Unit

PHIL 1540 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 may 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?

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 1571 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.

Also Offered As: ENVS 1043

1 Course Unit

PHIL 1580 Philosophy of Religion

An introduction to philosophical 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 as well as from 20th century and contemporary philosophy.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 1581 Jewish Philosophy

This course is an inquiry into questions that lie in the intersection of philosophy and Jewish thought, and it approaches these questions through the writings of classical Jewish philosophers. Topics to be covered include: The problem of evil, the problem of divine foreknowledge and free will, the nature of the human being and the immortality of the soul, the existence and nature of God, the origins of the universe and the possibility of miracles, prophecy, what constitutes the good life and human perfection, and the purpose and nature of divine law. Readings will be drawn from traditional Jewish texts, from medieval and modern Jewish and non-Jewish philosophers, and from contemporary analytic philosophy.

1 Course Unit

PHIL 1710 Introduction to Logic

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.

Fall or Spring

Also Offered As: LGIC 1710

Mutually Exclusive: PHIL 5710

1 Course Unit

PHIL 1800 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.

Fall or Spring

1 Course Unit

PHIL 1810 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.

Fall or Spring

1 Course Unit

PHIL 1830 Philosophy of Biology

This course will examine evolutionary theory and its philosophical foundations. We begin with Darwin's formulation of evolutionary theory and the main influences on Darwin. We then consider two contemporary presentations of the theory, by Richard Dawkins and Richard Lewontin. The rest of the course addresses a number of foundational issues including adaptation, the units of selections, the evolution of altruism, and the possibility of grounding ethics in evolutionary theory.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 1831 Evolution's Laboratory

This Global Seminar is a version of PHIL 1830 and will conclude with field work in the Galapagos Islands. This course is a Penn Global Seminar, which includes a travel component. An application is required. For more information and to apply, visit: <https://global.upenn.edu/pennabroad/pgs>
Not Offered Every Year
1 Course Unit

PHIL 1840 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.

Fall

Also Offered As: CIS 1400, COGS 1001, LING 1005, PSYC 1333

1 Course Unit

PHIL 1850 Philosophy of Social Science

This course discusses 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?

Not Offered Every Year

Prerequisite: PHIL 1433 OR PHIL 1800 OR PSYC 2737 OR ECON 0100 OR ECON 0200

1 Course Unit

PHIL 1860 Philosophy of Environmental Science

This course studies the conceptual foundations and methods of the environmental sciences including Geology, Environmental Chemistry, Oceanography, and Climate Science. We will study the methods deployed in understanding the complex interactions between land, atmosphere, and ocean, and look at the ways that predictions can be made about the future. The course will also address issues of ethics and global justice raised by the earth's rapidly changing climate..

Fall or Spring

1 Course Unit

PHIL 2112 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 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.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 2113 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.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 2200 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.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 2221 Philosophy East and West

Our goal in this course is to bring Western Philosophy and Eastern Philosophy into dialogue. Topics will 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.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 2430 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.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 2450 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.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 2510 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.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 2511 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.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 2540 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.

Spring, odd numbered years only

1 Course Unit

PHIL 2560 Philosophy of Education

The philosophy of education asks questions about the foundational assumptions of our formal institutions for the reproduction of culture. It ranges therefore, from epistemology and philosophy of mind to ethics and political philosophy. For instance: What is the nature of learning and teaching? How is it possible to come to know something we did not know already—and how can we aid others in doing that? How, if at all, should formal institutions of education be concerned with shaping students' moral and civic character? What is the proper relation between educational institutions and the state? We also ask questions more specific to our own time and context. For example: how, in a multicultural state, should we educate students of varied social identities, like race, gender, and religion? What is the relationship between education and justice.

Not Offered Every Year

Also Offered As: GSWS 2490

1 Course Unit

PHIL 2620 Introduction to Epistemology and Metaphysics

Two basic assumptions of academic research are that there are truths and we can know them. Epistemology is the study of 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.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 2640 Introduction to Philosophy of Mind

This course will survey several central topics in philosophy of mind, as well as investigate 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?

Fall or Spring

Also Offered As: VLST 2210

1 Course Unit

PHIL 2660 What is Meaning?

We will survey of central topics in philosophy of mind and language, and 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.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 2680 Introduction to Metaphysics

In this class we reflect on questions like: What is reality? What is causality? 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?

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 2843 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?

Also Offered As: VLST 2230

1 Course Unit

PHIL 2851 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 relation 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).
Not Offered Every Year
1 Course Unit

PHIL 2991 Topics in Philosophy

This seminar is open to all undergraduates. Topic will vary by semester.
Not Offered Every Year
1 Course Unit

PHIL 2999 Independent Study

Student arranges with a faculty member to pursue a program of reading and writing on a suitable topic.
Fall or Spring
1 Course Unit

PHIL 3110 Ancient Philosophical Figures

A study of selected topics, texts, and figures from Greek and Roman philosophy in the Classical and Hellenistic periods. Topics will vary from term to term.
Not Offered Every Year
1 Course Unit

PHIL 3170 Modern Philosophical Figures

This seminar for philosophy majors will study selected topics, texts, and figures from 17th and 18th century European philosophy.
Not Offered Every Year
1 Course Unit

PHIL 3330 Topics in Ethics

This seminar for philosophy majors will cover selected topics in ethics. The content will vary from semester to semester.
Not Offered Every Year
1 Course Unit

PHIL 3340 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.
1 Course Unit

PHIL 3341 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.
1 Course Unit

PHIL 3430 Topics in Political Philosophy

This majors seminar will focus on various topics in political philosophy. Topics will vary from term to term.
Not Offered Every Year
1 Course Unit

PHIL 3431 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.
Not Offered Every Year
1 Course Unit

PHIL 3435 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.
Not Offered Every Year
1 Course Unit

PHIL 3510 Topics in Philosophy of Race

In this seminar for Philosophy Majors, we will examine different topics and issues in the philosophy of race. Topics we will address can range from the metaphysics of race (e.g., are racial categories real?) to the moral and political philosophy of race (e.g., is affirmative action justifiable?)

1 Course Unit

PHIL 3600 Topics in Theoretical Philosophy

This seminar for philosophy majors will cover selected topics in metaphysics, epistemology, philosophy of mind, philosophy of science, or philosophy of language. Topics will vary from term to term.

1 Course Unit

PHIL 3620 Topics in Epistemology

A seminar for philosophy majors, on selected topics in contemporary epistemology (theory of knowledge).

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 3623 Philosophy of Perception

A seminar for majors in Philosophy. 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.

Not Offered Every Year

Also Offered As: VLST 2220

1 Course Unit

PHIL 3640 Philosophy of Mind

This seminar for philosophy majors will focus on selected topics in philosophy of mind.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 3800 Topics in Philosophy of Science

A seminar for philosophy majors on selected topics in the Philosophy of Science.

Fall or Spring

1 Course Unit

PHIL 3991 Topics in Philosophy

This seminar is restricted to philosophy majors (all others require a permit). Topic will vary by semester.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 4112 Plato's Selected Dialogues

A graduate-level 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.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 4113 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.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 4181 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.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 4182 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.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 4191 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.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 4330 Metaethics

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.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 4331 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 of deontology, and the challenges that it faces in relation to the prohibition on lying, on how we should treat the risk of wrongdoing, 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.

Spring

1 Course Unit

PHIL 4360 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. Mutually Exclusive: LAW 71 50

1 Course Unit

PHIL 4430 Modern Political Philosophy

A survey of several significant 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*.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 4470 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.

Mutually Exclusive: BDS 5020

Prerequisite: ECON 4100 OR ECON 4101 OR MATH 4320 OR PSCI 5800 OR PSYC 2737 OR PSYC 1440

1 Course Unit

PHIL 4510 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.

Spring, odd numbered years only

1 Course Unit

PHIL 4515 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.

Spring

Also Offered As: AFRC 4406, HIST 0873

1 Course Unit

PHIL 4620 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.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 4640 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.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 4660 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?

Not Offered Every Year

Prerequisite: PHIL 1710 OR PHIL 5710

1 Course Unit

PHIL 4720 Topics in Mathematical Logic

The course focuses on topics drawn from the central areas of mathematical logic: model theory, proof theory, set theory, and computability theory.

Not Offered Every Year

Also Offered As: LGIC 4960

1 Course Unit

PHIL 4721 Logic and Computability 1

This graduate course focuses on topics drawn from the central areas of mathematical logic: model theory, proof theory, set theory, and computability theory.

Not Offered Every Year

Also Offered As: LGIC 3100

Prerequisite: MATH 3710 OR MATH 5030

1 Course Unit

PHIL 4722 Logic and Computability 2

The course is a continuation of PHIL 4721. Cross-list with MATH5710 and LGIC3200.

Not Offered Every Year

Also Offered As: LGIC 3200

Prerequisite: PHIL 4721 OR PHIL 6721 OR MATH 5700

1 Course Unit

PHIL 4723 Introduction to Mathematical Logic

An introduction to first-order logic including the completeness, compactness, and Lowenheim-Skolem theorems, and Godel's incompleteness theorems.

Spring

1 Course Unit

PHIL 4770 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.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 4800 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.

Fall or Spring

1 Course Unit

PHIL 4840 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.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 4843 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.

Fall or Spring

1 Course Unit

PHIL 4991 Topics in Philosophy

This advanced undergraduate topics seminar meets with the graduate seminar PHIL 5991. Topic will vary by semester.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 4998 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.

Fall or Spring

1 Course Unit

PHIL 5113 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.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 5114 Topics in Aristotle

Graduate seminar focusing on Aristotle. Topic will vary by semester.

1 Course Unit

PHIL 5115 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. All works will be read in English translation.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 5116 Topics in Hellenistic Philosophy

Selected topics in the philosophy of the ancient Academics, Stoics, Epicureans, and their later successors in the Roman world.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 5150 Topics: Renaissance Culture

Please see department website for a current course description at: <http://www.sas.upenn.edu/italians/graduate/courses>

Not Offered Every Year

Also Offered As: CLST 7704, COML 5450, ITAL 5400

1 Course Unit

PHIL 5170 Topics in Early Modern Philosophy

This course addresses topics in European philosophy of the 17-18th centuries. Topics may include the natural philosophy in the early modern period, the relation of metaphysics to the 'sciences' (including what is meant by "metaphysics", and what falls under the scope of the various sciences) as well as social, political, and ethical issues, including the role that women played, and the nascent forms of feminism that emerged in the early modern era.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 5199 Nietzsche's Modernity and the Death of God

"God is dead." This famous, all too famous death sentence, issued by the 19th-century German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche, also signaled the genesis of a radical challenge to traditional notions of morality, cultural life, and the structure of society as a whole. In this course we will examine both the "modernity" of Nietzsche's thought and the ways in which his ideas have helped to define the very concept of Modernity (and, arguably, Postmodernity) itself. In exploring the origin and evolution of Nietzsche's key concepts, we will trace the ways in which his work has been variously revered or refuted, championed or co-opted, for more than a century. We will survey his broad influence on everything from philosophy and literature to music and art, theater and psychology, history and cultural theory, politics and popular culture. Further, we will ask how his ideas continue to challenge us today, though perhaps in unexpected ways. As we will see, Nietzsche wanted to teach us "how to philosophize with a hammer."

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 5200 Topics in Continental Philosophy

This graduate seminar will examine different traditions and topics in contemporary Continental philosophy, such as phenomenology, structuralism and post-structuralism, hermeneutics, genealogy, and deconstruction. Examples of authors we will read can include Husserl, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, Levinas, Gadamer, and Foucault.

1 Course Unit

PHIL 5330 Contemporary Ethics

Selected topics in contemporary ethical theory. Recent topics have included rationality and sources of normativity. Semester-specific description available in course syllabus.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 5331 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.

1 Course Unit

PHIL 5389 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 his 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.

Not Offered Every Year

Also Offered As: ARTH 5871, COML 5800, GRMN 5800, JWST 5800

1 Course Unit

PHIL 5430 Topics in Political Philosophy

This is a topics-based graduate seminar 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 classic and more recent works on the selected topics.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 5431 Contemporary Political Philosophy

A discussion of selected works and topics in contemporary political theory.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 5439 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.

Not Offered Every Year

Also Offered As: COML 6120, ENGL 6120, GRMN 6120, JWST 6120

1 Course Unit

PHIL 5450 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 relates to more "philosophical" or "jurisprudential" accounts of the contents of law.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 5451 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.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 5455 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.

Fall

1 Course Unit

PHIL 5560 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.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 5561 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.

1 Course Unit

PHIL 5620 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.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 5625 Rationality

Selected topics in contemporary theories of reason and rationality.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 5630 Philosophy of Action

This course will cover debates in contemporary action theory. Some possible topics include intentional action, practical knowledge, freedom of action, long-term planning, commitment, reasons for action, self-governance, practical reasoning, and collective agency.

1 Course Unit

PHIL 5640 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. Specific 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. UNDERGRADUATES NEED PERMISSION.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 5660 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. Specific 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.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 5710 Introduction to Logic

This graduate-level course provides an introduction to some of the fundamental ideas of logic. Topics will include truth functional logic, quantificational logic, and logical decision problems.

Fall or Spring

Mutually Exclusive: PHIL 1710

1 Course Unit

PHIL 5800 Topics in the Philosophy of Science

A graduate seminar on selected topics in the philosophy of science. Undergraduates need permission.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 5840 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.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 5950 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.

1 Course Unit

PHIL 5955 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.

1 Course Unit

PHIL 5956 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.

1 Course Unit

PHIL 5960 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.

1 Course Unit

PHIL 5961 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?

1 Course Unit

PHIL 5962 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.

1 Course Unit

PHIL 5966 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.

1 Course Unit

PHIL 5970 Philosophy of Science

An MLA seminar. 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..

1 Course Unit

PHIL 5991 Topics in Philosophy

This topics seminar is restricted to philosophy graduate students (undergraduates require permission from the department). Topic will vary by semester.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 6000 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.

Fall

1 Course Unit

PHIL 6112 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.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 6113 Aristotle

Graduate seminar focusing on the 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.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 6181 Kant I

The graduate 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.

Not Offered Every Year

Also Offered As: GRMN 5510

1 Course Unit

PHIL 6182 Kant II

This graduate 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.

Not Offered Every Year

Also Offered As: GRMN 5520

1 Course Unit

PHIL 6191 Hegel

A graduate seminar on 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.

Not Offered Every Year

Also Offered As: GRMN 5830

1 Course Unit

PHIL 6330 Metaethics

This graduate 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.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 6331 Normative Ethics

A discussion of contemporary debates in normative ethical theory.

Spring

1 Course Unit

PHIL 6430 Modern Political Philosophy

A graduate-level 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.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 6510 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.

Spring, odd numbered years only

1 Course Unit

PHIL 6515 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.

Spring

Also Offered As: AFRC 5060

1 Course Unit

PHIL 6620 Theory of Knowledge

Graduate seminar focusing on elected 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.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 6640 Philosophy of Mind

This graduate 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.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 6660 Philosophy of Language

This graduate-level 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?

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 6720 Topics in Logic

This graduate course focuses on topics drawn from the central areas of mathematical logic: model theory, proof theory, set theory, and computability theory.

Not Offered Every Year

Also Offered As: MATH 6770

1 Course Unit

PHIL 6721 Logic and Computability 1

The course focuses on topics drawn from the central areas of mathematical logic: model theory, proof theory, set theory, and computability theory.

Not Offered Every Year

Also Offered As: MATH 5700

1 Course Unit

PHIL 6722 Logic and Computability 2

A continuation of PHIL 6721.

Not Offered Every Year

Also Offered As: MATH 5710

1 Course Unit

PHIL 6723 Introduction to Mathematical Logic

A graduate-level introduction to first-order logic including the completeness, compactness, and Lowenheim-Skolem theorems, and Godel's incompleteness theorems.

Spring

1 Course Unit

PHIL 6770 Philosophy of Mathematics

This graduate 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.

Not Offered Every Year

1 Course Unit

PHIL 6800 Philosophy of Science.

This graduate seminar is 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.

Fall or Spring

1 Course Unit

PHIL 6843 Philosophy and Visual Perception

Graduate seminar exploring 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.

Fall or Spring

1 Course Unit

PHIL 6991 Consortium Course

For graduate students taking courses at other institutions belonging to the Philadelphia area Philosophical Consortium.

Fall or Spring

1 Course Unit

PHIL 6999 Independent Study

Directed readings in consultation with individual faculty members.

Fall or Spring

1-3 Course Units

PHIL 7000 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. Two Term Class, Student must enter first term; credit given after both terms are complete

1 Course Unit

PHIL 9900 Masters Thesis

Coursework at the masters thesis level.

Fall or Spring

0 Course Units

PHIL 9950 Dissertation

Ph.D. candidates, who have completed all course requirements and have an approved dissertation proposal, work on their dissertation under the guidance of their dissertation supervisor and other members of their dissertation committee.

Fall or Spring

0 Course Units

PHIL 9998 Teaching Practicum (Independent Study)

Supervised teaching experience. Four semesters are required of all Doctoral students in philosophy.

Fall or Spring

1 Course Unit

PHIL 9999 Independent Study

Directed readings in consultation with individual faculty members.

Fall or Spring

1-3 Course Units