PHILOSOPHY (Div II)
Chair: Morris Professor of Rhetoric Jana Sawicki


On leave Fall only: Professors: M. Barry, J. Cruz.
On leave Spring only: Professor A. White.

To engage in philosophy is to ask a variety of questions about the world and our place in it. What can we know? What should we do? What may we hope? What makes human beings human? These questions, in various forms, and others like them are not inventions of philosophers; on the contrary, they occur to most people simply as they live their lives. Philosophers, however, seek to keep such questions open, and to address them through reasoned discussion and argument, instead of accepting answers to them based on opinion or prejudice. The program in philosophy is designed to aid students in thinking about these issues, by acquainting them with influential work in the field, past and present, and by training them to grapple with these issues themselves. The program emphasizes training in clear, critical thinking and in effective writing. Philosophy courses center around class discussions and the writing of interpretive and critical essays.

MAJOR

Philosophy is a discipline with a long and intricate history, a history that remains an integral part of the discipline. In this way it differs dramatically from the natural sciences: for example, although no contemporary physicists or biologists embrace Aristotle’s physics or biology, among philosophers there continue to be champions of Aristotle’s metaphysics and of his ethics. Because of the richness and continuing importance of the history of philosophy, the program is designed to give majors a historical background that will acquaint them with a wide variety of approaches to philosophical issues and provide a basis for evaluating and contributing to contemporary debates.

The Philosophy major consists of nine semester courses: three required courses and six electives. The required courses are: any 100-level philosophy course, Philosophy 201 (History of Ancient Greek Philosophy) or Philosophy 202 (History of Modern Philosophy), and Philosophy 401 (Senior Seminar). The six electives are structured by a distribution requirement. Students must take at least one course in each of three areas: Contemporary Metaphysics and Epistemology [M&E], Contemporary Value Theory [V], and History [H]. These requirements apply to majors in the Class of 2018 and after.

Courses taught in other departments at Williams or at other institutions will not count toward the distribution requirement (Williams-Exeter tutorials may count, however, with the approval of the Department Chair). Up to two cross-listed courses taught in other departments may count as electives toward the major. No more than one 100-level course may count toward the major (and one 100-level course is required for the major—no exceptions).

We recommend the following trajectory through the major:

By the end of the first year, take a 100-level philosophy course (this is typically the first step in the major) and one other philosophy course.

By the end of the second year, complete a 100-level philosophy course, Phil 201 or Phil 202, and at least one other philosophy course. (If you will be away for the whole of your junior year, you should complete at least five courses by the end of the second year, preferably six.)

By the end of the junior year, complete a 100-level philosophy course, Phil 201 or Phil 202, and at least four other philosophy courses.

Other recommendations: take at least one tutorial; distribute your six electives evenly across the three distribution baskets; take a logic course; and take both PHIL 201 and PHIL 202.

The Degree with Honors in Philosophy

The degree with honors in Philosophy is awarded to the student who has demonstrated outstanding achievement in a program of study that extends beyond the requirements of the major. The extension beyond major requirements may take the form either of independent work culminating in a senior essay or thesis (the independent-study route) or of additional course work (the directed-study route). Candidates must have GPAs of 3.6 or higher in their courses in philosophy at the end of the junior and senior years. The independent-study route to honors requires the completion and defense of either a senior essay produced in the fall semester plus winter study period (maximum 40 pages) or a year-long senior thesis (maximum 75 pages). Plans for either essay or thesis (including a brief proposal and bibliography, worked out in consultation with an advisor) must be submitted to the department in mid-March (before spring break) of the junior year. The directed-study route to honors requires the completion of two courses in philosophy in addition to the nine required for the major. Candidates taking this route must also submit to the department revised copies of two term papers (15 pages or longer) written for philosophy courses they have taken. Students should register for a directed study over their senior year winter study and work with an advisor on the paper revisions. A recommendation for graduation with honors will be made on the basis of the thoroughness,
independence, and originality of the student's work.

**STUDY AWAY**

*The Williams-Exeter Programme at Oxford (WEPO):* the first full Oxford philosophy tutorial will count as the equivalent of two full-semester philosophy courses at Williams; the second full Oxford philosophy tutorial will count as the equivalent of one full-semester philosophy course at Williams, for a total of three Williams philosophy courses. Courses must be pre-approved by the Chair of the Philosophy Department, who will also determine which, if any, courses will count toward the philosophy major distribution requirements.

Courses taken in other Study Away programs: Students may petition the Philosophy Department for credit for philosophy courses taken at their Study Away institution. They should consult with the department Chair before they commit to a program. Final determinations will be made on the basis of the course syllabus and the quality of the student’s written work for the course. Typically, courses taken while studying away will not fulfill distribution requirements for the philosophy major at Williams.

**PHILOSOPHY RELATED COURSES**

The following courses offered in other departments, while not cross-listed with Philosophy, may be of interest to philosophy students:

- ENGL 445 World’s End: Literary Ecologies of the Limit (Christopher Pye, Fall 2018)
- ENGL 456 Hegel and the Dialectic (Christian Thorne, Fall 2018)
- HIST 301 Other People’s History (Alexander Bevilacqua (Spring 2019)
- PSCI 273, Politics without Humans? (Laura Ephraim, Fall 2018)
- PSCI 203, Intro to Political Theory (Nimu Njoya, Fall 2018)
- PSCI 235, Environmental Political Theory (Laura Ephraim, Spring 2019)
- REL/SCST 301 Social Construction (Jason Josephson Storm, Fall 2018)
- REL 238 Faith and Rationality in Islam (Zaid Adhami, Fall 2018)
- REL 244 Mind and Persons in Indian Thought (Georges Dreyfus, Spring 2019)
- RUS 222/COMP 270 Russian Literature and European Existentialism (Vladimir Ivantsov, Spring 2019)

**PHIL 11 (W) Spinoza’s Ethics**

Spinoza’s *Ethics* aims to prove that human happiness consists in our rationally perceiving that God is all there is, and that all there is—including you and I—is God. Yet the Christian Church immediately deemed the *Ethics* "a book which, perhaps since the beginning of the world until the present day, surpasses all others in godlessness and endeavors to do away with religion and set godlessness on the throne." Spinoza’s own Jewish community issued a writ of herem, excommunicating him for "monstrous deeds" and "abominable heresies." In our Winter Study we will closely read Spinoza’s *Ethics* together, in order to understand how its doctrine that God is everything could be so profoundly godless. Our goal will be to view the universe from the standpoint of eternity. This may involve some monstrous deeds and abominable heresies of our own.

**Class Format:** afternoons

**Requirements/Evaluation:** journal

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 30

**Enrollment Preferences:** preference to Philosophy majors

**Materials/Lab Fee:** cost of books

Winter 2019

LEC Section: 01   TR 1:00 pm - 3:50 pm PORG 1:00 pm - 3:50 pm   Justin B. Shaddock

**PHIL 12 (W) Bioethics According to The Simpsons**

Active Euthanasia? Okely Dokely! Human cloning? Don't have a cow, man! Over the past twenty years *The Simpsons* has included a healthy dose of
stoning and sometimes surprisingly illuminating critique of numerous bioethical issues. In this winter study course we will use clips and episodes from the classic animated series as a launch pad for investigating the deeper philosophical concepts and ethical questions involved in a variety of bioethical topics. Good comedy has a way of driving straight to the core of contested issues and painful circumstances, providing a point of entry for students in the class to more serious, academic material. Along the way, the course will also investigate what makes The Simpsons's treatment of these bioethical issues "funny"-how its satire plays on common misunderstandings, contradictions and inconsistencies in social policy and individual decisions, and how serious issues drive the comedic effect. During the first portion of the course, the instructor will present selections from The Simpsons that take up several core bioethical issues, paired with related readings from the bioethics literature. In the second portion of the course, the students themselves will identify and present clips pertaining to bioethical issues. The final project for the course will be collaborative in nature: small groups of students will be asked to develop and pitch (to the other class members) a storyline for a Simpsons episode (or portion thereof) that centers on a bioethical topic. Classes will meet two or three afternoons each week, and students will be expected to read a substantial amount of philosophical material in preparation for these meetings. In addition, students will need to spend significant amounts of time outside of class viewing videos and developing their final projects. Evaluation will be based on class participation, one in-class presentation, and the final collaborative project.

**Class Format:** afternoons

**Requirements/Evaluation:** final project

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 12

**Enrollment Preferences:** preference will be given to students who indicate intellectual seriousness about philosophical bioethics

Winter 2019

LEC Section: 01    M-F 1:00 pm - 3:50 pm   PORG 1:00 pm - 3:50 pm   Julie A. Pedroni

**PHIL 13 (W) Boxing**

Boxing is one of the world's oldest sports, and there are 3000 year old artistic representations of boxing from ancient Egypt. The history of boxing in the United States during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries reflects the history of the nation. Issues of class, ethnicity, race, and gender have played a central role in the sport. Stories about boxing also play a central role in the popular culture. In this course we will look at some treatments of boxing by social historians, examine some depictions of boxing in documentary and dramatic films, and watch some classic fights. We will also learn some of the fundamental skills involved in boxing. Training as a boxer will give men and women a better appreciation of the physical demands involved. Four days a week we will engage in an intensive training regimen working on basic punching technique, footwork, defense and conditioning. The workouts will involve minimal contact, but will be physically demanding. Students will need to purchase boxing gloves, handwraps, and a jump rope.

**Requirements/Evaluation:** evaluation will be based on attendance, participation, and a 10-page final paper

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 20

**Enrollment Preferences:** discretion of the instructor

**Materials/Lab Fee:** $150

**Attributes:** EXPE Experiential Education Courses

Winter 2019

LEC Section: 01    Cancelled

**PHIL 14 (W) Yoga and a Grounded Life**

"Yoga and a Grounded Life" will examine what the practice of yoga is, and how it can serve as a foundation, guide, and inspiration for living, particularly in the face of personal or societal challenges. Alongside the physical practice of yoga, the class will investigate the philosophical and ethical teachings of yoga's ancient text, the *Yoga Sutras of Patañjali*. Students will learn a number of basic yoga poses and breathing techniques in 1.75-hour classes that will meet 5 days a week. In addition, students will read and discuss portions of the *Yoga Sutras* and several different commentaries, such as those of BKS Iyengar and Chip Hartranft. Attendance at all classes is required. Missed classes must be made up before the end of Winter Study, usually by attending a regular class at Tasha Yoga. Students will be expected to practice on their own outside of class, to journal, and to participate in class discussions of the readings. Students will submit weekly written assignments in response to prompts relating to class
material. Adjunct Instructor Bio: Yoga teacher Anne O'Connor is certified in the Iyengar yoga method, which she has been practicing for 20 years. O'Connor, a freelance editor, also serves on the Williamstown Select Board and is a member of the First Congregational Church of Williamstown.

Class Format: mornings

Requirements/Evaluation: four 1- to 2-page papers and class attendance and participation

Prerequisites: no previous yoga experience required

Enrollment Limit: 14

Enrollment Preferences: instructor's discretion; interviews with enrollees

Materials/Lab Fee: cost of books

Attributes: EXPE Experiential Education Courses

Winter 2019

LEC Section: 01 TBA Anne C. O'Connor

PHIL 15 (W) Plato's Symposium and Its Afterlife

Crosslistings: CLAS15 / PHIL15 / WGSS15 / COMP15

Secondary Crosslisting

Plato's Symposium commemorates a gathering held at the home of the poet Agathon of Athens, in 416 BCE, shortly after his first victory in the tragedy contest. The attendees of Agathon's drinking party agree to dedicate their evening to delivering speeches in praise of love (eros/Eros). This dialogue has long been one of Plato's most widely appreciated works and its influence has ranged far beyond the purview of academic philosophy. We will read and analyze the dialogue itself, then turn to an eclectic array of works inspired by the Symposium to study its artistic and philosophical "afterlife."

Class Format: mornings

Requirements/Evaluation: 5-page paper and an in-class presentation of independent research

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 8

Enrollment Preferences: preference given to majors or intending majors in Classics, Comparative Literature, WGSS, or Philosophy

Materials/Lab Fee: cost of books

Winter 2019

LEC Section: 01 Cancelled

PHIL 25 (W) Eye Care and Culture in the Atlantic Coast Regions of Nicaragua

We will spend around ten days in Nicaragua, chiefly in the Atlantic Coast Autonomous Regions. Almost all of the days in those regions will be spent in clinics, where students-in conjunction with optometrists who volunteer their time for the trip-will administer eye exams, write prescriptions, and distribute glasses. While in Nicaragua, the students will keep detailed journals that they will complete following their return to Williamstown. They will interact with Nicaraguans during the eye clinics, and will have opportunities for speaking with them during evenings. Students will also be required to attend organizational and training meetings and to complete a number of relevant readings prior to the trip.

Class Format: travel

Requirements/Evaluation: performance in eye clinics, journal

Prerequisites: none; not open to first-year students

Enrollment Limit: 12

Enrollment Preferences: application essays

Materials/Lab Fee: $3,700

Attributes: EXPE Experiential Education Courses; TRVL Winter Study Travel Course

Winter 2019
PHIL 30 (W) Senior Essay: Philosophy

Philosophy senior essay.

**Class Format:** senior essay

Winter 2019

HON Section: 01  TBA  Jana Sawicki

PHIL 31 (W) Senior Thesis or Essay: Philosophy

To be taken by students registered for Philosophy 491 or 493-494.

**Class Format:** thesis

**Distributions:** (D2)

Winter 2019

HON Section: 01  TBA  Jana Sawicki

PHIL 99 (W) Independent Study: Philosophy

Open to upperclass students. Students interested in doing an independent project (99) during Winter Study must make prior arrangements with a faculty sponsor. The student and professor then complete the independent study proposal form available online. The deadline is typically in late September. Proposals are reviewed by the pertinent department and the Winter Study Committee. Students will be notified if their proposal is approved prior to the Winter Study registration period.

**Class Format:** independent study

**Distributions:** (D2)

Winter 2019

IND Section: 01  TBA  Jana Sawicki

PHIL 104 (S) Philosophy and Tragedy (WI)

Tragedy and philosophy were two of the finest achievements of classical Athenian civilization, and each attempts to reveal to the reader something fundamental about our shared human condition. The worldview that underlies classical tragedy, however, seems markedly different from the one that we find in classical philosophy. While Plato and Aristotle differ on many points, they share the belief that the cosmos and the human place within it can be understood by rational means. Furthermore, they share the conviction that the most important components of a successful life are within the control of the individual human being. The picture that we find in the works of the tragedians, Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides is markedly different. The tragedians emphasize the ways in which the cosmos and our role in it resists any attempt to be understood, and emphasize the ways in which the success or failure of our lives often turns on things completely beyond our control. The view of the tragedians can lead to a thoroughgoing nihilism according to which --the best thing of all [for a human being] is never to have born--but the next best thing is to die soon (Aristotle's *Eudemus* as quoted in Nietzsche's *Birth of Tragedy*; see also Sophocles' *Oedipus at Colonus*)." Despite these rather grim pronouncements, tragic drama has continued to fascinate and educate generations. Furthermore, philosophers have continued to revisit the existential questions vividly raised by Greek tragedy. In this course, we will examine a number of Greek tragedies and philosophical writing about tragedy and the tragic. We will read the *Oresteia* and *Prometheus Bound* by Aeschylus, Sophocles’ *Theban Cycle*, and the *Hippolytus, Bacchae and Philoctetes* by Euripides. As we read through these plays, we will also examine a number of philosophical works about tragedy. We will begin with Aristotle’s *Poetics* and will continue with Hume’s *Of Tragedy*, Hegel's various writings on tragedy, and Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy*. If possible, we will arrange to see a live performance of a Greek tragedy.

**Class Format:** tutorial

**Requirements/Evaluation:** 5 papers, 5 responses and a final paper in multiple drafts; each week one student will write a paper responding to the week’s readings and the other student will write a response to that paper
PHIL 109 (F) Skepticism and Relativism  (WI)
Intelectually, we are ready skeptics and relativists. We doubt, we point out that no one can be certain in what she believes, and we are suspicious of declarations of transcendent reason or truth (unless they are our own). Emboldened by our confidence in skeptical arguments, we claim that knowledge is inevitably limited, that it depends on one's perspective, and that everything one believes is relative to context or culture. No domain of inquiry is immune to this destructive skepticism and confident relativism. Science is only "true" for some people, agnosticism is the only alternative to foolish superstition, and moral relativism and, consequently, nihilism are obvious. But is the best conclusion we can come to with respect to our intellectual endeavors that skepticism always carries the day and that nothing at all is true? In this tutorial, we will investigate the nature of skepticism and the varieties of relativism it encourages. Our readings will come primarily from philosophy, but will be supplemented with material from anthropology, physics, psychology, and linguistics. We will look at relativism with respect to reason and truth in general as well as with respect to science, religion, and morality. Along the way, we will need to come to grips with the following surprising fact. With few exceptions, thoroughgoing skepticism and relativism have not been the prevailing views of the greatest minds in the history of philosophy. Were they simply too unsophisticated and confused to understand what is for us the irresistible power of skepticism and relativism? Or might it be that our skepticism and relativism are the result of our own laziness and failure? Of course, this question cannot really be answered, nor is there any value in trying to answer it, and any "answer" will only be "true" for you. Right?

Class Format: tutorial
Requirements/Evaluation: participants will present substantial written work in the tutorial every other week, and will be responsible for commenting on their tutorial partner's work on off weeks

PHIL 114 (F) Freedom and Society  (WI)
Freedom is one of our fundamental values as Americans. It is emphasized in our founding documents, and it occupies a central place in our contemporary political discourse. But do we ask: What is freedom? and Why do we value it? In the first unit of this course, we will consider the relationship between freedom and social order. Do society's laws limit our freedom in order to make us safe? Or do laws somehow enhance or enable our freedom? We will read Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau in seeking answers to these questions. We will then turn to some specific social forms in the second unit. We will ask whether they promote or preclude our freedom. We will read Adam Smith and Karl Marx on capitalism, and Simone de Beauvoir on gender.

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: weekly reading response papers; take-home midterm and final exams

Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option
Prerequisites: none; this tutorial is an appropriate first course in PHIL
Enrollment Limit: 10
Enrollment Preferences: first-year students
Expected Class Size: 10
Distributions: (D2) (WI)
Not offered current academic year
PHIL 115 (S)  Personal Identity  (WI)
Through lectures, discussions, close readings and assigned writings, we will consider a variety of philosophical questions about the nature of persons, and personal identity through time. Persons are subjects of experiences, have thoughts and feelings, motivation and agency; a person is thought of as continuous over time, and as related to, recognized and respected by other persons. Thus, the concept of person plays a significant role in most branches of philosophy: metaphysics, epistemology, moral and political philosophy, and of course in the philosophy of mind. Conceptions of person are equally important for scientific research programs (especially in psychology), for Law, and for the arts (especially mimetic arts). Questions about persons are of central importance for a myriad of our theories and practices, and for the ways in which we live our lives. The aim of this course is to explore and evaluate a number of rival conceptions of persons and personal identity over time. Some of the questions which we will discuss are: What is a person? How do I know that I am one? What constitutes my knowledge of myself as a person, and does that knowledge differ in any significant respect from my knowledge of physical objects and of other people? What makes me the particular person that I am, and how is my identity as this individual person preserved over time? While addressing these questions through lectures and class discussions, the course will place special emphasis on developing students' intellectual skills in the following domains: - close, analytical reading; - recognizing, reconstructing and evaluating claims and reasons that support them; - producing original ideas and arguments, orally and in writing; - responding to the claims and arguments presented in texts and in class; - writing clear, polished, well-argued papers.

Class Format: lecture/discussion
Requirements/Evaluation: class attendance, preparedness and participation; small group weekly meetings; weekly short writing assignments
Prerequisites: none; open to first year students
Enrollment Limit: 19
Enrollment Preferences: freshmen, sophomores, and philosophy majors who need a 100 level course to satisfy requirement for the major
Expected Class Size: 19
Department Notes: meets 100-level PHIL major requirement
Distributions: (D2) (WI)
Not offered current academic year

PHIL 116 (S)  Perception and Reality  (WI)
This course is an introduction to philosophy through four major themes: The nature of the universe, the existence of gods, thought itself, and the mind/body problem. Throughout, we will appeal to reason and evidence in forming our best beliefs. Our discussions will range over historical and contemporary works in the Western Tradition.

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: active participation; four (5-6 page) essays
Extra Info: not available for the fifth course option
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 19
Enrollment Preferences: first-years and sophomores; there is no need to email the professor in advance to indicate interest in the course
Expected Class Size: 19
Department Notes: meets 100-level PHIL major requirement
Distributions: (D2) (WI)

Spring 2019
PHIL 117 (S) Arguing about God (WI)

"Faith is a fine invention," according to Emily Dickinson's poem, "when gentlemen can see; but microscopes are prudent in an emergency." This introduction to philosophy will see how far the microscopes of reason and logic can carry us in traditional arguments about the existence and nature of God. We will closely analyze classical arguments by Augustine, Avicenna, Aquinas, Anselm, Maimonides, Descartes, and others. Pascal's wager is a different approach: it argues that even though proof of the existence of God is unavailable, you will maximize your expected utility by believing. We will examine the wager in its original home of Pascal's Pensees, and look at William James' related article, "The Will to Believe". The millennia old problem of whether human suffering is compatible with God's perfection is called "the problem of evil". We will examine this issue in Hume's Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion, classic sources and contemporary articles. Students should be aware that, in the classic tradition, this class resembles a logic course.

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: frequent short papers
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 19
Enrollment Preferences: first-years and sophomores
Expected Class Size: 19
Department Notes: meets 100-level PHIL major requirement
Distributions: (D2) (WI)

Not offered current academic year

PHIL 119 (F) Plato with Footnotes: Ethics and Politics (WI)

This course addresses a central question in practical philosophy: How should we live? The question has two parts: What is the best life for individuals? And what social and political arrangements make such a life possible? In attempting to answer these questions we also engage related theoretical questions concerning what is real and how we have access to it. We begin with readings from Plato's Republic—a seminal work in the history of philosophy that illustrates the inseparability of theoretical and practical questions and has exerted a powerful influence on nearly every subsequent attempt to answer these questions in the context of the Western philosophical tradition. While reading the Republic, we also consider some of the best of these attempts in the Western philosophical canon ("footnotes on Plato." Possible footnotes include Aristotle, Hobbes, Rousseau, Kant, Mill, Nietzsche, Adorno, and Foucault as well as contemporary philosophers. We will focus especially on questions concerning assumptions (about human nature, justice, and freedom, and the idea of a good life) that underpin democratic theories.

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: attendance, frequent short papers, two 5-page papers (totaling 25 pages) and class participation
Extra Info: not available for the fifth course option
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 19
Enrollment Preferences: first-year students, prospective and actual majors
Expected Class Size: 19
Department Notes: meets 100-level PHIL major requirement
Distributions: (D2) (WI)

Distribution Notes: WI: This writing intensive course involves writing multiple two page papers that involve identifying arguments or explication of text and critical responses. You will be given regular feedback on short papers in preparation for writing two longer 5 page essays that require you to use the same skills in a more expanded argument.
Attributes: LEAD Ethical Issues of Leadership; LGST Interdepartmental Electives;
PHIL 121 (F) Truth, Goodness, and Beauty (WI)
In our everyday lives, we routinely assume that our clocks can tell us the truth about what time it is, that committing murder is wrong, and that there are people, landscapes, and works of art that are beautiful. But we are also aware that people can and often do disagree about what is true, what is good or right, and what is beautiful. Should the fact of such disagreement lead us to conclude that truth, goodness, and beauty are in some basic sense relative to human beings, perhaps as individuals, perhaps as members of societies or cultures? Some philosophers defend such conclusions, but others argue that truth, goodness, and beauty are "objective," in some important sense, despite the fact that people disagree about them. This introductory course addresses these and related issues.

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: attendance, frequent short papers totaling about 30 pages, class participation
Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 19
Enrollment Preferences: first-year students and potential Philosophy majors
Expected Class Size: 19
Department Notes: meets 100-level PHIL major requirement
Distributions: (D2) (WI)

Fall 2018
SEM Section: 01 MWF 12:00 pm - 12:50 pm Alan White

PHIL 122 (F) Philosophical Approaches to Contemporary Moral Issues (WI)
In this tutorial we will examine a number of prominent and controversial social issues, using our study of them both as an opportunity to better understand the moral dimensions of those issues in and of themselves, and to consider the ways in which selected classical and contemporary moral theories characterize and address those moral dimensions. Topics will depend to some extent on student interest, but are likely to include concerns that fall under such headings as euthanasia, conscientious eating, abortion, capital punishment, the ethics of protest, and torture and terrorism. The course will use a case-based approach to examine these issues, and so in most weeks we will (1) read philosophical articles focused on a key concept or set of arguments central to the issue, and (2) consider in detail one morally complex case in which the concept or arguments have special application or relevance. In addition, we will devote several class meetings interspersed throughout the semester to reading foundational sources in ethical theory.

Class Format: tutorial
Requirements/Evaluation: bi-weekly tutorial papers, oral commentaries, and tutorial discussion
Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option
Prerequisites: none; this course is suitable for first-year students
Enrollment Limit: 10
Enrollment Preferences: prospective Philosophy majors and those committed to the tutorial
Expected Class Size: 10
Distributions: (D2) (WI)

Fall 2018
TUT Section: T1 TBA Julie A. Pedroni

PHIL 123 (S) Objectivity in Ethics (WI)
Is morality simply a matter of opinion? In this course we'll examine several influential attempts to provide a rational foundation for morality, along with Nietzsche's wholesale rejection of these efforts. Readings will include work by Plato, Hobbes, Kant, Mill, Nietzsche, and contemporary authors.
PHIL 126 (S) Paradoxes  (WI)

There are three grains of sand on my desk. This is unfortunate, but at least there isn't a heap of sand on my desk. That would be really worrisome. On the other hand, there is a heap of sand in my backyard. I don't know how exactly how many grains of sand are in this heap, but let's say 100,000. My daughter removes one grain of sand. I don't know why, she just does. It seems like there is still a heap of sand in my backyard. In fact, it seems like you can't change a heap of sand into something that isn't a heap of sand by removing one grain of sand. Right? But now we have a problem. By repeated application of the same reasoning, it seems that even after she removes 99,997 grains of sand—I don't know what she wants with all this sand, but I'm starting to worry about that girl—there is still a heap of sand in my backyard. But three grains isn't enough for a heap. So there is not a heap in my backyard. Now I'm confused. Where did my reasoning go wrong?  What we have here is an example of the *sorites* paradox. It is a paradox, because I started with seemingly true statements and used valid reasoning to arrive at contradictory conclusions. We can learn a lot about logic, language, epistemology and metaphysics by thinking through and attempting to resolve paradoxes. In this class, we'll work together to think through some ancient and contemporary paradoxes. We'll also work on writing lucid prose that displays precisely the logical structure of arguments, engages in focused critique of these arguments, and forcefully presents arguments of our own. Other topics could include: Zeno's paradoxes of motion and plurality, the liar's paradox, the surprise exam paradox, paradoxes of material constitution, Newcomb's *Problem*, and the Prisoner's *Dilemma*.

PHIL 128 (S) Utopias and Dystopias  (WI)

The touchstone of our course will be Plato's *Republic*: the first and perhaps greatest Utopia as well as perhaps the greatest work in political philosophy. We will prepare for the *Republic* by reading two Socratic dialogues: the *Euthyphro* and the *Meno*. After several weeks on the *Republic* we will turn to Shakespeare's last play: *The Tempest*. From there it is a natural transition to Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*. We will continue with B. F. Skinner's *Walden Two*, and finish by comparing the dystopias of the first book and first film of *The Hunger Games*.
PHIL 201 (F) History of Ancient Greek Philosophy
Crosslistings: PHIL201 / CLAS203

Primary Crosslisting

Very few people believe that everything is water, that we knew everything before birth, that philosophers ought to rule the state, or that some people are natural slaves. Why then should we spend our time studying people who in addition to having these surprising beliefs have been dead for 2500 years? First of all, Greek thinkers, especially Plato and Aristotle, radically shaped the trajectory of western thought in every area of philosophy. No one can have an adequate understanding of western intellectual history without some familiarity with the Greeks, and we might think that an understanding of our intellectual history can deepen our understanding of our own situation. More importantly, many of the thinkers that we will read in this class are simply excellent philosophers, and it is worthwhile for anyone interested in philosophical problems to read treatments of these problems by excellent philosophers. We will begin the course by looking briefly at some of the Presocratic philosophers active in the Mediterranean world of the seventh through fifth centuries BCE, and some of the sophists active in the fifth century. We will then turn to several of Plato’s dialogues, examining Plato’s portrayal of Socrates and his development of a new and profoundly powerful philosophical conception. We will then read some of Aristotle’s works on metaphysics, epistemology and ethics, considering some of the ways Aristotle’s thought responds to that of predecessors.

Class Format: lecture/discussion
Requirements/Evaluation: short papers, possibly supplemented by one or more exams
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: none
Expected Class Size: 20-40
Department Notes: philosophy majors must take either Phil 201 or Phil 202 (and can take both)
Distributions: (D2)
Distribution Notes: meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under CLAS; meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under PHIL

Fall 2018
LEC Section: 01    MWF 11:00 am - 12:15 pm    Keith E. McPartland

PHIL 202 (S) History of Modern Philosophy

This course provides an introduction to Modern Philosophy of the 17th and 18th Centuries, with a focus on metaphysics and epistemology. Topics: What can we know through our senses? Can we know anything through reason alone? What is the nature of the mind? What is the nature of bodies? Are bodies independent of minds? Do bodies interact with minds? Do bodies interact with other bodies? What are space and time? What can we know about God? Authors: Descartes, Locke, Berkeley, Leibniz, Hume, and Kant.

Class Format: lecture
Requirements/Evaluation: weekly papers plus midterm and final exams
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: none
Expected Class Size: 30
Department Notes: philosophy majors must take either Phil 201 or Phil 202 (and can take both)
Distributions: (D2)

Spring 2019
PHIL 203 (S) Logic and Language (QFR)
Logic is the study of reasoning and argument. More particularly, it concerns itself with the difference between good and bad reasoning, between strong and weak arguments. We all examine the virtues and vices of good arguments in both informal and formal systems. The goals of this course are to improve the critical thinking of the students, to introduce them to sentential and predicate logic, to familiarize them with enough formal logic to enable them to read some of the great works of philosophy, which use formal logic (such as Wittgenstein’s Tractatus), and to examine some of the connections between logic and philosophy.

Class Format: lecture/discussion
Requirements/Evaluation: a midterm, a final, frequent homework and problem sets
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: none
Expected Class Size: 50-80
Distributions: (D2) (QFR)
Attributes: Linguistics; PHIL Contemp Metaphysics & Epistemology Courses;

PHIL 204 (F) Hegel and Marx
This course will explore the themes of alienation, fetishism, ideology, dialectic, sociality, and freedom in the philosophical writings of G.W.F. Hegel and Karl Marx. We will focus our study on Hegel’s Phenomenology of Spirit and Marx’s early writings. We will conclude by considering some critical appropriations of Marx by 20th Century philosophers, including Georg Lukacs, Max Horkheimer, and Theodor Adorno.

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: midterm and final papers
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: none
Expected Class Size: 15
Distributions: (D2)
Attributes: PHIL History Courses

PHIL 207 (S) Contemporary Philosophy of Mind (WI)
The philosophy of mind has been one of the liveliest and most active areas of philosophical inquiry over the last century, and it has taken a place at the center of the field. Part of the explanation for this is the rise of compelling scientific accounts of who and what we are. The question of whether the mind can be fully understood within a physicalist, materialist framework has taken on an exciting urgency. In this course we will investigate the mind/body problem, mental representation, the conceptual and nonconceptual content of mental states, and the nature of consciousness. Throughout we will attend to the relevant empirical literature.

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: weekly two page papers on focused topics and two 8- to 10-page papers
Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option
Prerequisites: at least one prior 100- or 200-level PHIL course
Enrollment Limit: 19
**Enrollment Preferences:** prospective Philosophy majors and Cognitive Science concentrators

**Expected Class Size:** 14

**Distributions:** (D2) (WI)

**Attributes:** COGS Interdepartmental Electives; PHIL Contemp Metaphysics & Epistemology Courses;

*Not offered current academic year*

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**PHIL 209 (S) Philosophy of Science**

Crosslistings: SCST209 / PHIL209

**Primary Crosslisting**

It is a generally held belief, in our time and culture, that science is the best source of our knowledge of the world, and of ourselves. The aim of this course is to examine the origins, grounds, and nature of this belief. We will analyze and discuss various accounts of scientific method, structure and justification of scientific theories, scientific choice, change, and the idea that scientific knowledge is progressive. The course will begin with the "received view" of science, advanced by logical empiricists, which assumes the objectivity and the rationality of science. We will then discuss philosophies of science which emerged out of various criticisms of this view - especially those of Popper, Lakatos, Kuhn and Feyerabend - and the challenges to the assumptions of scientific objectivity and rationality their works provoked. This discussion will naturally lead us to the relativist and social-constructivist views developed within contemporary science studies. Finally, we will analyze the current debate about cognitive credentials of science and proper approach to the study of science, which came to be known as "the science wars."

**Class Format:** seminar with a short lecture component in each class

**Requirements/Evaluation:** class attendance, preparedness and participation; three short assignments; three 5 pages long papers, the last of which will be the final paper, due a week after the end of classes

**Extra Info:** may not be taken on a pass/fail basis

**Prerequisites:** one PHIL course, or declared major in a natural science, or permission of instructor

**Enrollment Limit:** 19

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**PHIL 212 (S) Ethics and Reproductive Technologies** (WI)

Crosslistings: WGSS212 / SCST212 / PHIL212

**Primary Crosslisting**

In her groundbreaking book, *The Tentative Pregnancy*, Barbara Katz Rothman writes that "[t]he technological revolution in reproduction is forcing us to confront the very meaning of motherhood, to examine the nature and origins of the mother-child bond, and to replace--or to let us think we can replace--chance with choice." Taking this as our starting point, in this course we will examine a number of conceptual and ethical issues in the use and development of technologies related to human reproduction, drawing out their implications for such core concepts as "motherhood" and "parenthood," family and genetic relatedness, exploitation and commodification, and reproductive rights and society's interests in reproductive activities. Topics will range from consideration of "mundane" technologies such as in vitro fertilization (IVF), prenatal genetic screening and testing, and surrogacy, to the more extraordinary, possibly including pre-implantation genetic diagnosis (PGD), post-menopausal reproduction, and post-mortem gamete procurement. Background readings include sources rooted in traditional modes of bioethical analysis as well as those incorporating feminist approaches.

**Class Format:** discussion

**Requirements/Evaluation:** active participation in class discussions, three or four short reflection papers, and two longer papers (5-7 and 7-10 pages)

**Prerequisites:** none, but introductory-level course in PHIL and/or WGSS recommended

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PHIL 213 (S) Biomedical Ethics (WI)

Much like the construction of medical knowledge itself, it is from specific cases that general principles of biomedical ethics arise and are systematized into a theoretical framework, and it is to cases they must return, if they are to be both useful and comprehensive to those making decisions within the biomedical context. In this tutorial we will exploit this characteristic of biomedical ethics by using a case-based approach to examining core concepts of the field. The first portion of the course will be devoted to developing and understanding four moral principles which have come to be accepted as canonical: respect for autonomy, beneficence, nonmaleficence, and justice. The remainder of the course will consider key concepts at the core of medical ethics and central issues for the field, such as privacy and confidentiality, the distinction between killing and "letting die," therapy vs. research, and enhancement vs. therapy. To this end, each week we will (1) read philosophical material focused on one principle or concept, and (2) consider in detail one bioethics case in which the principle or concept has special application or relevance. In some weeks, students will be asked to choose from a small set which case they would like to address; in others the case will be assigned.

Class Format: tutorial; students will meet with the professor in pairs for approximately 75 minutes per week, writing and presenting 5- to 7-page essays every other week, and commenting orally on partners' essays in alternate weeks

Requirements/Evaluation: evaluation will be based on bi-weekly papers, oral commentaries, and tutorial discussions

Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 10

Enrollment Preferences: declared and prospective Philosophy majors and students committed to taking the tutorial

Expected Class Size: 10

Distributions: (D2) (WI)

Attributes: PHIL Contemporary Value Theory Courses; PHLH Bioethics + Interpretations of Health; SCST Elective Courses;

Not offered current academic year

PHIL 216 (S) Philosophy of Animals (WI)

Crosslistings: ENVI216 / PHIL216

Primary Crosslisting

Animals are and always have been part of human life. To name just a few: We treat animals as companions, as food, as objects of wonder in the wild, as resources to be harvested, as testing grounds for science, and as religious sacrifice. The abstract philosophical question before us is, what are animals such that they can be all these things? In this course we aim to engage that abstract question through two more focused projects. Firstly, we will try to understand the mental lives of non-human animals. Secondly, we will try to make sense of the moral dimensions of our relationship to animals. Throughout we will to fuse a rigorous scientific perspective with more humanistic themes and philosophical inquiry. Topics include sentience, animal cognition, language in non-human animals, empathy and evolution, the history of domestication, animal rights, cross-cultural views on animals, arguments against and for vegetarianism and veganism, the morality of zoos, hunting and fishing, and pets and happiness.

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: four 4- to 5-page papers and one 10- to 12-page final paper

Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 19
PHIL 220 (F) Happiness (WI)
According to Aristotle the ultimate good is happiness—everything we desire we desire for the sake of happiness. Yet what is it to be happy? Should we value other things (say justice or passionate commitment and curiosity) over happiness? Are happiness and pleasure the same thing? Is happiness an emotional or mental state or is it a social construct? What do the social and psychological sciences have to teach us about happiness? Philosophy? Is the happy life a life of virtue? Does being virtuous guarantee happiness? How important are honor, money, love, work, friendship and our connections to others to our happiness? In this tutorial we will read from Ancient, modern and contemporary philosophical sources as well several relevant studies in the social sciences and positive psychology movement in order to engage questions concerning happiness.

Class Format: tutorial
Requirements/Evaluation: five 5-page papers and five 2-page papers
Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 10
Enrollment Preferences: students interested in philosophy and/or happiness
Expected Class Size: 10
Distributions: (D2) (WI)
Distribution Notes: WI: This course is writing intensive insofar as it requires over 35 pages of writing, regular feedback from me and your partner on writing and critical analysis, and successive efforts to improve your ability to write a variety of types of critical essays. Guidelines for different methods of engaging in critical analysis will be provided.

Fall 2018
TUT Section: T1 TBA Jana Sawicki

PHIL 222 (F) Minds, Brains, and Intelligent Behavior: An Introduction to Cognitive Science
Crosslistings: PHIL222 / COGS222 / PSYC222
Secondary Crosslisting
This course will emphasize interdisciplinary approaches to the study of intelligent systems, both natural and artificial. Cognitive science synthesizes research from cognitive psychology, computer science, linguistics, neuroscience, and contemporary philosophy. Special attention will be given to the philosophical foundations of cognitive science, representation and computation in symbolic and connectionist architectures, concept acquisition, problem solving, perception, language, semantics, reasoning, and artificial intelligence.

Class Format: lecture/discussion
Requirements/Evaluation: midterm and final exams, and self-paced weekly exercises
Extra Info: not available for the fifth course option
Prerequisites: PSYC 101 or any introduction to PHIL course or CSCI 134 or permission of instructor; background in more than one of these is recommended
Enrollment Limit: 25
Enrollment Preferences: first-year and sophomore students
Expected Class Size: 25
Department Notes: meets Contemporary Metaphysics & Epistemology requirement only if registration is under PHIL
Distributions: (D2)

Attributes: Linguistics; PHIL Contemp Metaphysics & Epistemology Courses; PSYC 200-level Courses

Not offered current academic year

PHIL 223 (S)  Philosophy of Sport

Sports: many of us (at Williams, in the US, throughout most of the world) play them, yet more of us watch them, and we invest not only our time but enormous amounts of money in them (we build sports arenas, not cathedrals; in 2013, in 40 of the 50 United States, the highest-paid public official was a football or basketball coach). Why do sports matter so much to us? Should they? The topics we consider in responding thoughtfully to these questions will include sports and health, sports and education, ethical issues in sports (including issues of class, gender, and race), and sports and beauty.

Class Format: lecture/discussion

Requirements/Evaluation: short writing assignments for most classes

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 30

Enrollment Preferences: seniors, then juniors, then sophomores

Expected Class Size: 30

Distributions: (D2)

Not offered current academic year

PHIL 225 (S)  Existentialism

We will study the philosophical and literary works of Soren Kierkegaard, Friedrich Nietzsche, Martin Heidegger, Jean-Paul Sartre, and Simone de Beauvoir. What makes these thinkers "Existentialists"? It's not merely that they ask the question, "What gives meaning to a human life?" And, it's not merely that their answers invoke our freedom to determine our own identities. More than this, Existentialists emphasize the subjective relation we bear to our belief systems, moral codes, and personal identities. Existentialists investigate deeply irrational phenomena of human life, including anxiety, boredom, nausea, tragedy, despair, death, faith, love, hate, sadism, masochism, authenticity, guilt, and care. And, Existentialists express their thought in philosophical treatises as often as in literary texts. In this course we will attempt to understand these dimensions in which Existentialism is a distinctive intellectual tradition.

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: four mid-length papers

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 30

Enrollment Preferences: none

Expected Class Size: 20

Distributions: (D2)

Attributes: PHIL History Courses

Not offered current academic year

PHIL 227 (F)  Death and Dying  (WI)

In this course we will examine traditional philosophical approaches to understanding death and related concepts, with a special focus on the ethical concerns surrounding death and care for the dying. We will begin with questions about how to define death, as well as reflections on its meaning and function in human life. We will move on to examine ethical issues of truth-telling with terminally ill patients and their families, decisions to withhold or withdraw life-sustaining treatments, the care of seriously ill newborns, physician-assisted suicide, euthanasia, and posthumous interests. In addition to key concepts of death, dying, and terminal illness, we will develop and refine notions of medical futility, paternalism and autonomy, particularly within the context of advance directives and surrogate decision making.

Class Format: lecture/discussion

Requirements/Evaluation: class attendance and participation, periodic short essays (3 or 4 total, 2-3 pages each), two mid-length papers (5-7 pages and 7-10 pages, respectively); possible experiential learning component
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 19
Expected Class Size: 10-15

Distributions: (D2) (WI)
Attributes: PHIL Contemporary Value Theory Courses; PHLH Bioethics + Interpretations of Health;
Not offered current academic year

PHIL 228 (F) Feminist Bioethics  
Crosslistings: PHIL228 / WGSS228  
Primary Crosslisting
In this course we'll explore the ways in which feminist approaches to moral thinking have influenced both the methodology and the content of contemporary bioethics. The first portion of the course will address the emergence of the "Ethics of Care," critically assessing its origins in feminist theory, its development within the context of the caring professions, and its potential as a general approach to bioethical reasoning. The second portion of the course will use feminist philosophy to inform our understanding of the ways in which gender structures the individual's interactions with the health care system. To do this we'll explore topics that might traditionally be considered "women's issues" in health care, such as medicine and body image (e.g., cosmetic surgery, eating disorders), reproductive and genetic technologies, and research on women and their health care needs. In addition we'll also look at feminist analyses of topics that traditionally have not been regarded as "gendered," such as resource allocation and end of life issues.

Class Format: lecture/discussion  
Requirements/Evaluation: active participation in class discussions, two mid-length papers (5-7 and 7-10 pages, respectively), one oral presentation, and three or four periodic short writing assignments (2-3 pages each)  
Prerequisites: none, although previous coursework in WGSS is desirable
Enrollment Limit: 19
Enrollment Preferences: Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies and Philosophy majors

PHIL 231 (F) Ancient Political Thought  
Crosslistings: PHIL231 / PSCI231  
Secondary Crosslisting
The core activity of this seminar is the careful reading and sustained discussion of selected works by Plato and Aristotle, but we will also engage such other thinkers as Epictetus and Augustine, and, from a political and theoretical point of view, selections from the Hebrew Bible and New Testament. Among the questions that we will address: What is justice? How can it be known and pursued? How is political power generated and exercised? What are the social and ethical prerequisites--and consequences--of democracy? Must the freedom or fulfillment of some people require the subordination of others? Does freedom require leading (or avoiding) a political life? What distinguishes that kind of life from others? What does it mean to be "philosophical" or to think "theoretically" about politics? Although we will attempt to engage the readings on their own terms, we will also ask how the vast differences between the ancient world and our own undercut or enhance the texts' ability to illuminate the dilemmas of political life for us.

Class Format: lecture/discussion  
Requirements/Evaluation: three 7- to 8-page papers  
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 25
Enrollment Preferences: Political Science majors
Expected Class Size: 18
PHIL 232 (F) Modern Political Thought (WI)
Crosslistings: PHIL232 / PSCI232

Secondary Crosslisting
This course is a chronological survey of major works of political theory from the 16th to the 20th century. In discussions and writing, we will explore the diverse visions of modernity and of politics offered by such thinkers as Machiavelli, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Marx, Mill, and Freud. They help us ask: What is freedom? Who is equal? Who should rule? With what limits and justifications? What form of government best serves the people? Who are the people, anyway? And on what grounds can we justify confidence in our provisional answers to such questions? Class will be primarily driven by discussion, often preceded by brief lectures. Attention to the writing process and developing an authorial voice will be a recurrent focus of our work inside and outside the classroom.

Class Format: lecture/discussion
Requirements/Evaluation: four formal papers of 5-7 pages; brief informal writing tasks inside and outside of class
Prerequisites: none; open to all
Enrollment Limit: 19
Enrollment Preferences: Political Science majors
Expected Class Size: 19
Distributions: (D2) (WI)
Attributes: PSCI Political Theory Courses;

Fall 2018
LEC Section: 01    TF 2:35 pm - 3:50 pm     Laura D. Ephraim

PHIL 235 (S) Morality and Partiality: Loyalty, Friendship, Patriotism (WI)
The aim of this tutorial is to critically examine the nature, importance, and ethical value of personal attachments and loyalties. Loyalty is frequently expected by family, friends and lovers, and demanded by institutions, religious and political communities, as well as by the state. A person incapable of loyalty is often characterized as fickle, cold, self-serving and sometimes even pathological. However, the status of loyalty as a virtue has always been suspect: it has been argued that it is incompatible with impartiality, fairness and equality, and claimed that it is always exclusionary. So, some relationships with other people--such as friendships, familial ties, love, patriotism--seem to be ethically desirable, central to the quality of our lives, and yet prima facie in tension with the widely held belief that morality requires impartiality and equal treatment of all human beings. Are we ever justified in having more concern, and doing more, for our friends, family, community or nation? Does morality require that we always subordinate our personal relationships to universal principles? Is patriotism incompatible with cosmopolitanism, and if so, which of the two should we value? If loyalty is a virtue, what are the proper limits of its cultivation and expression?

Class Format: tutorial; tutorial pairs will meet with the instructor for one hour a week
Requirements/Evaluation: tutorial attendance and participation; bi-weekly tutorial papers, each about 5 pages long (totaling 6 per student); bi-weekly oral responses to the paper of the tutorial partner
Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option
Prerequisites: none; open to first year students
Enrollment Limit: 10
Enrollment Preferences: Philosophy majors and then sophomores
Expected Class Size: 10
Distributions: (D2) (WI)
Attributes: PHIL Contemporary Value Theory Courses;
PHIL 236 (S) Contemporary Ethical Theory (WI)
This course will be an in-depth exploration of central questions in normative ethics, including the following: Which features of actions are morally important and why (e.g., their motive, their intrinsic nature, or their consequences)? When should we give morality priority over our personal commitments and relationships, and why? Are there universal moral principles that apply to all cultures? Are we capable of disinterested altruism, or are we motivated solely by self-interest? By which methods can we answer these questions? We will examine these and related issues by looking closely at two influential moral theories: consequentialism and deontology. While both have important historical roots -- consequentialism in Mill and Sidgwick, deontology in Kant -- we will focus on contemporary developments of these views. In the last few weeks, we'll examine contractualism, which outlines a different approach to these questions.

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: short response papers; an 8- to 10-page midterm paper; a 10- to 12-page final paper
Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis
Prerequisites: at least one PHIL course or permission of instructor
Enrollment Limit: 19
Enrollment Preferences: Philosophy majors
Expected Class Size: 10-15
Distributions: (D2) (WI)
Attributes: PHIL Contemporary Value Theory Courses; Not offered current academic year

PHIL 240 (F) The Autobiographical Philosophy of Education
Crosslistings: INTR240 / PHIL240
Primary Crosslisting
Why are you here? What do you expect to learn? How do you expect to learn? The College Mission Statement says that "Williams seeks to provide the finest possible liberal arts education by nurturing in students the academic and civic virtues, and their related traits of character". How have you already been taught the academic and civic virtues? Where have you been taught them? In school? On the sports field? At home? How did you develop your character? This first-year seminar will examine the philosophy of education through educational autobiographies: works that tell the story of a moral and intellectual education. Each book was chosen by and will be introduced by a professor from a different department, and then Professor of Philosophy Steve Gerrard will continue the discussion. This year's autobiographies are: John Stuart Mill, Autobiography, Charles Dew, The making of a Racist, Michael Chabon, The Recipe for Life, Philip Roth, The Facts: A Novelist¿s Autobiography, bell hooks, Wounds of Passion, Paul Kallanthis, When Breath Becomes Air, Frederick Douglass, My Bondage and My Freedom, Zhuangze, Basic Writing. This course is part of the John Hyde Teaching Fellowship.

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: frequent short responses, including our own educational autobiographies that we will share
Extra Info: not available for the fifth course option
Prerequisites: open only to first-year students
Enrollment Limit: 12
Enrollment Preferences: Interested students should e-mail Professor Gerrard a very brief description of their educational background and interests in order to enroll. I will be seeking a balance of educational backgrounds and interests
Expected Class Size: 12
Distributions: (D2)
In this course, we will examine a number of issues in contemporary metaphysics through a discussion of the nature of kinds. The problem of universals has vexed philosophers at least since the time of Plato. Oscar is a dog and Annie is a dog. Oscar and Annie aren't identical but they have something in common; each of them is a dog, each of them belongs to a single kind and they share the property of being a dog. But what is going on here? We, at least most of us, are happy to say that Oscar and Annie exist. But is there a third entity that we need to countenance: the universal caninity? If we do think that there is such a thing as caninity, what sort of thing is it? If we don't, what accounts for the truth of our judgment that Oscar and Annie have something in common? Scientists often give explanations for the behavior of objects in terms of their properties. What role do properties play in causation, explanation and laws of nature? Finally there are different kinds of kind. Some kinds or properties seem to be pretty natural, e.g. being an electron or a dog. Other kinds seem to be less natural and seem somehow to be socially constructed, e.g. being a work of art, an American or a sausage. But are there really natural kinds? Can we, as Plato put it, "carve nature at the joints", or are all kinds constructed rather than discovered? Furthermore what is involved in the social construction of a kind? Finally, the nature and existence of some kinds is a hotly contested political matter. How should we think about racial kinds or about gender kinds? While we will be concerned to place our discussions of these issues in historical context, most of the reading for the class will consist in articles written by contemporary philosophers.

**Class Format:** lecture and discussion

**Requirements/Evaluation:** one 10 page midterm paper and one 15 page final paper which will involve draft and revision, possible short response papers, and active participation in class

**Prerequisites:** one PHIL course; familiarity with formal logic helpful but not required; or permission of instructor

**Enrollment Limit:** 18

**Expected Class Size:** 10-15

**Distributions:** (D2) (WI)

**Attributes:** PHIL Contemp Metaphysics & Epistemology Courses;
Fellowship.

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: several short papers (20 pages total), longer final paper (12-15 pages)

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 20

Enrollment Preferences: seniors, juniors, and sophomores in that order

Expected Class Size: 20

Distributions: (D2)

Spring 2019

SEM Section: 01 MWF 12:00 pm - 12:50 pm Steven B. Gerrard

PHIL 244 (S) Environmental Ethics (WI)

Crosslistings: PHIL244 / ENVI244

Secondary Crosslisting

What ethical standards should guide our individual and societal choices when those choices affect current and future environmental conditions? This course will introduce students to fundamental concepts, methods, and issues in environmental ethics. Initial tutorial meetings will focus on theoretical materials that will background later discussions and will include classic readings from the environmental ethics literature (e.g., Leopold, Taylor, Rolston). Subsequent sessions will pair readings about key concepts with specific cases that raise complex ethical issues, including the concept of moral standing and, e.g., people who do not yet exist, non-human individuals, species, and complex living systems; the concept of moral responsibility and complicity in environmentally damaging practices; the legitimacy of cost-benefit analysis as an environmental policy tool; and the valuation of human lives.

Class Format: tutorial

Requirements/Evaluation: one 5- to 7-page essay every other week (6 in all) and carefully prepared oral responses to partners’ essays in alternate weeks; evaluation will be based on essays, oral critiques, and quality of discussion

Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

Prerequisites: ENVI 101 or one course in PHIL

Enrollment Limit: 10

Enrollment Preferences: declared and prospective Environmental Studies majors and concentrators

Expected Class Size: 10

Department Notes: meets Value Theory requirement only if registration is under PHIL

Distributions: (D2) (WI)

Attributes: ENVI Environmental Policy; EVST Culture/Humanities; PHIL Contemporary Value Theory Courses; SCST Elective Courses;

Spring 2019

TUT Section: T1 TBAThursday Org Mtg 8:30 pm - 8:55 pm Julie A. Pedroni

PHIL 248 (S) Free Speech and Its Enemies

The Williams College Mission statement says that "free inquiry requires open-mindedness, and commitment to community draws on concern for others". The question of this course is whether these values are in conflict. Does free inquiry clash with concern for others, or do they (or can they) work together? We will begin with John Stuart Mill's powerful defense of free speech in On Liberty, but will then investigate challenges to Mill's traditional liberalism from thinkers, such as Catharine MacKinnon, who believe that such rights are never neutral. Our subjects will include hate speech, press censorship, pornography, controversial art, sacrilegious speech and campus controversies. We will, undoubtedly, have to adjust the syllabus to respond to breaking international, national and local news. The course will, I hope, provide the students an opportunity and the tools to intellectually examine deeply emotional and contentious issues. This course is part of the John Hyde Teaching Fellowship.

Class Format: seminar
PHIL 274 (S)  Messing with People: The Ethics of Human Experimentation  (WI)

The Tuskegee Syphilis Study and Stanley Milgram's Obedience experiments are infamous. Yet, other lesser known experiments are equally important landmarks in research ethics, as well, such as the Willowbrook experiment, in which residents of a state home for mentally impaired children were intentionally infected with a virus that causes hepatitis, and the Kennedy-Krieger Lead Abatement study, which tested the efficacy of a new lead paint removal procedure by housing young children in partially decontaminated homes and testing those children for lead exposure. In this tutorial we'll closely examine a series of contemporary and historical cases of human experimentation (roughly, one case per week) with an eye toward elucidating the moral norms that ought to govern human subjects research. A number of conceptual themes will emerge throughout the course of the term, including notions of exploitation and coercion, privacy and confidentiality, and the balance between public interests and individual rights. Specific issues will include the ethics of placebo research, deception in research, studies of illicit/illegal behavior, genetic research, experimentation with children, pregnant women and fetuses, and persons with diminished mental capacity, among other topics.

Class Format: tutorial; students will meet with the professor in pairs for approximately 75 minutes per week, writing and presenting 5- to 7-page essays, and commenting orally on their partners' essays in alternate weeks

Requirements/Evaluation: evaluations will be based on written work, on biweekly papers, oral commentaries, and tutorial discussions

Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 10

Enrollment Preferences: prospective Philosophy majors and students committed to taking the tutorial

Expected Class Size: 10

Distributions: (D2) (WI)

Attributes: PHIL Contemporary Value Theory Courses; PHLH Bioethics + Interpretations of Health;

Not offered current academic year

PHIL 280 (S)  Frege, Russell, and the Early Wittgenstein

The last line of Ludwig Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* famously reads: “Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent.” Are there things that cannot be put into words? What are the limits of language? What is the nature of language? How do logic and language relate? We will examine these (and other questions) in the context of the great philosophical revolution at the beginning of the last century: the linguistic turn and the birth of analytic philosophy. We will see how a focus on language affects our understanding of many traditional philosophical questions, ranging from epistemology and metaphysics to aesthetics and ethics. Our texts will include Gottlob Frege, *The Foundations of Arithmetic*, Bertrand Russell, *Principles of Mathematics*, and Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*. While you're debating whether to take this class, consider the following puzzle. There is a village where the barber shaves (a) all those and (b) only those who do not shave themselves. Now, ask yourself: who shaves the barber? You will see that if the barber does not shave himself, then by condition (a) he does shave himself. And, if the barber does shave himself, then by condition (b) he does not shave himself. Thus, the barber shaves himself if and only if he does not shave himself. See if you can figure out why this is sometimes called a paradox, and then ask yourself what this has to do with our opening questions.

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: two short papers (5 pages) and one longer final paper (12-15 pages)

Prerequisites: at least two PHIL courses; PHIL 202 and 203 recommended

Enrollment Preferences: Philosophy majors, then seniors and juniors of any major

Expected Class Size: 12-15
PHIL 286 (F) Contemporary Systematic Philosophy

Systematic philosophy, also describable as comprehensive theorization, was central to the philosophical enterprise from at least the time of Aristotle until that of Hegel, but has been out of style, in both analytic and continental philosophy, for more than 100 years. This course examines a current attempt to return systematic philosophy to its long-central position. We begin by assessing Alan White’s *Toward a Philosophical Theory of Everything* (2014), which, although not yet receiving widespread attention, was described by one reviewer as “a critically important work for all those deeply interested in philosophical issues and their significance for basic human concerns.” Because of the scope of systematic philosophy, this course provides students with the opportunity to investigate theories currently under development on a much richer variety of issues than is usual in philosophy courses (which are often restricted to specific subdisciplines of philosophy or to works of historical figures). Among those issues are ones involving semantics, ontology, truth, knowledge, moral and other values, human freedom, beauty, being, and God.

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** participation, one or more essays

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 12

**Enrollment Preferences:** Philosophy majors and potential Philosophy majors

**Expected Class Size:** 6

**Distributions:** (D2)

**Attributes:** PHIL Contemp Metaphysics & Epistemology Courses

Not offered current academic year

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PHIL 288 (S) Embodiment and Consciousness: A Cross-Cultural Exploration

Crosslistings: PHIL288 / REL288

**Secondary Crosslisting**

This course examines some of the central questions raised by the study of consciousness: the place of intentionality, the role of emotions, the relation with the body, the nature of subjectivity, the scope of reflexivity, the nature of perceptual presence, etc. In confronting these difficult questions, we do not proceed purely theoretically but consider the contributions of various observation-based traditions, from Buddhist psychology and meditative practices to phenomenology to neurosciences. We begin by examining some of the central concepts of Buddhist psychology, its treatment of the mind as a selfless stream of consciousness, its examination of the variety of mental factors and its accounts of the relation between cognition and affects. We also introduce the practice of meditation as a way to observe the mind and raise questions concerning the place of its study in the mind-sciences. We pursue this reflection by examining the views of James, Husserl, Sartre and Merleau-Ponty, particularly as they concern the methods for the study of the mind and the relation between consciousness, reflexivity and the body. In this way, we develop a rich array of analytical tools and observational practices to further our understanding of the mind. But we also question the value of these tools based on first person approaches by relating them to the third person studies of the mind. In this way, we come to appreciate the importance of considering the biology on which mental processes are based and the light that this approach throws on the nature of consciousness. We conclude by considering the relation between first and third person studies of the mind, focusing on the concept of the embodied mind as a fruitful bridge between these different traditions.

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** regular practice of meditation, a class presentation, a short essay (6-pages); a long final research paper (15 pages)

**Extra Info:** not available for the fifth course option

**Prerequisites:** any introduction to philosophy and at least two upper level courses in PHIL, at least one of which meets the Contemp Metaphysics or Epistemology distribution requirement for the major, no exceptions;

**Enrollment Limit:** 18

**Enrollment Preferences:** Religion and Philosophy majors

**Expected Class Size:** 18

**Department Notes:** there is no need to email the professor in advance to indicate interest in the course
PHIL 291 (F)  Violence: Its Trajectory and Its Causes  (WI)
This tutorial focuses on two books by Harvard psychologist Steven Pinker: *The Better Angels of our Nature. Why Violence Has Declined* (2011) and *Enlightenment Now: The Case for Reason, Science, Humanism, and Progress* (2018). We focus first on the controversial theses that—despite two world wars and the Holocaust—the twentieth century was not the most violent so far, and that, over the entire course of history, human beings have become decreasingly violent. We then turn to the books’ explanations of the factors they identify as leading us to be violent—our ”inner demons”---and as curbing our violence---our ”better angels,” among which the books particularly emphasize reason, science, and humanism.

Class Format: tutorial
Requirements/Evaluation: tutorial papers and responses to partner's tutorial papers, in alternating weeks; participation in tutorial discussions
Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option
Prerequisites: none; the books are written for general readers, not for those with expertise in any academic discipline
Enrollment Limit: 10
Enrollment Preferences: Philosophy majors and potential majors
Expected Class Size: 10
Distributions: (D2) (WI)
Attributes: JLST Interdepartmental Electives; PHIL Contemporary Value Theory Courses;

Fall 2018
TUT Section: T1    TBA    Alan White

PHIL 294 (S)  Philosophy and Narrative Fiction  (WI)
Crosslistings: PHIL294 / COMP294
Primary Crosslisting
What is it for a novel, a story, a play or a film to be a philosophical narrative? It is not enough for it merely to be about a character who happens to be a philosopher; nor is it just that philosophical positions are reviewed in the narrative, as in Gaarder's *Sophie's World*. Milan Kundera tried to answer this question by saying that a good philosophical novel does not serve philosophy but, on the contrary, tries to "get hold of a domain that (...) philosophy had kept for itself. There are metaphysical problems, problems of human existence, that philosophy has never known how to grasp in all their concreteness and that only the novel can seize." If Kundera is right, fictional narratives (such as novels) sometimes do the philosophical work that philosophy cannot do for itself. What kind of work is that, and how is it accomplished? Why can't argumentative prose—philosophers' preferred form of expression—clearly say, and moreover prove, what literature, theatre and film illustrate, show and display? One possible answer which we will examine is that, while many philosophers recognize that there are intimate connections between what we believe, feel and do, philosophical argumentation by its very nature appeals to belief alone; narrative art, by contrast, can simultaneously engage our reason, emotions, imagination and will, thus resulting not only in deepening our understanding, but also in transformation of the self. To properly address a number of interrelated questions concerning philosophy in literature and film, and philosophical problems of meaning, interpretation and evaluation of narrative fiction, we will discuss both narrative works of art and theoretical approaches to their analysis. We will consider the ways in which narrative fiction presents and engages its audience in philosophical reflections on personal identity, nature of the self, interpersonal relationships, memory, time, human existence, freedom, and the meaning in life. The choice of literary works and films to be discussed will to some extent depend on students' interest. Most of the authors will come from this list, however: Sartre, de Beauvoir, Kafka, Dostoyevsky, Thomas Mann, Camus, Ecco, Kundera, Borges, Charlie Kaufman, Bergman, Tarkovsky, Resnais, Kurosawa, Bunuel, Kubrick, Godard, Visconti and Guillermo del Toro. The theoretical aspect of the course will involve close readings of selected articles in contemporary aesthetics, philosophy of literature and philosophy of film.

Class Format: tutorial
Requirements/Evaluation: weekly film screenings on Monday nights (7-10 pm); tutorial attendance and participation; bi-weekly tutorial papers, each about 5 pages long (totaling 6 per student); bi-weekly oral responses to the paper of the tutorial partner
Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 10

Enrollment Preferences: students who can demonstrate informed interest in the course and who can commit the time that the course will require

Expected Class Size: 10

Distributions: (D2) (WI)

Distribution Notes: meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under PHIL; meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under COMP

Attributes: FMST Core Courses;

PHIL 295 (F) Philosophy of Film and Film Theory (WI)

Crosslistings: COMP295 / PHIL295

Primary Crosslisting

Philosophy of film is a relatively young, but very rich and rapidly growing field. Its central question--What is film?--has been approached and framed in many different ways: naturally, the answers to that question, and the theoretical assumptions that underlie the answers, differ as well. This course will offer a selective overview of the debates that characterized philosophy of film since the early 20th century. Starting with early film theorists (such as Munsterberg, Arnheim, Bazin, and Soviet formalists), we will examine how their insights and disagreements influenced later developments in continental and analytic philosophy of film, and in film theory. While looking at film as art, as document, as experiment and as entertainment, we will always keep in sight specific theoretical assumptions that underlie different understandings of film, and different critical approaches to the medium.

Some of the questions we will ask are: What is the nature of filmic representation? Does film accurately capture reality, as no other art does? Does it advance our thinking and increase our knowledge of the world? Or is it a supreme illusion, a dream-like escape, the domain in which the viewer’s unconscious wishes are magically fulfilled? How does film generate meaning? Is film a creation of a single artist - the director, the author - or is it a result of a loosely synchronized and not quite coherent collaboration of many different people, each guided by her or his particular vision? Is there a room for the notion of collective intention in filmmaking? What is the nature of audience’s response to film? Why do we seek to experience through film fear and anguish that we avoid in our daily lives? Are there ethical considerations that should govern both film production and spectatorship? Finally, is there a reason for philosophy of film and film theory to exist as a separate field? Is philosophy of film really autonomous, independent from traditional philosophical disciplines which help generate its central questions, such as aesthetics, philosophy of art, epistemology, ontology, semiotics, ethics, social and political philosophy? Is film today really distinct from a number of new, emerging visual media? How should we think about the boundaries and methods of theorizing about film?

Class Format:

Requirements/Evaluation: this is a reading, writing & viewing intensive class; evaluation will be based on class participation, 5 short response papers (about 800 words each), & two 5 pages long papers

Extra Info: the second of which will be due after the end of classes; class attendance and Tuesday evening film screenings are mandatory

Extra Info 2: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis

Prerequisites: none; open to first year students

Enrollment Limit: 19

Enrollment Preferences: Philosophy majors and intended majors; students especially interested in film; and by seniority

Expected Class Size: 19

Distributions: (D2) (WI)

Distribution Notes: meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under PHIL; meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under COMP

Attributes: FMST Core Courses; PHIL Contemporary Value Theory Courses;

PHIL 304 (F) Philosophy of Language (WI)

This will be a course in the philosophy of language at it has developed over the past century and a half in the analytic tradition. We will narrow our focus even further and will concentrate primarily on meaning, reference and truth. What sorts of things can be true or false? We ordinarily claim that sentences are true or false, but are there other entities whose truth and falsity explains the truth and falsity of sentences? If there are such things--we'll call them propositions--what are they like? If there aren't such things, how do we characterize meaningfulness instead? What is it for a sentence or a proposition to be true? We think that there is a difference between a linguistic object's being meaningful and its having a referent. For example, many people would agree that ‘Keith’s favorite unicorn’ is a meaningful expression. However, few (haters gonna hate) would say that the expression has a
referent. It is difficult, however, to get clear on the relation between the meaning of an expression and its reference. We'll try to make some progress on these issues. Our study will definitely include Frege, Russell, Quine, Searle, and Kripke. There will be a series of short response papers in which you provide a careful analysis of particular arguments in our texts. There will also be a midterm paper (roughly 10 pages) and a final paper (roughly 15 pages) which you will develop and revise in consultation with the instructor. It will be very helpful, though not absolutely necessary, for you to have some familiarity with logic and some experience in reading philosophy.

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: short response papers, midterm paper (10pp), final paper (15pp)
Prerequisites: previous philosophy course and familiarity with logic suggested
Enrollment Limit: 19
Enrollment Preferences: Philosophy majors
Expected Class Size: 10
Distributions: (D2) (WI)
Attributes: Linguistics; PHIL Contemp Metaphysics & Epistemology Courses;
Not offered current academic year

PHIL 306 (S)  The Good Life in Greek and Roman Ethics  (WI)
Crosslistings: CLAS306 / PHIL306
Primary Crosslisting

Most thoughtful human beings spend a good deal of time musing about how we ought to live and about what counts as a good life for a human being. The philosophers of ancient Greece and Rome were among the first thinkers to develop rigorous arguments in response to such musings. Much of the moral philosophy produced in Greece and Rome remains as relevant today as when it was written. In this course, we will examine some central texts in ancient Greek and Roman moral philosophy. We will begin by reading some of Plato's early dialogues and his Republic. We will then turn to Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics. We will then examine writings in the Stoic and Epicurean traditions, as well as Cicero's On the Ends of Good and Evil. As we proceed through the course, we will look at the way in which each thinker characterizes happiness, virtue and the relation between the two. We will also pay close attention to the way in which each of these thinkers takes the practice of philosophy to play a key role in our realization of the good human life. This course is part of the Williams College program at the Berkshire County Jail and House of Corrections and will be held at the jail. Transportation will be provided by the college. The class will be composed equally of Williams students and inmates, and one goal of the course will be to encourage students from different backgrounds to think together about issues of common human concern.

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: several short response pieces. A final paper of 10-15 pages
Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option
Enrollment Limit: 9
Enrollment Preferences: juniors & seniors & students who can demonstrate an interest in the subject matter of the class; there will not be any preference purely on the basis of major; final selection for the course will be made on the basis of an interview with the instructor
Expected Class Size: 9
Distributions: (D2) (WI)
Distribution Notes: meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under CLAS; meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under PHIL
Attributes: PHIL History Courses;

Spring 2019
SEM Section: 01  W 4:45 pm - 8:30 pmThursday Org Mtg 7:00 pm - 7:25 pm  Keith E. McPartland

PHIL 308 (F)  Wittgenstein's "Philosophical Investigations"

Bertrand Russell claimed that Ludwig Wittgenstein was "perhaps the most perfect example I have ever known of genius as traditionally conceived--passionate, profound, intense, and dominating." Wittgenstein's two masterpieces, the Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus and the Philosophical Investigations, stand like opposing poles around which schools of twentieth-century analytic philosophy revolve. The Wittgenstein of the Tractatus is known as the "earlier Wittgenstein," the Wittgenstein of the Investigations is known as the "later Wittgenstein." This course is an intensive,
line-by-line study of the *Investigations*—one of the greatest (and thus, one of the most controversial) books in the history of philosophy. Aside from its overwhelming influence on 20th and 21st century philosophy and intellectual culture, any book which contains the remark, “If a lion could talk, we could not understand him,” deserves serious attention.

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** one short midterm paper (5-7 pages) and one longer final paper (12-15 pages)

**Prerequisites:** at least two Philosophy Courses, PHIL 202 highly recommended

**Enrollment Limit:** 19

**Expected Class Size:** 12

**Distributions:** (D2)

**Attributes:** Linguistics; PHIL History Courses

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**PHIL 312 (S) Philosophical Implications of Modern Physics** (QFR)

Crosslistings: PHIL312 / SCST312 / PHYS312

**Secondary Crosslisting**

Some of the discoveries made by physicists over the last century seem to show that our common sense views are deeply at odds with our most sophisticated and best confirmed scientific theories. The course will present the essential ideas of relativity theory and quantum theory and explore their implications for philosophy. We will ask, for example, what these theories tell us about the nature of space, time, probability and causality.

**Class Format:** lecture

**Requirements/Evaluation:** attendance, participation, problem sets, exams, six 1- to 2-page papers and a 12- to 15-page term paper

**Prerequisites:** MATH 140, high-school physics, and either a 200-level course in PHIL or a 100-level course in PHYS

**Enrollment Limit:** 20

**Enrollment Preferences:** Philosophy majors and Physics majors

**Expected Class Size:** 20

**Distributions:** (D2) (QFR)

**Distribution Notes:** meets the Division 2 requirement if registration is under PHIL or SCST; Division 3 requirement if registration under PHYS

**Attributes:** PHIL Contemp Metaphysics & Epistemology Courses;

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**PHIL 315 (F) Kant's "Critique of Pure Reason"**

Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* is perhaps the most significant text in the history of philosophy. It puts an end to the Early Modern traditions of Rationalism and Empiricism, and it stands at the beginning of both the Analytic and Continental traditions in contemporary philosophy. Love it or hate it, you cannot ignore it. In this course, we will study the most important and influential chapters of the Critique with the help of some secondary literature.

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** students will be required to participate actively in discussion and write a number of papers

**Prerequisites:** PHIL 202

**Enrollment Limit:** 15

**Enrollment Preferences:** Philosophy majors

**Expected Class Size:** 10

**Distributions:** (D2)
PHIL 321 (S)  Introduction to Critical Theory  (WI)
Crosslistings: PHIL321 / WGSS322

Primary Crosslisting

"Dare to know!  Have courage to use your own reason-that is the motto of Enlightenment." Thus the 18th century German philosopher Immanuel Kant exhorts his contemporaries to muster the courage to cultivate their capacity for reason. Modern faith in the prospects of universal human dignity, rational autonomy, the rights of man, individual liberty, democracy, open scientific inquiry and social and political progress depend upon it. Yet in 19th and 20th centuries we find the promise of Enlightenment tempered by the rise of nationalism and the persistence of racism, sexism, genocide, terrorism, and religious extremism as well as the emergence of wars of mass destruction, environmental degradation, and the potential for manipulation of populations by consumerist mass media. Can the promise of Enlightenment be redeemed? In this tutorial we begin with short readings by Kant, Hegel and Marx, key sources for critical social theory in the 20th century. Possible topics may include: alienation, authoritarianism, "pathologies of reason," and reification, as well as recognition, the idea of socialism, and progress. Possible other figures read may include: Max Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno, Herbert Marcuse, Walter Benjamin, Jurgen Habermas, Nancy Fraser, Amy Allen, Noelle McAfee, Judith Butler, Elizabeth Grosz, Michel Foucault, Jean Baudrillard, and Gilles Deleuze, Georgio Agamben, Frantz Fanon, Edward Said and Achille Mbembe, as well as current critiques of neoliberal capitalism. This tutorial will be adapted for WGSS students seeking to meet a theory requirement.

Class Format: tutorial, students will work in pairs and meet for 75 minutes each week with the professor
Requirements/Evaluation: each student will write and present five 5- to 6-page paper every other week and a commentary on their partner's essay on alternate weeks;
Extra Info: evaluations are based on written work as well as level of preparation and intellectual engagement in tutorial meetings
Extra Info 2: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option
Prerequisites: demonstrated background in modern philosophy, critical theory, political theory, or continental philosophy
Enrollment Limit: 10
Enrollment Preferences: current and prospective Philosophy majors and students with a sufficient background in political or critical theory
Expected Class Size: 10
Distributions: (D2) (WI)
Attributes: PHIL History Courses;  WGSS Theory Courses

PHIL 328 (S)  Kant's Ethics

Although Kant initially planned for his magnum opus to comprise theoretical and practical chapters, his metaphysics and epistemology take up all of his Critique of Pure Reason while his ethics is spread out over a series of works--Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals, Critique of Practical Reason, and Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason. These latter writings of Kant's had a tremendous influence on the development of subsequent moral philosophy and indeed set the stage for contemporary discussions of the nature of practical reason, motivation, freedom, and morality. Our seminar will have two aims: (1) to reconstruct the single most compelling moral theory from Kant's various ethical writings, and (2) to trace the influence of Kant's ethics in contemporary philosophy.

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: two 8-page seminar papers and a 12-page final paper
Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option
Prerequisites: two courses in PHIL (including a 100-level PHIL course; PHIL 201 or 202 recommended); or permission from the instructors
Enrollment Limit: 20
Enrollment Preferences: preference to Philosophy majors
Expected Class Size: 15
Distributions: (D2)
Attributes: PHIL History Courses
PHIL 335 (S) Contemporary Metaethics (WI)

We speak as if moral judgments can be true or false, warranted or unwarranted. But how should objectivity in this domain be understood? Is moral objectivity like scientific objectivity, assuming we have a clear sense of what that involves? If not, should that concern us? Are there other models for understanding moral objectivity besides science? While answers to such questions are implicit in historically important accounts of morality, these issues became the topic of explicit, sustained debate in the twentieth and twenty-first century. Our focus will be on recent influential work in this area. We will examine several different approaches in depth, including realism, constructivism, expressivism, and skepticism.

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: short response papers, midterm paper, final paper, attendance and participation
Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis
Prerequisites: two courses in PHIL (including a 100-level PHIL course; PHIL 201 or 202 recommended); or permission from the instructor
Enrollment Limit: 15
Enrollment Preferences: current and prospective Philosophy majors
Expected Class Size: 5-15
Distributions: (D2) (WI)
Attributes: PHIL Contemporary Value Theory Courses;

PHIL 337 (F) Justice in Health Care (WI)

Justice is a notoriously complex and elusive philosophical concept, the conditions of which are even more difficult to articulate within real world institutions and contexts than in the abstract. In this course we’ll explore justice as a fundamental moral principle and as a desideratum of the US health care system. The first portion of the course will be devoted to considering general theories of justice as well as alternative conceptions of justice within the health care context. This will provide the background for subsequent examination of specific topics, which may include, among others: justice in health care financing and reform, which may itself include an analysis of the Affordable Care Act or current legislative proposals; justice in health care rationing, with particular attention to the relationship between rationing criteria and gender, “race,” disability, and age; justice in the procurement and allocation of organs for transplantation; obesity and personal responsibility for illness; and justice in medical research, including “double standards” for research conducted in less developed countries.

Class Format: tutorial
Requirements/Evaluation: evaluations will be based on biweekly papers, oral commentaries, and tutorial discussions
Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 10
Enrollment Preferences: Philosophy majors, Public Health concentrators, and students committed to taking the tutorial
Expected Class Size: 10
Distributions: (D2) (WI)
Attributes: JLST Interdepartmental Electives; PHIL Contemporary Value Theory Courses; PHLH Bioethics + Interpretations of Health;

PHIL 340 (S) Locke and Leibniz (WI)

Modern philosophy centers on two debates: Empiricism vs. Rationalism and Realism vs. Idealism. Locke is the first great Empiricist Realist, and Leibniz the greatest Rationalist Idealist. The debate between Empiricism and Rationalism concerns whether all our knowledge derives from experience, or any is innate. The debate between Realism and Idealism concerns whether reality is composed of mind-independent matter, or
mind-like substances. Leibniz wrote his New Essays in 1704 as a critical response to Locke's Essay of 1690. He hoped it would occasion a public debate between Locke and himself, and prompt the intellectual community to decide, once and for all, between Empiricism and Rationalism, Realism and Idealism, and on related issues concerning the mind, language, truth, God, natural kinds, causation, and freedom. The debate never transpired - indeed, Leibniz suppressed his New Essays - because of Locke's death in 1705. This tutorial will bring to life the debate between Locke and Leibniz, and enable students to reach their own conclusions about Empiricism vs. Rationalism, Realism vs. Idealism, and related issues.

Class Format: tutorial

Requirements/Evaluation: weekly tutorial papers and response essays

Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

Prerequisites: PHIL 202 History of Modern Philosophy, or instructor's permission

Enrollment Limit: 10

Enrollment Preferences: preference to Philosophy majors

Expected Class Size: 10

Distributions: (D2) (WI)

Attributes: PHIL History Courses;

Not offered current academic year

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PHIL 360 (F) The Political Thought of Frantz Fanon  (WI)

Crosslistings: PSCI370 / LEAD360 / PHIL360 / AFR360

Secondary Crosslisting

Martinican psychiatrist, philosopher, and revolutionary Frantz Fanon was among the leading critical theorists and Africana thinkers of the twentieth century. Fanon ushered in the decolonial turn in critical theory, a move calling on those both within and outside of Europe to challenge the coloniality of the age and to forge a new vision of politics in the postcolonial period. This course is an advanced seminar devoted to a comprehensive examination of Fanon's political thought. We will begin with an analysis of primary texts by Fanon and end by considering how Fanon has been interpreted by his contemporaries as well as activists and critical theorists writing today.

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: evaluation will be based upon attendance and participation, weekly online reading response papers, a class presentation, two 7-page essays, and one 20-page final research paper

Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 19

Enrollment Preferences: Africana Studies concentrators, Leadership Studies concentrators, and Political Science majors

Expected Class Size: 10

Distributions: (D2) (WI)

Attributes: AFR Core Electives; AMST Comp Studies in Race, Ethnicity, Diaspora; AMST Critical and Cultural Theory Electives; PSCI Political Theory Courses;

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PHIL 379 (F) American Pragmatism

Crosslistings: PHIL379 / AMST379

Primary Crosslisting

Along with jazz, pragmatism stands as the greatest uniquely American contribution to world culture. As the music wails in the background, we will study the classic pragmatists: William James, C. S. Peirce, and John Dewey. We will continue with the contemporary inheritors of the tradition: Cornel West, Richard Rorty, and Hilary Putnam. Although it has influenced both analytic and continental philosophy, pragmatism is a powerful third philosophical movement. Always asking what practical difference would it make, our authors investigate the central questions and disputes of
philosophy, from epistemology and metaphysics to ethics and religion. Rather than seeing philosophy as an esoteric discipline, the pragmatic philosophers (with the possible exception of Peirce) see philosophy as integral to our culture and see themselves as public intellectuals.

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: final paper, several short assignments

Prerequisites: at least two PHIL courses

Enrollment Limit: 25

Enrollment Preferences: Philosophy and American Studies majors, then seniors and juniors of any major

Expected Class Size: 12-15

Distributions: (D2)

Attributes: AMST Critical and Cultural Theory Electives; PHIL History Courses; TEAC Related Courses

Not offered current academic year

PHIL 380 (F) Relativism (WI)
The aim of the course is to survey, analyze and discuss many varieties of relativism--semantic, epistemic, ontological and moral--from Plato's Theaetetus to contemporary social constructivism. We will pay special attention to the structure of arguments for and against relativism, as well as to the philosophical motivations and perceived consequences of its endorsement or rejection. We will thus be led to discuss some of the concepts common to epistemology, metaphysics and ethics: reason, justification, objectivity, understanding, reality and truth. Some of the questions we will consider are: Are moral standards relative to cultural frameworks? Are there incompatible but equally true ways of describing the world? Is rationality relative to cultural norms? Is relativism a form of skepticism? Is it forced on people who endorse cultural pluralism as their political ideal as the only tenable philosophical position? Our readings will include the relevant works of Plato, Sextus Empiricus, Carnap, Quine, Davidson, Goodman, Elgin, Hacking, Krausz, Foot, and Williams, among others.

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: class attendance, preparedness and presentation; weekly small group discussions and one or two group presentations in class; three short writing assignments (1-2 pgs. each) and three 5 pages long papers

Prerequisites: two philosophy courses, or consent of the instructor

Enrollment Limit: 19

Enrollment Preferences: Philosophy majors and intended majors

Expected Class Size: 7-10

Distributions: (D2) (WI)

Attributes: PHIL Contemp Metaphysics & Epistemology Courses;

Not offered current academic year

PHIL 388 (S) Consciousness (WI)
The nature of consciousness remains a fundamental mystery of the universe. Our internal, felt experience--what chocolate tastes like to oneself, what it is like to see the color red, or, more broadly, what it is like to have a first person, waking perspective at all--resists explanation in any terms other than the conscious experience itself in spite of centuries of intense effort by philosophers and, more recently, by scientists. As a result, some prominent researchers propose that the existence of consciousness requires a revision of basic physics, while others (seemingly desperately) deny that consciousness exists at all. Those positions remain extreme, but the challenge that consciousness poses is dramatic. It is at the same time the most intimately known fact of our humanity and science's most elusive puzzle. In this tutorial we will read the contemporary literature on consciousness. We will concentrate both on making precise the philosophical problem of consciousness and on understanding the role of the relevant neuroscientific and cognitive research. Tutorial partners will have an opportunity to spend the end of the semester working on a special topic of their choosing including, for instance, consciousness and free will, pain and anesthesia, consciousness and artificial intelligence, or disorders of consciousness.

Class Format: tutorial; expect several short lectures by the instructor over the course of the semester where all the tutorial members convene

Requirements/Evaluation: participants will present substantial written work in the tutorial every other week, and will be responsible for commenting on their tutorial partner's work on off weeks

Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option
**Prerequisites:** any introduction to philosophy and at least two upper level courses in PHIL, at least one of which meets the Contemporary Metaphysics or Epistemology distribution requirement for the major, no exceptions; no need to email the professor in advance

**Enrollment Limit:** 10

**Enrollment Preferences:** Philosophy majors, Neuroscience or Cognitive Science concentrators; open to sophomores; every effort will be made to pair students according to similar or complementary background

**Expected Class Size:** 10

**Distributions:** (D2) (WI)

**Attributes:** COGS Interdepartmental Electives; PHIL Contemp Metaphysics & Epistemology Courses;

Spring 2019

TUT Section: T1    TBAThursday Org Mtg 8:30 pm - 8:55 pm   Joseph L. Cruz

**PHIL 401 (F) Senior Seminar: Contemporary Moral Psychology and Virtue Ethic (WI)**

The seminar will focus on contemporary philosophical work on practical and intellectual virtues considered indispensable for a good, meaningful human life. We will begin by reading selections from seminal ethical writings by Plato, Aristotle and Hume, then move on to the 20th century revival of eudaimonistic and sentimentalist traditions of virtue ethics. Special stress will be placed on discussing the nature of virtues such as integrity, empathy, self-knowledge, authenticity and emotional maturity, and on articulating realistic psychological and social preconditions for their development.

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** active participation in class discussion; seminar presentations; 10 weekly several short papers; a 12-15-page final paper

**Extra Info:** may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

**Prerequisites:** required of all senior philosophy majors

**Enrollment Limit:** 15

**Enrollment Preferences:** enrollment is limited to senior philosophy majors

**Expected Class Size:** 8-10

**Distributions:** (D2) (WI)

**Distribution Notes:** The course will require weekly short papers and a final paper, totaling about 35 pages

Fall 2018

SEM Section: 01    M 7:00 pm - 9:40 pm   Bojana Mladenovic

SEM Section: 02    W 1:10 pm - 3:50 pm   Bojana Mladenovic

**PHIL 491 (F) Senior Essay: Philosophy**

This course involves Independent Study under the supervision of a member of the department. The objective is the presentation and writing of a senior essay (maximum 40 pages).

**Class Format:** independent study

**Extra Info:** may not be taken on a pass/fail basis

**Distributions:** (D2)

Fall 2018

HON Section: 01    TBA   Jana Sawicki

**PHIL 493 (F) Senior Thesis: Philosophy**

This course involves Independent study under the supervision of a member of the department. The objective is the preparation and writing of a senior thesis (maximum 75 pages).

**Class Format:** independent study
PHIL 494 (S) Senior Thesis: Philosophy
This course involves Independent study under the supervision of a member of the department. The objective is the preparation and writing of a senior thesis (maximum 75 pages).

Class Format: independent study

PHIL 497 (F) Independent Study: Philosophy
Philosophy independent study.

Class Format: independent study

PHIL 498 (S) Independent Study: Philosophy
Philosophy independent study.

Class Format: independent study

Spring 2019
IND Section: 01  TBA  Jana Sawicki

PHIL 498 (S) Independent Study: Philosophy
Philosophy independent study.

Class Format: independent study

Distributions: (D2)