Course Offerings in Philosophy

Fall 2017

PHIL 100 – Introduction to Philosophy – PI

Dr. Tartaglia  Sec. 3 – 97196  MWF  9:00-9:50 am Satterlee 222
Sec. 5 – 97233 MWF  10:00-10:50 pm Satterlee 220

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 100 – Introduction to Philosophy – PI

Dr. DiGiovanna  Sec. 1 – 96547  MWF  1:00-1:50 pm Carson 201
Sec. 2 – 96496 MWF  11:00-11:50 am  Carson 201
Sec. 6 – 96107 MWF  2:00-2:50 pm Carson 201

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 and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844, Freud’s Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis, and Love and Will, by Rollo May.

PHIL 100 – Introduction to Philosophy—Honors – PI, FC

Honors or by permission of instructor.

Dr. Curry  Sec. HNR – 96930  TUTH  11:00-12:15 pm Morey 253

This specially designed Honors Introduction to Philosophy will consist of a brief introduction to argument, followed by a close reading of Plato’s Apology, Euthyphro, Crito, Meno and Republic. The semester will culminate in an exploration of the historical context of the Platonic dialogues by playing the Athens Game, fundamentally relying on “The Threshold of Democracy: Athens in 403 B.C.” module developed at Barnard College. In the game students take the role of leaders of various factions, as well as serving in certain democratically elected positions of power, to recreate the political landscape of late 5th Century Athens, most likely concluding with a recreation of the trial of Socrates. To prepare for the game, students will read a number of primary texts from the late 5th century BCE, including selections from Xenophon, Thucycides, Aristotle, Hesiod and Homer.

This course fulfills both the FC (Freshman Critical Thinking) and PI (Philosophical Inquiry) General Education designators.
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 110 – Introduction to Logic – PI, FC**

**Professor LaVine**  
Sec. 1 - 97068  
TUTH 11:00-12:15 pm  
Flagg 214

Sec. 2 - 97303  
TUTH 9:30-10:45 am  
Flagg 211

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**

**Professor Munroe**  
Sec. 1 - 96108  
TUTH 12:30-1:45 pm  
Stowell 116D

Sec. 2 - 96934  
TUTH 2:00-3:15 pm  
Stowell 116D

Sec. 3 - 97304  
TUTH 4:00-5:15 pm  
Carson 201

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 320 – Aesthetics – PI
Dr. DiGiovanna  Sec. 1 – 98019  MWF 10:00-10:50 am  Carson 214
This is a course in the philosophy of the fine arts. The following is a sample of the questions that will be raised: What essentially is music? painting? poetry? dance?; Are any characteristics shared by all the fine arts?; What is the relation between art and emotion?; Are there objective criteria for evaluating art or are good and bad in art a matter of subjective taste?; Does music mean anything or represent anything outside of music? As texts we will use Susan Langer's *Feeling and Form* and *Esthetics Contemporary*, edited by R. Kostelanetz, among other things.

PHIL 325 – 19th Century Philosophy
Pre-requisites: 2 courses in Philosophy or permission.
Dr. Curry  Sec. 1 – 98020  MWF 12:00-12:50 pm  Flagg 211
This course is designed to trace the historical development of Continental thought from Kant to Kierkegaard and Nietzsche, focusing on the most influential figures in the period. Kant’s great insight was to recognize that in some sense the self is the source of knowledge. But this raises the question of how a subjective entity, the self, can construct an objective world complete with the order of space, time and causality. This problem, a problem facing all idealisms, is what motivated the German Idealist tradition we will be examining.

PHIL 330 – Environmental Ethics – PI
Counts for Environmental Studies Major/Minor.
Professor LaVine  Sec. 1 – 96701  MW 3:30-4:45 pm  Flagg 102
The basic task of environmental ethics is to defend a comprehensive and reasoned account of the moral relations between persons and their natural environment. Thus, a theory of environmental ethics will address such questions as: What ethical principles govern human conduct with regard to the environment? To whom or to what do humans have moral responsibilities and what are these responsibilities? Different approaches will provide different answers. In this course, we will survey opposing theories and examine their application to controversial issues. Topics include Biocentrism, Ecocentrism, Deep Ecology, and Ecofeminism as these relate principally to the issue of Value. Our overriding concern then will be to question, as a number of authors have it, "Is Nature Intrinsically Valuable?"

PHIL 331 – Moral Issues in Mental Health – PI
Dr. Murphy  Sec. 1– 97630  MWF 1:00-1:50 pm  Flagg 102
The diagnosis and treatment of mental disorders raises a number of significant moral and philosophical issues: the meaning or nature of psychiatric diagnoses, the obligations of the mental health professional toward her patients, whether or not mental illness should be considered an extenuating factor when evaluating the moral culpability of an individual who commits a crime, and if the state is ever justified in curtailing the freedoms of mentally ill citizens based solely on their illness. These and other philosophical issues will be explored through careful reading of original work in the philosophy of mind, ethics and philosophy of psychiatry.
PHIL 333 – Philosophy of Justice

Required for Criminal Justice Major, minimum of Sophomore standing required.

Dr. Tartaglia  Sec. 1 – 96976   M 4:00-6:30 pm   Carson 202

The course consists essentially of an enquiry into the question of punishment. The philosopher's interest in punishment is mainly connected with questions of justification. It is, prima facie, wrong to deliberately inflict suffering or deprivation on another person, yet punishment consists in doing precisely this. What conditions, the philosopher asks, would justify it? Or, more generally, what kind of consideration would count toward a justification?

PHIL 355 – Philosophy of Language

Dr. Tartaglia  Sec. 1 – 98021   TUTH 9:30-10:45 am Morey 202

In order for discourse and arguments to be examined and treated by logic, they must be converted from ordinary language (English, for us) to the language (symbolism) of logic. Now the elements and grammar of English are very rich while the elements of logic are few and the grammar of logic is very simple. This course shows how this conversion is made. Logic has learned a great deal from the grammar of ordinary language, merely tweaking some concepts and categories of ordinary language grammar. On the other hand, logic has informed ordinary-language grammar. One can see this by examining the grammar textbooks of the past several decades. At any rate this course should appeal to anyone interested in grammar or how the richness of ordinary language can be accommodated by the poverty of logic's grammar and categories.

PHIL 440 – 20th Century Analytic Philosophy

Prerequisite: Junior or Senior standing and two courses in Philosophy or Permission of Instructor.

Professor LaVine  Sec. 1-98022   MW 2:00-3:15 pm   Brainerd 202

Despite being the dominant form of philosophy in the English-speaking world today, there is much confusion over exactly what analytic philosophy is. I think this is explained by the fact that 'analytic philosophy' is ambiguous between (i) a style and attitude toward working on a certain kind of philosophical problem which puts great emphasis on logical and linguistic analysis and (ii) a social-intellectual movement which saw great hope for (i) in its relation to philosophical/scientific progress and their connection to human progress and which took place roughly between 1900-1970. Given that the former's time frame goes back to at least Leibniz (1646-1716) and that the course is the history of TWENTIETH CENTURY analytic philosophy, we will focus on its intersection with the latter. That said, precisely because analytic philosophy in the first sense is the dominant style of doing philosophy in the English-speaking world today, occasionally discussing the larger history will allow us to use the course as an introduction to mainstream anglophone philosophy today. We will also use the course as a chance to engage in both senses of analytic philosophy. Students should expect to write and speak regularly about their real-life reactions to thinkers such as Leibniz, Hume, Kant, Bolzano, Frege, Jones, Bertrand Russell, Moore, Stebbing, Wittgenstein, Carnap, Ayer, Popper, Quine, Kripke, and Gillian Russell.
PHIL 465 – Metaphysics – WI
Prerequisite: Junior or Senior standing and 2 courses in Philosophy
Dr. Murphy Sec. 1 – 98023 TUTH 12:30-1:45 pm Satterlee 222

In this course we will consider a number of philosophical questions about the structure of reality. What sorts of things exist? What is it for one thing to cause another? What makes things identical to each other? What is the nature of time? To what extent can we understand reality independently of our own minds? Whatever conclusion one reaches as to the answers to these questions, serious consideration of them offers the opportunity to develop one’s skills at abstract thinking and rigorous critical analysis. The study of metaphysics also invites reflection on the nature and purpose of philosophy, since it has often been suggested that many of the traditional questions of metaphysics are either meaningless or are the proper domain of theology or natural science rather than philosophy.

Course Offerings for Summer 2017

PHIL 120 – Introduction to Ethics – PI, FC

Professor Munroe 76329 - 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 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

Required:
PHIL 475 Seminar in Philosophy 3 Credit Hours

Required Courses 18 Credit Hours

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) or Special Topics in Philosophy (PHIL 395) 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 Seminar (to be approved by the faculty) OR
PHIL 495 Special Topics

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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