PHIL 1012 - Introduction to Philosophy: Relationship of the Individual to the World

001 TR 12:30pm-1:45pm M. Tanzer
This course will examine fundamental philosophical issues, primarily, although not exclusively, in the theory of knowledge and in ethics. The first half of the course, focusing on the theory of knowledge, will examine the thought of Plato and of David Hume; while the second half of the course, focusing on ethics, will look at the ethical theories of John Stuart Mill and of Immanuel Kant. This section of the course will also look at how the ethical theories of Mill and Kant have been applied to the problem of animal rights, by Peter Singer and Tom Regan.

002 MW 12:30pm-1:45pm M. Talero
Philosophy is the activity of exploring essential questions of radical importance to human life. In this class we will investigate four essential questions: What makes life worth living? Is human nature fundamentally good or bad? What is the best moral system? Is a better world possible?

The study of philosophy helps foster three basic skills that, unfortunately, many people never get a chance to develop:
1) Reading difficult, insightful texts packed full of wisdom
2) Thinking carefully and making good judgments
3) Having lively, deep, life-changing discussions with others

In this course, we will be working together to practice each of these life-enriching, vital skills. By the end of this class you will think more deeply, you will have new tools for understanding your life, and you will see the world and others around you in a new way.

003 MW 2:00pm-3:15pm S. Tyson
Why am I here? Where do I belong? What should I do? How can I live well? Can philosophy really help me with these questions? Through close reading of texts by philosophers like Plato, Aristotle, Descartes, Kant, and de Beauvoir, as well as reflection on our own experience, we will explore these questions. In the process, students will develop their critical thinking skills, refine their speaking, reading, and writing skills, and gain a deeper understanding of the history of Western thought. In most classes, we will discuss texts and their relevance to issues in our contemporary lives.

004 TR 8:00am-9:15am W.D. Mehring
This introductory course will examine the position of five major philosophers (Plato, Epicurus, the Stoics, Schopenhauer, and Nietzsche) on perennial philosophical conundrums (What is the good life? Is there life after bodily death?) in a manner that is both understandable and relevant. In addition to reading the philosophers’ writings, we will read Alain de Botton’s The Consolations of Philosophy.

005 MW 11:00am-12:15pm G. Zamosc
This course aims at helping students develop their skills at interpreting texts, critical thinking, and argumentation, while introducing them to a series of fundamental problems in philosophy. We will study (1) Knowledge and skepticism about the external world; (2) free will and moral responsibility; (3) the nature of morality; (4) arguments for the existence of God; and, if time permits, (5) the problem of personal identity.

006 TR 9:30am-10:45am W.D. Mehring See Section 004 for description
007 MW 9:30am-10:45am S. Walker
In this course we will consider major positions in the history of Western philosophy from Plato to Sartre. Along the way we will discuss differing views on the nature of reality, the existence of God, our acquisition of knowledge, and our moral and social obligations to others.

E01 ONLINE W.D. Mehring See Section 004 for description
PHIL 1020 - Introduction to Ethics & Society: The Person and the Community

001 TR 2:00pm-3:15pm S. Walker

The purpose of this course is to provide the student with useful tools for solving ethical problems. We will investigate major positions from the philosophic tradition of ethics from Plato to Sartre. We will work toward the understanding of moral terminology and the development of moral reasoning through the examination of contrasting ethical theories. We will consider such issues as virtue, rights, and our obligations to others.

002 TR 9:30am-10:45am B. Lisle

003 MW 11:00am-12:15pm B. Lisle

In this introduction to the study of ethics and moral philosophy, we will examine some of the dominant moral arguments and ethical theories in the history of Western philosophy. Our primary topics of discussion will involve the interpretation and comparison of ethical theories that have been developed to justify moral codes and commandments. In our inquiries into these theories, we will focus on some key arguments that have been used to define and explain central concepts of ethics in Western civilization: topics such as virtue, justice, civil rights, duty, happiness, moral knowledge, and existential freedom. Ethics is the branch of philosophy that attempts to answer the basic question, “how ought I (or we) live?” Implicit in that question is the question, “what is the good life for a human being?”

004 TR 12:30pm-1:45pm Z. Walter

This course will be oriented toward reading, writing and discussion of some of the basic themes and issues in the philosophy of ethics. In this class we will be dealing with questions such as “What does it mean to live a good life?”, and “Why should I be moral?”. We will also be engaging in depth, issues around the will and morality, and some epistemological frameworks of moral reasoning. We will further explore and develop a mastery of different types of moral and ethical reasoning, most notably virtue ethics, stoicism, utilitarianism, deontology, pragmatism, and existentialism. The reading in this class will primarily be oriented toward some canonical writings in the philosophy of ethics, beginning with some ancient philosophy (Pre-Socratic, Plato, Aristotle, Seneca), on through to the modern period (Hume and Kant) and finally to the late 19th and 20th century (Nietzsche, James, and Beauvoir). The goal of this study overall is to examine, interpret, and ultimately to infuse the philosophy of ethics into our lives as a way of making sense and thinking about the world we live in.

005 MW 9:30am-10:45am D. Reeves

006 MW 12:30pm-1:45pm D. Reeves

This course will provide a journey into moral reflection. Its aim is to invite students to subject their own views about ethics to critical examination. We will work towards three goals. The first is to explore several moral issues that raise questions about ethics and justice in today’s diverse and complex society. We will ask how a just society might distribute the things we prize – income and wealth, duties and rights, powers and opportunities, offices and honors in the right way; how ought each person be awarded her or his due. The second goal will be to understand and evaluate the role of philosophy and critical thinking in addressing issues such as financial bailouts, affirmative action and the death penalty. We will ponder three central ideals or ways of thinking about ethical issues: virtue, freedom and welfare. The third goal is for students to engage in constructive discussion of the issues presented. A subset of this goal will to exposed students to diverse views while exploring and developing their own positions.

E01 ONLINE D. Craig

What is ethics? What role does ethics play in human life—socially and individually, historically and today? What are some of the dominant theories of ethics, and how do they compare to one another? Finally, given the diversity of ethical perspectives available to us, how can we decide which is best? This course will address this set of questions (and others related to them) through an approach to ethics in three stages. First, we will explore how ethical reasoning is precipitated in situations of moral conflict through consideration of an Ancient Greek tragedy: Sophocles’ Antigone. Second, we will examine and compare the positions of four key figures from the history of ethical philosophy – Immanuel Kant, John Stuart Mill, Aristotle and Simone de Beauvoir. Finally, we will select via student survey three controversial, contemporary issues, approach them as moral quandaries, and bring lessons from earlier in the semester to bear upon them, allowing these issues to be seen and evaluated afresh. By semester’s end, not only will students have a better understanding of what ethics is; they will have the tools to make more sophisticated ethical decisions of their own.
PHIL 2441- Logic and Language

001  MW  9:30am-10:45am    A. Hughes

This course introduces students to the study of reasoning and evidence. We will explore logic and formal problem-solving, the role of language in reasoning, common errors, barriers to good reasoning, non-rational aspects of persuasion, and scientific reasoning (explanation, probability, and statistical reasoning). Many of the problems we address are similar to problems that appear on exams like the LSAT, GMAT, MCAT, and the GRE.

002  TR  8:00am-9:15am    M. Bauer

This course concentrates on enhancing students’ capacity to reason well. The aim, in short, is for you to be sharper and smarter when you finish this course! Students will learn to distinguish argumentative from non-argumentative passages in ordinary language, to analyze the form of an argument, as well as how to recognize and avoid argumentative errors and mistakes. Students will also learn how to employ several techniques for determining the acceptability of an argument. Further, students will be introduced to the basic structure of scientific inquiry, including standards of evidence, the argumentative function of hypothetical construction and experimentation, as well as the limits of scientific conclusions. Students will learn as well why the structure of scientific inquiry makes it a distinctively powerful form of inquiry into the natural world.

003  MW  2:00pm-3:15pm    A. Hughes  See Section 001 for description

004  TR  9:30am-10:45am    C. Shelby

This course concentrates on enhancing students’ capacity to reason well. The aim, in short, is for you to be sharper and smarter when you finish this course! Students will learn to distinguish argumentative from non-argumentative passages in ordinary language, to analyze the form of an argument, as well as how to recognize and avoid argumentative errors and mistakes. Students will also learn how to employ several techniques for determining the acceptability of an argument. Further, students will be introduced to the basic structure of scientific inquiry, including standards of evidence, the argumentative function of hypothetical construction and experimentation, as well as the limits of scientific conclusions. Students will learn as well why the structure of scientific inquiry makes it a distinctively powerful form of inquiry into the natural world.

E01  ONLINE    B. Hackett

This course introduces the study of formal logic and its applications in argument evaluation; studies culminate by the end of the semester on one particularly important application of logic: the use of inductive reasoning in the sciences. We begin the semester by distinguishing various modes of reasoning (deductive, inductive, and abductive), and basic methods for representing and evaluating arguments are introduced. Next, we zoom in on deductive styles of reasoning by mastering one particularly powerful and reliable method for testing deductive arguments for logical validity. Finally, we shift our focus to scientific reasoning by studying how probability works within inductive arguments. In an effort to encourage the mastery of skills throughout the course, we will practice methods on actual (often very simple) English arguments.

PHIL 3002- Ancient Greek Philosophy

001  MW  12:30pm-1:45pm    R. Metcalf

002  MW  11:00am-12:15pm    R. Metcalf

This course will cover the development of Greek philosophy, from the earliest Presocratics to Aristotle, surveying all major subject areas: cosmology, metaphysics, logic and rhetoric, ethics, political philosophy, etc.
PHIL 3032-  Twentieth Century Analytic Philosophy
001  MW 9:30am-10:45am  G. Zamosc

In this course we will explore the thought of some representative philosophers of the 20th century analytic tradition concerning problems in the philosophy of action. The main focus of the class will be to explore different ways of trying to understand the nature of action. What makes a piece of behavior your doing? Where is the agent in the workings of the mind? The course will cover three main accounts of action: the causal, hierarchical and planning models. Time permitting we will explore other issues like shared intentions and collective action, the toxin puzzle, and others. Authors we will read include Davidson, Frankfurt, Bratman and Velleman.

PHIL 3280-  War and Morality
001  TR 9:30am-10:45am  S. Walker

War continues to exist, in part, due to our inability to come to terms with it adequately. Some claim certain wars to be just. Others have argued that war itself opens the door to a condition so extraordinary that it negates the possibility of any legitimate ethical evaluation. In this course we will attempt to identify and analyze some of the major moral issues of war. When is a war just, and when is it not? Are there moral means of conducting a war? What are morally acceptable rules of engagement? What if anything justifies violating them? How does one evaluate terrorism as a means of conducting war? Given the topic of this course we will likely generate more questions than answers. Readings will include, among others, works by St. Augustine, Hobbes, Walzer, Nagle, Sartre, Milne, Gandhi and Buber.

PHIL 3360-  Epistemology
001  TR 12:30pm-1:45pm  C. Shelby

When perturbed by claims made by our associates, we often inquire “how do you know that?” That’s a really good question. How do we know anything? How do we know when we know? What does it even mean to say that we know something? These are the fundamental questions of epistemology, and the ones that will occupy us this semester. Far from know-it-alls, we seem rather to be don’t-even-know-if-we-knows. Thus, we will spend a semester investigating the relations among such things as opinion and belief, justification and certainty, reasons and causes, and induction and deduction.

PHIL 3440-  Introduction to Symbolic Logic
001  TR 11:00am-12:15pm  M. Bauer

This course is an introduction to formal or symbolic logic. In formalizing logic, we aim to construct “mechanistic” models for different types of reasoning systems. The techniques involved in formalizing rationality play a role in a diverse set of fields, e.g., cognitive psychology, philosophy, linguistics, mathematics, computer science, artificial intelligence research, and genetics. The logics covered include two-valued propositional, predicate, and modal propositional as well as a brief introduction to three-valued propositional variants. The aim of the course is for you to become proficient in those logics by semester’s end.

PHIL 3500-  Ideology and Culture: Racism and Sexism
001  TR 2:00pm-3:15pm  C. Kautzer

Although race and gender are notoriously difficult concepts to get a handle on, the racial and gender dimensions of identity are some of the most potent in our social world, contributing to social, political, and economic inequality and discrimination. Indeed, one of the reasons that race and gender defy final definition is because they are continually contested, reconstructed, and intersecting—unbound by biology. In this course we investigate the dynamic of material and ideological forces, social movements, and individual actions at work in the formation of racial and gender identities. Through contemporary readings, we will also learn the philosophical tools necessary for ideology critique and enhanced individual and collective self-determination.
This course explores, in detail, the way ideology functions within culture. Particular attention will be placed on the way ideological forces work to foster and maintain racist and sexist forms of thought and behavior. We will begin by analyzing the nature and scope of ideological forces as cultural forces, and then we will explore various ways certain contemporary thinkers claim it may be possible to resist or eliminate racist and sexist thinking within an individual and collectively. One basic question we will be asking is: to what extent can one escape ideologically founded thinking? Is it possible, in other words, for one to gain a self-critical relation to one’s own culture, especially since cultural traditions seem to entail ideological forces that mask themselves within the guise of common sense or conventional wisdom?

How is it that a particular social perspective, serving particular interests, can be propagated throughout a culture and become accepted, internalized, even by those it harms most? In this course we'll examine several accounts of what ideologies are, how they are developed and maintained, and what functions they serve in their societies. These accounts will range from Marx's classic theory to more recent theories, influenced by recent psychological studies. Throughout the course we'll also explore a few case studies of the ideologies of sexism and racism, and possible ways to combat them with more helpful strategies.

Historical overview of the metaphysical question of whether there is life after bodily death, beginning with classical arguments through the current debate over such phenomena as near death experiences and deathbed visions. Also focuses on ethical controversies such as suicide, euthanasia, and capital punishment, and the efficacy of philosophical consolations for grief.

This course presents an introduction to the philosophy of art and aesthetics. In part, this means familiarization with a variety of methods but it also means considering all sides of the communication that is art: the creative process of artists, the object-events created (or "artworks"), and the audience's ability to experience, interpret, and evaluate art. In the course of this survey, a variety of problem-areas related to art will be considered: for example, what is a work of art? What is taste or beauty and who determines and justifies those standards? How is meaning conveyed by works of art and what methods of interpretation best reveal meaning? What is an aesthetic experience and why is it special? What are the social, political, and philosophical roles of art products and art criticism in contemporary society? Our attempts to grapple with these theories and problems will utilize as much actual art as possible through multimedia technology and, hopefully, field trips to local art sites.
PHIL 4242/5242- Bioethics
001  MW 9:30am-10:45am  M. Wilding
H01  Hybrid: F 11:00am-1:45pm  M. Wilding

Humans have cloned organisms, cracked the genome, genetically modified life and prolonged it...just because we can do something scientifically does that mean we should? What is fair? What happens when there are not enough resources to accommodate the needs? These are a few of the questions people grapple with when embarking on bioethics decision-making. In this course the aim is to evaluate bioethics topics utilized in current technology and practice. The tools to accomplish this will be through reflection, utilization of normative ethical theory, and case analyses. Topics covered include: beginning of life issues, end of life issues, organ transplants, stem cell research, cloning, and allocation of resources. Upon completion of the course participants will have explored and evaluated emerging issues in bioethics as they pertain to philosophy, science, medicine, and technology.

PHIL 4480/5480- Perspectives on Good and Evil
001  Sa./Sun. 10:00am-5:00pm  S. Coggan
Meeting Dates: Aug. 23-24, Sept. 13-14, Oct. 4-5, and 26th (1:00pm-5:00pm)

This course will face head on the great "problem of evil." As formulated in philosophical parlance, if the deity is understood as perfect, as omnibenevolent, then why is there any evil? How can a perfect entity ever create imperfection? Why would an absolutely benevolent God cause or allow the innocent to suffer? We will examine this key issue, present the classical formulation of the problem, the traditional solutions offered and then the classical critiques of each answer. Each religion deals with the question of suffering, and each views it differently. In addition, not all religions agree on what constitutes "good" and "evil." These are the questions that will be explored. Cross-listed with RLST 4480/5480

PHIL 4760/5830- Kant
001  TR 3:30pm-4:45pm  M. Tanzer

Immanuel Kant's revolutionary thought represents one of the most important developments in the history of Western philosophy. As a result, all subsequent philosophical thought has had to take Kant's transcendental idealism, and its radical reconceptualization of the subject/object distinction, into account. This course will consist of a detailed examination of Kant's ontology, epistemology and ethics.

PHIL 4795/5795- Marx and Marxism
001  W 5:00pm-7:50pm  C. Kautzer

The purpose of this course is to work through a number of influential texts by Karl Marx—such as the 1844 Manuscripts, German Ideology, and Capital—as well as engage several examples of subsequent Marxist social theory, from Adorno to Zizek. Some topics covered include historical materialism, the origin and function of critique, as well as theories of capitalism, communism, alienation, ideology, subjectivity, and revolution. Some familiarity with the work of Hegel is highly recommended, but not necessary. Suggested preparatory readings are available upon request.

PHIL 5020- Elements of Social Thought
001  T 5:30pm-8:20pm  M. Bookman

This course introduces students to the disciplines (philosophy, sociology, philosophy of history, political theory, classical psychology, etc.) and key texts that comprise and influence the social sciences Most of the readings are drawn from the classical works that form the intellectual core of social thought and provide the necessary tools for understanding the social and political infrastructure of contemporary society. Newer readings demonstrate the current relevance and persistence of questions, as well as providing refutations and critique. Readings include Hegel, Marx, Nietzsche, Freud, Dewey, Habermas, Rawls, and Irigaray, among others.