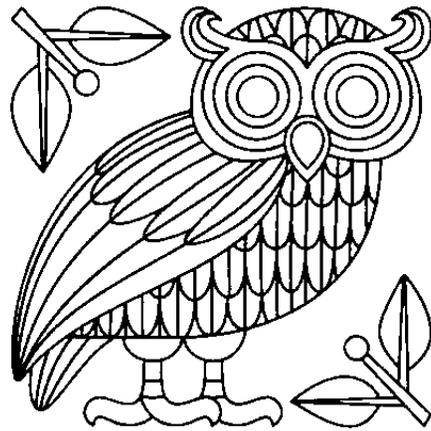


Philosophy & Religious Studies

Course Listings
Spring 2015



UA
LR | DEPARTMENT OF
PHILOSOPHY AND
INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES

Introduction to Philosophy – PHIL 1310
Prof. Thomas – TR 10:50-12:05 (CRN: 12211)
Prof. John – WEB (CRN: 11862)

This course is a survey of basic themes in philosophy, addressing such fundamental concerns as the nature of morality and beauty, the relation of mind and body, and the existence of free will, through discussion and analysis of readings.

Introduction to Critical Thinking – PHIL 1330 (CRN: 11863)
Prof. Jones-Cathcart – WEB

An introduction to reasoning skills. This course focuses on the recognition of informal fallacies and the nature, use, and evaluation of arguments, as well as the basic characteristics of inductive and deductive arguments.

Introduction to Logic – PHIL 2350 (CRN: 12218)
Prof. Merrick – MWF 11:00-11:50

An introduction to deductive logic including translation of sentences into formal systems, immediate inferences, syllogisms, formal fallacies, proofs of validity, and quantification.

Ethics and Society – PHIL 2320
multiple sections, see Schedule of Classes

This course features a study of selected texts reflecting a variety of ethical systems—with at least one major text from each of four historical periods (antiquity, medieval, early modern, and contemporary). Ethical theories examined will include: deontology, utilitarianism, and virtue theory.

Kant and the 19th Century — PHIL 3321 (CRN: 13276)

Prof. Merrick — MWF 9:00-9:50

We will begin with Immanuel Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* (the First Critique) and consider this text according to its established objective: namely, to offer a critique of reason by the use of reason. Though Kant thought we could guarantee the autonomy of reason and leave room for faith and ethics, many of his contemporaries and successors disagreed. After examining Kant's critical philosophy we will turn to Hegel, Marx, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche and Freud. Of particular interest will be their respective responses to the project of the Enlightenment. Over the course of the term we will attempt to answer some of the following questions:

- a. How can reason justify itself?
- b. Does reason have to accept its own authority, precisely in order to carry out such a critique?
- c. Is Nietzsche best seen as an anti-enlightenment thinker?
- d. Have the promises of modernity been realized?
- e. Is the method of dialectic a new way of doing philosophy? What about the method of genealogy?
- f. Is there still a role for philosophical critique and, if so, what form does it take?
- g. Does capitalism present a threat to human dignity?
- h. Do we live in an "enlightened" age?

Science and Culture — PHIL 3312 (CRN: 13486)

Prof. Thomas — WEB

It is difficult not to be impressed with the technological fruits of our scientific investigation of the world (such as computers, antibiotics, jets, and cell phones). But it is also clear that this same
2 technology can have disastrous and unforeseen consequences (such as nuclear proliferation and global warming). The goal of this class is to take a close look at what science is (and is not), how it works, and what it is that scientists do. To that end, we will examine the methods, presuppositions, and goals of science, as well as the interplay between scientific pursuits and the interests of the society in which it is embedded.

Contemporary Ethical Theory — PHIL 3341 (CRN: 12219)

Prof. Jauss — MWF 10:00-10:50

The subject matter of ethics includes not only straightforwardly practical questions (questions in *applied* ethics), but also some especially fundamental *theoretical* questions (questions in ethical *theory*). As the course title suggests, this course is a survey of contemporary work on the *theoretical* questions. These questions include, for example, the familiar question of what makes an action right, when it is (a question in *normative* ethical theory); however, they also include a diverse range of even deeper *metaethical* questions, most of which hover around the intersection of ethics with other branches of philosophy, such as metaphysics, epistemology, philosophy of mind, and philosophy of language. So contemporary ethical theorists are interested not only in, say, theories of the right and the good (so-called *consequentialist* theories and their rivals, for example), but also in, say, theories about what we are really doing when we engage in moral talk (so-called *noncognitivist* theories and their rivals, for example). Additional course topics may include the "buck-passing" account of value, the internalism/externalism dispute, (metaethical) moral relativism, objectivity, dilemmas, and moral realism, among other possibilities.

Philosophy of Race — PHIL 4373 (CRN: 13277)

Prof. Green — TR 3:05-4:20

This course will explore the concept of race from multiple philosophical and historical perspectives. We will consider ways in which race is distinct from ethnicity, cultural identity, and nationality. Further, we will inquire whether or not race is itself a coherent philosophical concept and if so, how it is justified. The second half of the course will turn toward an application of these ideas by looking at differing political uses of race in civil society, in times of war, and within the context of genocide.
[Graduate section: PHIL 5373 — CRN: 13525]

Current Process Philosophy — PHIL 4380 (CRN: 12222)

Prof. Robinson — MW 1:40-2:55

This course seeks to introduce students to the problems, texts and concepts of process philosophy as a series of responses to the great questions of philosophy. Questions about the nature, form and purpose of matter, life, time and consciousness have typically been addressed by process philosophers in relation to the concepts of becoming, change and fluidity. The fundamental ‘stuff’ of the world is here understood not as a fixed material substance or ‘thing’ but as a ‘process’ of becoming. A substance with fixed properties is replaced by a fluid series of complex and interrelated events. A river is not an ‘object’ but a flowing, ever changing process such that “one cannot step twice into the same river”. However, the nature and conception of this processual reality varies throughout the tradition from the great ‘fire’ of the pre-Socratic thinker Heraclitus, to the concept of ‘difference’ of the ‘postmodern’ philosopher Gilles Deleuze. In this course we will concentrate on 20th century process philosophers – primarily Bergson, James, Whitehead and Deleuze – and contrast them in order to examine the value and significance of process thought as a contemporary philosophy.
[Graduate section: PHIL 5380 — CRN: 13151]

3000- and 4000-level PHIL courses generally have PHIL 1310, PHIL 2320, or instructor consent as their prerequisite

Students enrolling in 1000- or 2000-level PHIL or RELS courses are advised to have completed (or be concurrently enrolled in) RHET 1311

Eastern Thought — PHIL/RELS 3350 (CRNs: 13402 / 13279)

Prof. Norton — MW 3:05-4:20

This course will explore some of the most significant concepts and problems in the history of “Eastern” cultures (i.e., those that have their roots in ancient India and China). We’ll proceed according to themes such as the nature of reality, selfhood, and ethics, but along the way we’ll also delve deeper into the beliefs, practices, and histories of traditions such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, and Daoism. In addition, we’ll critically interrogate the boundaries of categories such as “spirituality,” “religion,” and “philosophy” – and particularly “Western” and “Eastern.”

Religion, Society, and Culture — RELS 4321 (CRN: 12225)

Prof. Hale — TR 12:15-1:30

We will read and discuss several articles dealing with religion from an anthropological perspective. The articles focus more on religion as practiced. Topics include myth, ritual, shamanism, altered states of consciousness, healing, witchcraft, and sorcery. The class will be conducted almost entirely through discussions. Insights from various backgrounds and fields of study are encouraged.

World Religions — RELS 2305

Prof. Hale — TR 9:25-10:40 (CRN: 12223)

Prof. Franks — WEB (CRN: 11869)

This course examines the global patterns of contemporary world religions as symbol systems and expressions of discrete, coherent world views. It focuses on the particular histories, practices, and beliefs of the major world religions.

Meditation Techniques — RELS 3340

Prof. Poling — TR 9:25-10:40 (CRN: 13860)

Same as PSYC 3340. Theoretical framework for understanding the meditation experience; training in specific meditation techniques of various religious traditions, as well as the self-analysis of dreams.