

UNDERGRADUATE
SPRING 2021 COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

PHI 100 (DEC:B, SBC: CER, HUM) Concepts of the Person, Main Focus (II)

An historical introduction to philosophy through readings and discussions on topics such as human identity, human understanding, and human values.

PHI 100.01 Concepts of the Person: Freedom and Meaning

TUTH 8:00-9:20

A. Steinbock

This course will examine what it means to be a person. To do this, it will critically investigate the themes of freedom and meaning. We will do this by inquiring into the nature of freedom and what it means to be human in Fyodor Dostoevski's *The Grand Inquisitor on the Nature of Man*. We will then turn to the problem of meaninglessness and the possibility of creating meaning in the reflections of the holocaust survivor, Viktor Frankl through his *Man's Search for Meaning*. This discussion will allow us to explore issues concerning existential thought and race through a careful reading of Lewis Gordon's *Existential Africana*. We will conclude the course with the philosophy of accompaniment, working with *In the Company of the Poor: Conversations with Dr. Paul Farmer and Fr. Gustavo Gutiérrez*.

PHI 100.02

Dreams and Desire: Introduction to Psychoanalysis

MWF 10:30-11:25

C. Driker-Ohren

This course will examine personhood through its radical critique by Sigmund Freud, the father of psychoanalysis. The Western definition of personhood emphasizes a stable, self-identical consciousness that is separate or separable from the body. Freud upends this notion, positing instead that human beings are fundamentally at odds with ourselves. Freudian psychoanalysis claims that our activities manifest hidden conflicts of the psyche, and that these conflicts in turn stem from drives—representatives of biological instinct. And yet, biology is never simply destiny. Our reading of Freud will underscore the link between unconscious meaning and history, both family history and that of society at-large. We will examine the function of dreams, slips of the tongue, and neurotic symptoms as “royal roads” to repressed desires, often linked to events from childhood. Likewise, we will wrestle with Freud's treatment of sexuality as a site of conflict that challenges and exceeds societal norms. Through our discussion of Plato, Hegel, Kafka, Freud, and contemporary psychoanalysis, we will attempt to gauge the relevance of these ideas for our own time, and the manner in which our sense of self is connected to stories, scenes, and events beyond our conscious awareness.

PHI 100.03

MWF 11:45-12:40

J. Wheeler

This course will be broadly focused on what it means to be a subject. We will consider, among other things, the nature of personal identity and free will, the role that the body, the environment, and society play in forming subjects,

the way in which subjects are gendered, raced, classed, etc., the subjectivity of animals and other non-humans, and the role that individual and group subjectivity play in history and politics

PHI 101 (DEC: G, SBC: HUM) Historical Introduction to Western Philosophy, Main Focus (I)

An introduction to pivotal theories of the Western philosophic tradition. Readings are drawn from ancient Greek, medieval, and modern classics of philosophy. Topics may include philosophic theories of politics, morality, logic, metaphysics, knowledge, anthropology, art, and religion.

PHI 101.01

TUTH 11:30-12:50

R. Crease

An introduction to key philosophers, philosophies, and key philosophical ideas of the Western tradition. Readings are drawn from Plato, Aristotle, Descartes, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, James Baldwin, Hannah Arendt, Maxine Sheets-Johnstone and others.

PHI 101.02

MWF 11:45-12:40

A. Forsberg

"Since at least the 6th Century BCE, thinkers in the western philosophical tradition have used their reason in the attempt to understand the kinds of beings that most fundamentally exist. Yet, beyond this, they have also attempted to understand what this *power for reason and its limits* might tell us about the kinds of beings we are and, moreover, what the nature of reason in general might (or might not) tell us about what it means "to be" in the first place. In this course, we will keep concerns such as these at the forefront of our own thinking as we read and discuss a few key texts drawn from the last 2500 years of western philosophy, encountering figures such as Parmenides of Elea, Immanuel Kant, and Friedrich Nietzsche. We will be sure to stay aware of the fact that, in seriously engaging these texts, we will not simply be reading philosophy but also practicing it directly. Therefore, in interrogating the potentials and the limits of the power of reason, we will be gaining first-hand access to these potentials and limits as they are individually manifest in ourselves, providing us with a vital perspective on who and what we are."

PHI 102.01

MF 1:00-2:20

A. Fishman

This course will provide an introduction to the major areas of intersection between philosophy and psychology, including consciousness studies, cognitive science, moral psychology, and phenomenological psychopathology. We will read classic texts by authors like William James and Friedrich Nietzsche, as well as engage with contemporary debates pertaining to such topics as: concepts and analogies, mental illness (especially schizophrenia), moral agency, consciousness, and the self. We will consider questions like: What is a concept? What (if anything) distinguishes the human mind from those of other animals? How can mental illness alter the very structure of experience? To what degree are our actions guided by rational reflection and self-direction, and to what degree are they driven by automatic processes or non-rational influences – and what are the implications of this for our moral responsibility and its limits?

PHI 104 (DEC: D; SBC: CER, HUM) Introduction to Moral Reasoning, Main Focus (II)

PHI 104.01

TUTH 1:15-2:35

H. Cormier

In this course we will read historical and contemporary writings on morality in the Western philosophical tradition. We will oppose the two main traditional moral theories to each other, and we will consider some current moral problems in the light of those two theories.

TEXTS:

- Plato, *Five Dialogues*, Hackett Publishing, ISBN 9780872206335
- The Basic Writings of John Stuart Mill*, Modern Library, ISBN 9780375759185
- Immanuel Kant, *Ethical Philosophy*, Hackett, ISBN 9780872203204
- Mark Timmons, ed., *Disputed Moral Issues: A Reader*, Oxford University Press, ISBN 9780195177633
- a couple of writings available at the Blackboard site.

PHI 104.02

TUTH 9:45-11:05

D. Dilworth

Description: close readings of four major literary and philosophic works, archetypal classics providing food for thought and discussion on fundamental questions of moral life.

Degree of difficulty: intensive reading (and four exams) in limited time frames will require consistent, assiduous concentration throughout the semester and a gradually expanding capacity for comparative evaluation.

Assigned readings:

1. Aristotle, NICOMACHEAN ETHICS, Books I-IV and XIII, IX, X.
2. Dante, INFERNO, book one of THE DIVINE COMEDY.
3. Shakespeare, KING LEAR.
4. Hume, ENQUIRY CONCERNING THE PRINCIPLES OF MORALS.

Bookstore: each of these readings is available in inexpensive paperback editions, available through Amazon (SBU student link) and a variety of other source; also possibly online.

Grades: from the four exams. Optional papers in consultation with the professor.

Logistics: zoom takes the daily attendance; more than three absences without official excuse constitute automatic failure without further discussion; for unforeseeable excusable absences contact via email dd9419@aol.com (do not use the campus email); no makeups or incompletes except for unforeseeable excusable reasons, also requiring immediate email contact.

PHI 104.03

MWF 10:30-11:25

S. Wrenn

In the *Logic of Sense*, Giles Deleuze writes that “either ethics makes no sense at all, or this is what it means and has nothing else to say: not to be unworthy of what happens to us”. In this course, we will track how such a statement is possible and its significance for how we are to conduct our lives. This will involve dealing with questions of evil

and, in particular, the problem of why bad things happen to “good” people. We will see how “being worthy of what happens to us” concerns an ethics, or a way of living, that does not fall prey to resentment. In this course, we will read a diverse set of reading drawn from the Book of Job, Aristotle, Spinoza, Kant, Nietzsche, Deleuze, and Lorde.

PHI 105 (DEC:G, SBC: CER, HUM) Politics and Society, Main Focus (II)

An historical introduction to philosophy through an analysis of political theories, theories of action, and styles of political life. Main themes will include the relation of the individual to the state, the scope of social responsibility, and the nature of human freedom.

PHI 105.01

TUTH 1:15-2:35

J. Edwards

This course introduces you to basic problems of Western political philosophy. It is structured in view of five key questions: (1) What is justice? (2) How should we understand human freedom? (3) What exactly do we mean when we talk about rights? (4) What is the basis of political obligation? (5) Can a state be democratic? Readings will be taken from Plato’s Republic, Aristotle’s Politics, Hobbes’s Leviathan, Rousseau’s Discourse on the Origin Inequality and On the Social Contract, and G. A. Cohen’s Why Not Socialism?

PHI 105.02

MWF 11:45-12:40

D. Coutts

This course provides an introduction to political philosophy through an analysis of political theories and theories of action, with an emphasis on distributive justice. Main themes include the relation of the individual to the state, contemporary urban life, the scope of social responsibility, and the nature of human freedom.

PHI 108 (DEC:B, SBC:ESI, HUM) Logical & Critical Reasoning, Main Focus (II)

The principle aim of this course is to help a student acquire the skills of thinking, reading, and writing critically. The student develops a sensitivity to language and argumentation that is applicable to a wide range of situations and subject matters.

PHI 108.01

TUTH 9:45-11:05

A. De Laurentiis

A study of the basic principles of rational thinking. This semester, the class centers on informal logic. This includes learning to distinguish inductive from deductive reasoning; to recognize valid, invalid and just shaky arguments; to detect pseudo-arguments; to evaluate context; to analyze passages in so-called natural language (here: English); to learn about concepts, definitions, analogies, hypothetical reasoning, science and its imitations. This class is online but synchronous. Keeping up with weekly exercises, taking all quizzes and exams and keeping an open mind at all times (strictly enforced) are your key to success.

PHI 108.02

MW 8:30-9:50

B. Jephcott

"This course will provide an introduction to the fundamentals of the logical analysis of propositions and arguments. We will also interrogate the relationship between logical and critical thinking. Are all logical arguments examples of critical thinking? This questioning will aim to reveal the ethical underpinnings of the notion of "critical thought", and engage a reflection on the relevance of this notion in contemporary public debate."

PHI 108.03

TUTH 8:00-9:20

A. Moentmann

This class is an introductory course into logic and critical thinking from a philosophical perspective. Philosophical texts are examined in order to see how philosophers in the history of philosophy have used critical thinking to support their arguments. We will focus on ancient and medieval philosophy.

PHI 112 (DEC:H, SBC:STAS) Technology and Modern Life, Main Focus

Investigates the history as well as the present and potential future impact of technology and artifacts not only on material human life but also on the human experience of the world. It addresses ethical questions concerning the uses and abuses of technology as well as asking such questions as whether technology is neutral and merely instrumental or should be seen as having a more profound impact on human life.

PHI 112.01

MWF 11:45-12:40

A. Kim

Investigates the history as well as the present and potential future impact of technology and artifacts not only on material human life but also on the human experience of the world. It addresses ethical questions concerning the uses and abuses of technology as well as asking such questions as whether technology is neutral and merely instrumental or should be seen as having a more profound impact on human life.

PHI 112.02

MW 8:30-9:50

C. Faul

Technologies of the Self

Taking its cue from the title of a seminar given by Michel Foucault, this course will examine the various technologies through which we as human beings work upon and fashion ourselves, both individually and collectively. What practices and technologies have been and continue to be employed to shape ourselves? How are these practices and technologies used, and for what purpose? Additionally, what role does technology (in the conventional sense of the term) play in this process? These questions and more will be addressed through reading, writing, and collective conversation. This class presupposes no previous work in philosophy and is both reading and writing intensive.

PHI 112.03

MF 1:00-2:20

H. Martinez

This course investigates the historical, present, and future impact of technology and artifacts not only on

material human life but also on the human experience of the world. It addresses ethical, epistemological, and metaphysical questions concerning the uses and abuses of technology. Furthermore, we will see how the history of philosophy can help to understand the implications of our use of technology.

Intermediate Courses

PHI 206 Introduction to Modern Philosophy (17th& 18th Century) (I) Asynchronous S. Struble
(DEC:I, SBC: GLO, HUM)

This class will be a survey of the major figures in the period of Western philosophy known as the "Early Modern" period. Our course will focus on several of the major texts of that period and developing a thorough understanding of each one and the relationship between these thinkers. This class will be reading and writing intensive.

PHI 220 Introduction to Symbolic Logic (II) (DEC:C, SBC:QPS) MWF 11:45-12:40 G. Mar

This course is a self-contained introduction to the formal techniques of symbolic logic. It presupposes no prior knowledge of philosophy or mathematics. It does not aim at justifying results about logical systems. Instead the purpose of this course is to impart a skill—the ability to recognize and construct logically correct deductions and refutations. Students who do the best in the course tend to be the ones who regularly complete their homework assignments in a timely fashion. The joy of constructing derivations can be as much fun as solving a Sudoku puzzle but logic is far more practical. PHI 220-01 (54252) Introduction to Symbolic Logic (On-Line Lecture), Zoom MWF 11:45AM - 12:40PM Feb 1, 2021-May 19, 2021

PHI 247 Existentialism (I) (DEC:G, SBC:CER, HUM) MW 2:40-4:00 R. Harvey

While the themes mentioned in the Bulletin description – alienation, anxiety, nihilism, absurdity, the self, value, death, and immediacy – will necessarily color and shade our exploration this semester, our focus will be on reading, discussing, analyzing, and interpreting a selection of the salient texts that make up the philosophical (and literary) tendency that bears the name of existentialism, from its origins in the 19th century through its mid-20th -century heyday, in order to situate it in the history of ideas. Readings from Kierkegaard, Dostoevsky, Nietzsche, Camus, Sartre, and Beauvoir; plus a film by Hiroshi Teshigahara.

UPPER DIVISION COURSES

PHI 300 Ancient Philosophy (I) (DEC:I, SBC:HFA+) TUTH 3:00-4:20 C. Miller

Advanced studies in selected Greek thinkers from the pre-Socratics to the classical Athenian philosophers and the Hellenistic schools. This semester's course studies the beginnings of Western European thought: Heraclitus, Parmenides, Socrates & Plato. We are fortunate to study the ideas of some of the most influential thinkers ever. The goal of this course is to explore/learn the ideas in the readings and their relevance to the many issues we face today.

PHI 306 Modern Philosophy (I) (DEC:I,SBC: HFA+) TUTH 9:45-11:05 J. Edwards

Your most fundamental objective in taking this course is to gain a historically well-grounded understanding of major philosophical concepts, principles, methods, and problems that have shaped our conceptions of material nature and the conditions of human agency in nature since 1600. This course is thus concerned with key developments in Western philosophy during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. We will pay special attention to pivotal metaphysical, epistemological, and moral arguments presented by the following thinkers: Descartes, Hobbes, Hume, Rousseau, and Kant.

PHI 309 20th Century Philosophy (I) (DEC:I, SBC: CER, HFA+) TUTH 11:30-12:50 A. Steinbock

This course is devoted to examining the contemporary themes of freedom, values, and otherness. We will begin with Edmund Husserl's *The Idea of Phenomenology* to grasp the fundamental concept of intentionality and givenness. We will then read Jean-Paul Sartre's *Transcendence of the Ego* to understand a central existentialist concept of freedom. We will then confront the most radical example of existentialist thought with Albert Camus's notion of absurdity in *The Myth of Sisyphus*. We will then take up the problem of value as it is developed in humanism and in personalism through a careful reading of Max Scheler's *Ressentiment*. We will conclude with a focus on the problem of otherness or alterity in Emmanuel Levinas's work, *Time and the Other*.

**PHI 340 Philosophical Traditions of East Asia (I) (DEC: J, SBC: CER, HFA+)
MW 2:40-4:00 A. Kim**

Philosophy has sprung from at least three different sources: Greek, Chinese, and Indian. Our course will examine the earliest metaphysical and ethical reaches of these three currents.

**PHI 363 Phil. of The Social Sciences (III) (DEC:G, SBC:HFA+, SBS+)
TUTH 11:30-12:50 P. Carravetta**

A study of the philosophical foundations selected social sciences, applying principles and methods of philosophical analysis to questions concerning the structures of social reality, the methodological and epistemological status of the social sciences in general, and the criteria for evidence and legitimacy for certain theories. Specifically, course will focus on theories of history, perspectives in anthropology, and the impact of globalization. Detailed Syllabus available in January, 2021. NOTES: Prerequisite: one course in philosophy and completion of one SBS course; or permission of the department. Advisory Prerequisite: PHI 105, 206, 249, or 277. SBC: HFA+, SBS+, 3 cr.

PHI 366 /SUS 366 Philosophy of the Environment (III) (DEC:G, SBC:CER, HFA+)

TUTH 4:45-6:50 J. Taylor

Philosophical questions raised by human relations with the natural world, ranging from basic concepts such as nature, ecology, the earth, and wilderness, to the ethical, economic, political, and religious dimensions of current environmental problems, including the question of whether there are values inherent in nature itself beyond those determined by human interests alone.

PHI 369 Philosophy of Mathematics (III) (SBC:STEM+) MW 2:40-4:00 G. Mar

This course is about philosophical issues raised by mathematical knowledge, e.g., questions about the nature of mathematical knowledge, e.g.,

- a. What constitutes a mathematical proof? Do proofs confer certainty? Must mathematical proofs be completely formalizable or computable?
- b. Must proofs be constructive? Are computer verifications (e.g., of the cases of the four color map) proofs?
- c. What about the pedagogy of mathematics, are there “best practices” that could improve the way mathematics is taught—the U.S. pours more money per student into education than any other nation, yet several years ago it was ranked 24th in the world for mathematics education?
2. ontology of mathematics, e.g.,
 - a. Do mathematical objects exist independently of the human mind?
 - b. What is the connection between analytical equations and geometrical representations of mathematical objects?
 - c. Is the beauty of a mathematical object or the elegance of a proof something objective or only something subjective that exists only “in the eye of the beholder”?
3. foundations of mathematics, e.g.,
 - a. Do paradoxes and antinomies constitute crises in the foundations of mathematics? Must mathematics have a foundation?
 - b. What are the requirements for a foundational system? Can mathematics be reduced to logic, set theory, computational algorithms?
 - c. What accounts for the “unreasonable effectiveness” of mathematics in applying to the empirical world? Is “empirical mathematics” possible?

Why were so many of the great philosophers were also great mathematicians, and vice versa? Some of these will meet in due course include—Zeno, Pythagoras, Euclid, Descartes, Pascal, Leibniz, Newton, Fermat, Frege, Cantor, Hilbert, Poincare, Russell, Hardy, Riemann, Ramanujan, Julia Robinson—and especially the 20th century logicians Kurt Gödel, Alonzo Church, Alan Turing, and Alfred Tarski. Although this is not a math course, we cannot responsibly philosophize about mathematics without have some firsthand examples of mathematical thinking. We will talk about some classical proofs, e.g., of the Pythagorean theorem, the irrationality of the root of 2, and Euler’s identity, considered by many to be one of the most beautiful equations of mathematics. We will regularly pose recreational puzzles and paradoxes, take historical excursions, and hopefully, catch a glimpse of the joy of mathematics which has built some of the most lasting achievements of the human race. We also want to have a great deal of intellectual fun in doing so.

PHI 372 Ethical Inquiry (II) (DEC:G, SBC: CER, HFA+) TUH 9:45-11:05

L. Miller

An intensive study of the methodological principles governing the application of ethical theories and ethical judgments through an investigation of selected ethical problems. Prerequisites: PHI 104 or two courses in Philosophy.

Seminars

PHI 395 Junior Seminar (SBC:ESI)

TU 3:00-5:50

P. Carravetta

Topic: Ends of Utopia - A study of why and how perfect societies are invented, with close analyses of some representative texts, which include More's Utopia, Campanella City of the Sun, Marx's Communist Manifesto, as well as the anti-utopias or dystopias that characterize the XX century: Huxley's Brave New World, Orwell's 1984, and Atwood's The Handmaid's Tale. Students will be engaged in individual and group research and presentations, employing diverse media: poems & novels, painting, architecture, political tracts, documentaries and sci-fi films. Only required background text is G. Claeys and L.T. Sargent, eds. The Utopia Reader (NYU P 1999, or 2 nd ed. 2016); Majority of materials will be uploaded on Black Board. This seminar emphasizes careful reading, rigorous discussion, and extensive writing at an advanced level. Detailed Syllabus available in January 2021. NOTES: Advisory Prerequisite: Major in Philosophy, or U3 or U4 standing SBC: ESI. 3 cr.

PHI 402 Analysis of Philosophical Texts (I) (G, HFA+) TH 3:00-5:50

A. De Laurentiis

Ancient philosophers would have thought it odd to separate academic disciplines from one another. We will imitate their approach by immersing ourselves in their reflections and discoveries ranging from metaphysics to physics to ethics and politics. We begin with extant fragments of pre-Socratic philosophers that will challenge our interpretive abilities; we then move to more complete, systematic, somewhat arduous Aristotelian texts; finally, we will gain familiarity with the cosmological and ethical thought of ancient Stoicism. This class is online but synchronous: participation is encouraged, attendance is necessary, note-taking from lectures is just as in in-person classes. I encourage you to keep a notebook with your summaries, critical insights, and especially questions to be discussed in class and during office hours. Short-essay exams and one final paper.