Philosophy Course Offerings
Spring 2016
Summer 2016

Bertrand Russell
PHIL 100 – Introduction to Philosophy – PI

Dr. DiGiovanna
Sec. 1 – 80063  MWF 11:00-11:50 am  Kellas 101
Sec. 4 – 81093  MWF 1:00-1:50 am  Kellas 102
Sec. 5 – 81181  MWF 2:00-2:50 pm  Kellas 101

This is an introductory course in which a variety of philosophical problems and approaches will be presented. We will focus on several major thinkers of perennial importance, namely Plato, Aristotle, Marx and Freud. Emphasis will be placed on a careful and thoughtful reading of a modest quantity of material. Texts include a selection of the Dialogues of Plato, the Nicomachean Ethics of Aristotle, Marx's Economic andPhilosophic Manuscripts of 1844, Freud’s Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis, and Love and Will, by Rollo May.

PHIL 100 – Introduction to Philosophy – PI

Dr. Tartaglia
Sec. 2 – 80064  MWF 9:00-9:50 am  Flagg 205
Sec. 3 – 80567  TUTH 9:30-10:45 am  Kellas 101
Sec. 6 – 81580  W 4:00-6:30 pm  Carson 201

Philosophy is the critical reflection on the justification of basic human beliefs and analysis of basic concepts in terms of which such beliefs are expressed. We shall examine a number of philosophical problems, by considering the solutions offered by various great philosophers through the ages.

PHIL 102 – Philosophy of the Liberal Arts – PI, FC

Dr. Murphy
Sec. 1 – 81575  TUTH 9:30-10:45 am  Satterlee 205
Sec. 2 – 81576  MWF 11:00-11:50 am  Kellas 102

This course examines arguments for and against the traditional humanities disciplines. Defenders of the humanities argue that studying philosophy, art, literature, culture and history can improve students' abilities to think critically about moral issues, interact fruitfully with people from other cultures, fulfill their obligations as citizens and live meaningful and fulfilling lives. In this class we will critically examine these claims. Understanding these arguments will require careful engagement with a number of fundamental philosophical questions regarding the nature of morality, the relationship between values and culture, the possibility of objective judgments in aesthetics and ethics, and the standards by which to judge whether one's life is or is not meaningful. We will explore these questions through careful reading of classic and contemporary philosophical work.
PHIL 105 – Human Nature – PI, FC

Dr. Curry Sec. 1 – 81180 MWF 10:00-10:50 am Flagg 102

This class will examine a number of differing views on whether there is or is not a human nature, and if there is, what it is. The term "nature", when used in this context, refers to the idea that there are certain features or properties which all human beings, qua human beings, share. We are all aware of some aspects of what humans are like, but few of us have ever tried to theorize more broadly about what it is to be a human being, or how such being is to be understood. We will examine a diverse array of accounts of what it is to be human, as offered by religion, philosophy, psychology and biology.

PHIL 110 – Introduction to Logic – PI, FC

Prof. LaVine Sec. 1 – 81094 TUTH 9:30-10:45 pm Dunn 206
Sec. 2 – 81438 TUTH 11:00-12:15 pm Kellas 106
Sec. 3 – 81573 TUTH 2:00-3:15 pm Flagg 238

Philosophy is the rigorous and systematic investigation into those questions that people across all disciplines and walks of life normally take for granted. Logic, as a branch of philosophy, studies the ubiquitous process of using old beliefs to come to new beliefs (i.e. making arguments, giving reasons) that people normally just engage in without much thought. This course will be an introduction to the basic concepts, problems, and classifications surrounding this process. Some representative questions we will discuss include the following: is there a tension between reason and emotion? Should we always be logical? Are there multiple types of reasoning? How often are politicians reasonable?

PHIL 120 – Introduction to Ethics – PI, FC

Prof. Munroe Sec. 1 – 80816 TUTH 2:00-3:15 pm Kellas 101
Sec. 2 – 80817 TUTH 3:30-4:45 pm Kellas 102
Sec. 3 – 81574 TUTH 12:30-1:45 pm Kellas 104

It may seem paradoxical, but, in this course committed to serving as an introduction to ethics we shall start with, and spend a considerable amount of time on, worrying what our textbook labels as Challenges to Morality. For example, Tom Regan will tell us How Not to Answer Moral Questions while Thomas Nagel will (hopefully) enlighten us on what is Right and Wrong. Charles Stevenson will consider the Nature of Ethical Disagreement. And Nietzsche will, well, be Nietzsche. This is, of course, only a sample of the literature we will canvas. With these challenges in hand, we shall, albeit too briefly, consider two philosophers, who, tho’ chronologically coming earlier than those presenting the challenges, do take up, in their own way, these challenges. Both John Stuart Mill (utilitarianism) and Immanuel Kant (deontology) argued that morality could be reduced to a single principle, tho’, to be sure, not the same principle. We shall consider these principles in some detail. In addition to Mill and Kant, the ethics of care will get a quick look. Finally, and again, all too briefly, we shall consider a couple of contemporary moral issues.
PHIL 322 – Ancient Philosophy – PI, WC

Dr. Curry  Sec. 1 – 81577  MWF 12:00-12:50 pm  Flagg 210

Pre-requisites: one course in Philosophy or permission of instructor. Required for Classical Studies Minor.

In this class students will critically approach the history of ancient philosophy from its origins in mytho-poetical and Homeric thought up to its absorption into the philosophical theology of the Church Fathers. In examining the first philosophers, the so-called “Pre-Socratics”, we will discuss the origins of scientific and metaphysical theorizing, and examine the views of the first advocates of moral relativism and skepticism. The majority of the semester will be spent on the works of Plato and Aristotle. We will close the course with a brief look at the Hellenistic schools and Neo-Platonism.

The most basic prerequisite for this course is a willingness to closely read and think about some difficult texts.

PHIL 346 – Existentialism & Phenomenology – PI, WI

Dr. Curry  Sec. 1 – 81578  TUTH 11:00-12:15 pm  Flagg 232

This course is designed to introduce the student to the problems, concerns and methods of the philosophical, cultural and literary movement known as Existentialism. We will approach the subject in a generally historical manner, beginning with some important forerunners of Existentialism and the phenomenological method, proceeding to look briefly at the origins of Phenomenology in the work of Edmund Husserl, and culminating with an in-depth inquiry into the "existential phenomenology" of Sartre. Each student must be willing to plow through some very difficult, and sometimes lengthy readings, and to bring their own insights to bear on the problems and issues discussed.

PHIL 350 – Philosophy of Science – PI, WI

Dr. Murphy  Sec. 2 – 81579  TUTH 12:30-1:45 pm  Carson 205

Junior or Senior standing only.

This course covers issues that should be of interest to philosophers and scientists alike. Philosophers can learn from the methodologies of science and scientists can learn from the methodologies of analytic philosophy. Some of the questions considered include: How should we distinguish science from pseudoscience? What is a law of nature? How and when is a scientific theory confirmed? What is an adequate scientific explanation? What does it mean to say that one thing causes another? Does science progress or does it merely change? Is science more objective than other disciplines? In addition to addressing these general questions about the sciences, we will also consider some philosophical issues specific to physics and biology.

PHIL 355 – Philosophy of Language

Dr. DiGiovanna  Sec. 1 – 81184  MWF 10:00-10:50 am  Kellas 101

Required for Linguistics Minor.

This course is designed not only for majors but also for any student interested in understanding more about the nature of language. The following are some of the topics and questions that we will deal with in the course: What is the nature of language? What is linguistic meaning? How is language related to thought? What is metaphor and how does it function? Grade will be based on tests, term paper and class participation.
PHIL 380 – Philosophy of Mind

Dr. Murphy  Sec. 1 – 81182  MWF 1:00-1:50 pm  Flagg 211

Minimum requirement of Junior Standing

This course will cover some basic issues in the philosophy of mind. Are mind and body two distinct things (dualism); are there only brains and no minds (materialism); or only minds and no bodies (idealism); or is having a mind a matter of embodying a certain form or function, so that, e.g., machines might have minds (functionalism)? How do minds act on bodies (if they do at all), or bodies on minds; i.e., what is the nature of mental causation? How does thinking work? Can it be modeled, or even embodied in a computer? What is the nature of consciousness? All these closely intertwined issues will be dealt with through both historical and contemporary readings.

PHIL 475 – Seminar in Philosophy: Quine – SI

Dr. Tartaglia  Sec. 1 – 81044  M 4:00-6:30 pm  Carson 204

Minimum requirement of Junior standing.

Quine is the dominant analytic philosopher of the second half of the 20th Century. During this period a very large portion of analytic philosophy was a reaction to, or development of, Quine’s ideas. Though his ideas and arguments shook up the philosophical world as he found it, his ideas are fairly easy to grasp and his arguments are fairly easy to follow. Further, the main thrust of his philosophy is thoroughly convincing.

In 1981, P. F. Strawson, an eminent philosopher himself and often at odds with Quine, wrote: “The elegance, economy, wit and precision of his writing are among the chief glories of modern philosophy. Never have asceticism of method and austerity of vision been so glitteringly displayed.” By virtue of intellectual power, range and fertility of ideas and brilliance of presentation, Quine is one of the most distinguished and influential of 20th Century philosophers. No undergraduate interested in analytic philosophy or even remotely considering graduate school in philosophy can afford not to be acquainted with Quine’s work, especially his work in epistemology.

Course Offerings for Summer 2016

PHIL 100 – Introduction to Philosophy – PI, FC

Professor LaVine  Session 2A

Being the oldest of the intellectual disciplines, philosophy is perhaps the most diverse subject one can take in the traditional academic setting. This fact is made obvious when one realizes that almost all of the specialized disciplines once resided in philosophy, splitting off when a certain amount of agreement on fundamental issues was reached. Because of this diversity, it can be difficult to understand what it is that holds philosophers together. One of the more famous attempts to characterize what is common to philosophers was given by Wilfrid Sellars when he said that they try “to understand how things in the broadest possible sense of the term hang together in the broadest possible sense of the term”.

In order to help fill this out and to understand the goal of philosophy, we will focus on one of the common tools of philosophers; the paradox. Paradoxes have concerned many philosophers throughout the history of philosophy and have often been catalysts for progress in the field. Thus, investigating their place in the work
of some of the most influential philosophers will help us to understand many of the questions central to philosophical work (e.g. how ought we to act? What is there? What do we know? How do we know it?). Furthermore, since a paradox is an argumentation with seemingly true premises leading to a seemingly false conclusion by a seemingly valid chain of reasoning, attempting to understand them, solve them, and evaluate potential solutions to them will be integral to achieving the FC goals of understanding good reasoning and strengthening reasoning skills.

PHIL 102 – Philosophy of the Liberal Arts – PI, FC - Online
Dr. Murphy Session 1

This course examines arguments for and against the traditional humanities disciplines. Defenders of the humanities argue that studying philosophy, art, literature, culture and history can improve students' abilities to think critically about moral issues, interact fruitfully with people from other cultures, fulfill their obligations as citizens and live meaningful and fulfilling lives. In this class we will critically examine these claims. Understanding these arguments will require careful engagement with a number of fundamental philosophical questions regarding the nature of morality, the relationship between values and culture, the possibility of objective judgments in aesthetics and ethics, and the standards by which to judge whether one's life is or is not meaningful. We will explore these questions through careful reading of classic and contemporary philosophical work.

This course will be offered in an online format during a five-week session.

PHIL 120 – Introduction to Ethics – PI, FC
Prof. Munroe Session 1

It may seem paradoxical, but, in this course committed to serving as an introduction to ethics we shall start with, and spend a considerable amount of time on, worrying what our textbook labels as Challenges to Morality. For example, Tom Regan will tell us How Not to Answer Moral Questions while Thomas Nagel will (hopefully) enlighten us on what is Right and Wrong. Charles Stevenson will consider the Nature of Ethical Disagreement. And Nietzsche will, well, be Nietzsche. This is, of course, only a sample of the literature we will canvas. With these challenges in hand, we shall, albeit too briefly, consider two philosophers, who, tho’ chronologically coming earlier than those presenting the challenges, do take up, in their own way, these challenges. Both John Stuart Mill (utilitarianism) and Immanuel Kant (deontology) argued that morality could be reduced to a single principle, tho,’ to be sure, not the same principle. We shall consider these principles in some detail. In addition to Mill and Kant, the ethics of care will get a quick look. Finally, and again, all too briefly, we shall consider a couple of contemporary moral issues.
Philosophy Major

Required Courses:

Logic – One of the following: 3 Credit Hours
   PHIL 110 Introduction to Logic
   PHIL 210 Introduction to Symbolic Logic

Ethics – One of the following: 3 Credit Hours
   PHIL 120 Introduction to Ethics
   PHIL 328 Issues in Ethical Theory

History of Philosophy¹ – Two of the following 6 Credit Hours
   PHIL 322 Ancient Philosophy
   PHIL 323 Medieval Philosophy
   PHIL 324 Modern Philosophy
   PHIL 325 19th Century Philosophy
   PHIL 387 Selected Philosophers
   PHIL 440 20th Century Analytic Philosophy

Other Required Courses – One of the following 3 Credit Hours
   PHIL 454 Theory of Knowledge
   PHIL 465 Metaphysics
   PHIL 380 Philosophy of Mind
   PHIL 350 Philosophy of Science

Senior Seminar 3 Credit Hours
   PHIL 475 Seminar in Philosophy

Electives: 12 Credit Hours

Total Hours: 30 Credit Hours

Notes:
   ♦ Majors must earn a minimum of 2.0/S in all courses counted toward the major.
   ♦ A minimum of 15 semester hours of the major must be taken at the 300-400 level.

¹Selected Philosophers (PHIL 387), Special Topics in Philosophy (PHIL 395), or Senior Seminar (PHIL 475) may be substituted for one of the history courses, when appropriate, as determined by the department.
Philosophy Minor

The Philosophy Minor permits students majoring in other disciplines to
(1) pursue in a systematic way their personal interests and concerns with philosophical questions, and/or
(2) deepen their understanding of their discipline in regard to its philosophical foundations, methodologies, and its normative assumptions and implications through an integrated course of study tailored to their major program.

Required Courses:

**Introductory Course – One of the following:**

3 Credit Hours

PHIL 100  Introduction to Philosophy
PHIL 105  Human Nature

**Ethics – One of the following:**

3 Credit Hours

PHIL 120  Introduction to Ethics
PHIL 314  Contemporary Moral Issues
PHIL 328  Issues in Ethical Theory

**History of Philosophy – One of the following:**

3 Credit Hours

PHIL 322  Ancient Philosophy
PHIL 323  Medieval Philosophy
PHIL 324  Modern Philosophy
PHIL 325  19th Century Philosophy
PHIL 440  20th Century Analytic Philosophy

**Electives:**

9 Credit Hours

**Total Hours:**

18 Credit Hours

**Notes:**

- Minors must earn a minimum of 2.0/S in all courses counted toward the minor.
- A minimum of 9 semester hours of the minor must be taken at the 300–400 level.
Philosophy Honors Major

ELIGIBILITY
- Philosophy Majors with six credit hours in philosophy completed at SUNY Potsdam (or other acceptable institution, to be determined by the faculty)
- 3.5 cumulative GPA in Philosophy
- 3.25 cumulative GPA
- 3.0 minimum grade in all philosophy courses to be applied to major
- Submit application at least three semesters before graduation

REQUIREMENTS
- Senior Thesis and Oral Defense
- Course Distribution Requirements noted below; 3.0 minimum grade required.

Required Courses and Credits: 27 Credit Hours
- PHIL 210 Introduction to Symbolic Logic OR
- PHIL 217 Language and Symbolic Logic
  *(PHIL 110 Intro Logic is highly recommended)*
- PHIL 322 Ancient Philosophy
- PHIL 324 Modern Philosophy
- PHIL 328 Issues in Ethical Theory
- PHIL 355 Philosophy of Language OR
- PHIL 440 20th Century Analytic Philosophy
- PHIL 454 Theory of Knowledge
- PHIL 465 Metaphysics
- PHIL 480 Honors Thesis Research I
- PHIL 481 Honors Thesis Research II
- PHIL 387 Selected Philosophers OR
- PHIL 475 Special Topics OR
- PHIL 495 Seminar (to be approved by the faculty)

Electives: Three Courses from the following: 9 Credit Hours
- PHIL 320 Aesthetics
- PHIL 323 Medieval Philosophy
- PHIL 325 19th Century Philosophy
- PHIL 350 Philosophy of Science
- PHIL 359 Philosophy of Religion
- PHIL 371 Social and Political Philosophy
- PHIL 380 Philosophy of Mind

Total Hours: 36 Credit Hours
Department of Philosophy
Located in Carson & Morey Hall

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