PHILOSOPHY

Doing philosophy means reasoning about questions that are of basic importance to the human experience—questions like, What is a good life? What is reality? How are knowledge and understanding possible? What should we believe? What norms should govern our societies, our relationships, and our activities? Philosophers critically analyze ideas and practices that often are assumed without reflection. Wesleyan’s philosophy faculty draws on multiple traditions of inquiry, offering a wide variety of perspectives and methods for addressing these questions.

FACULTY

Stephen Angle
BA, Yale University; PHD, University of Michigan
Mansfield Freeman Professor of East Asian Studies; Professor of Philosophy; Professor, East Asian Studies

Lori Gruen
BA, University of Colorado Boulder; PHD, University of Colorado Boulder
William Griffin Professor of Philosophy; Professor of Philosophy; Professor, Science in Society; Professor, Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

Steven W. Horst
BA, Boston University; PHD, University of Notre Dame
Professor of Philosophy; Professor, Science in Society

Tushar Irani
BA, Colgate University; PHD, Northwestern University
Associate Professor of Philosophy; Associate Professor of Letters

Joseph T. Rouse
BA, Oberlin College; MA, Northwestern University; MAA, Wesleyan University; PHD, Northwestern University
Hedding Professor of Moral Science; Professor of Science in Society; Professor of Philosophy; Professor, Environmental Studies

Sanford Shieh
AB, Cornell University; BA, Cornell University; BA, Oxford University; PHD, Harvard University
Associate Professor of Philosophy

Elise Springer
BA, Wesleyan University; MA, University of Connecticut; PHD, University of Connecticut
Associate Professor of Philosophy; Chair, Philosophy; Associate Professor, Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

AFFILIATED FACULTY

Axelle Karera
BA, York University; PHD, Pennsylvania State University
Visiting Assistant Professor, African American Studies; Visiting Assistant Professor, Philosophy; Andrew W. Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow, Center for the Humanities

Manfred Ma
Visiting Scholar in Philosophy

Daniel Smyth
BA, University of Chicago; MA, University of Chicago; PHD, University of Chicago
Assistant Professor of Letters; Assistant Professor, Philosophy

VISITING FACULTY

Alex Feldman
BA, Brown University; MA, Pennsylvania State University; PHD, Pennsylvania State University
Visiting Assistant Professor of Philosophy

Kathryn Gillespie
PHD, University of Washington
Postdoctoral Fellow in Animal Studies

Sharisse Leigh Kanet
BA, Wesleyan University; MA, CUNY Queens College
Visiting Instructor in Philosophy

EMERITI

L. Kent Bendall
MAA, Wesleyan University
Professor of Philosophy, Emeritus

Brian C. Fay
BA, Loyola Marymount Uni; DPHIL, Oxford University; MA, Oxford University; MAA, Wesleyan University
William Griffin Professor of Philosophy, Emeritus

Victor Gourevitch
BA, University of Wisconsin; MAA, Wesleyan University; PHD, University of Chicago
William Griffin Professor of Philosophy, Emeritus

DEPARTMENTAL ADVISING EXPERTS

All departmental faculty

• Undergraduate Philosophy Major (catalog.wesleyan.edu/departments/phil/ugrd-phil)

PHIL111 Introduction to Critical Philosophy of Race
This first-year seminar course will examine contemporary figures in the emerging field of critical philosophy of race. We will attempt to examine what contributions (if any) the critical philosophy of race has provided not only to philosophy as a discipline, but also to more traditional and established modes of thinking race and racism. We will do so by exploring issues such as the differences between critical philosophy of race and critical race theory, the historical role of race and racism in philosophical thinking, and by attending to the major debates currently held in this emerging tradition.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-PHIL, SBS-PHIL

PHIL112 Ecology of Perception
The study of perception lies at the heart of both the natural sciences and the arts. Theories of perception inform, and are informed by, concepts
in metaphysics, ethics, philosophy of mind and language, aesthetics, and epistemology (the study of knowledge). Broadly construed, ecology is the study of systems of interdependency in the natural world. Therefore, the ecology of perception is the study of how structures of interdependency shape, and are shaped by, the process of perception. This course is an interdisciplinary fusion of visual studies, philosophy of mind, and environmental philosophy and offers an introduction to ecological thinking and concepts of sustainable living. Beginning with a reading of Descartes—an architect of the modern world—we explore the basic philosophical problems involved with understanding perception, media, and concepts of mind, concluding with architectural theory and eco-design, consciousness studies, and general evolutionary theory.

Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL
Identical With: COL228, CHUM228, HIST140
Prereq: None

PHIL15 What Do Animals Think?
Do animals think? Can they reason? Do they form intentions or have beliefs? Might they act ethically? What do the other animals know? How can we know what they might know, and what can exploring the minds of other animals tell us about our own minds? In this course we will attempt to answer these questions by adopting a largely comparative perspective and examine philosophical, scientific, psychological, and popular writing about minds. We will examine evidence for mindedness and reasoning in social species. We will watch films about animals doing amazing things. We will also explore the ethical implications of this research.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-PHIL, SBS-PHIL, SBS-PHIL
Prereq: None

PHIL115 Reproduction in the 21st Century
This course will cover basic human reproductive biology, new and future reproductive and contraceptive technologies, and the ethics raised by reproductive issues.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: NSM-BIOL, NSM-BIOL, NSM-BIOL, NSM-BIOL
Identical With: BIOL118, FGSS118, SISP118, BIOL118, FGSS118, BIOL118, FGSS118, BIOL118, FGSS118, SISP118, BIOL118, FGSS118, SISP118, BIOL118, FGSS118, BIOL118, FGSS118, BIOL118, FGSS118, SISP118, BIOL118, FGSS118, SISP118, BIOL118, FGSS118, BIOL118, FGSS118, SISP118, BIOL118, FGSS118
Prereq: None

PHIL154 What is Rationality?
What does it mean to be rational? Although this question has traditionally been the province of philosophy, reference to reason and rationality is also pervasive in the modern social and behavioral sciences. Humans are rational creatures—or if they are not in practice, they should be. This course takes an expansive view of rationality and its history, tracing how the concept has changed over time, and critically examining its significance in the sciences and broader culture today. From the role of reason in human flourishing and civic discourse in the ancient world, to early modern conceptions of logic as "the art of thinking," to Cold War attempts to build machines that might reason more reliably than frail humans, this exploration of reasoning and rationality explores several interlocking themes: the relationship between reason and other facets of the mind, especially emotion; conceptions of reason as an evaluative versus a calculating faculty; the role of reason in human judgment; the relationship between rationality and rules; the relationship between choosing rationally and choosing ethically; and the fraught history of attempts to formulate universally valid principles of rationality.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-HIST, SBS-HIST, SBS-HIST
Identical With: HIST283, SISP283, HIST283, SISP283, HIST283, SISP283, HIST283, SISP283, HIST283, SISP283, HIST283, SISP283
Prereq: None

PHIL160 Philosophy and the Movies: The Past on Film
This course examines how films represent the past and how they can help us understand crucial questions in the philosophy of history. We begin with three weeks on documentary cinema. How do documentary films achieve "the reality effect"? How has contemporary documentary’s use of reenactment changed our expectations of nonfiction film? Much of the course is devoted to classic narrative films that help us critically engage questions about the depiction of the past. We think about those films in relation to texts in this history of philosophy and contemporary film theory.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-FILM, HA-FILM
Identical With: FILM360, HIST129, FILM360, HIST129, FILM360, HIST129
Prereq: None

PHIL201 Philosophical Classics I: Ancient Western Philosophy
This course is a study of major texts representing the principal theories of knowledge and reality in the 17th and 18th centuries: rationalism (Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz), empiricism (Locke, Berkeley, Hume), and the Kantian synthesis. Through careful close analysis of primary texts. Students must be willing to engage with readings that are fascinating but at the same time dense, difficult, and often perplexing.

Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL
Identical With: COL359, CCIV217, COL359, CCIV217, COL359, CCIV217, COL359, CCIV217
Prereq: None

PHIL202 Philosophical Classics II: Early Modern Philosophy from Descartes Through Kant
This course is a study of major texts representing the principal theories of knowledge and reality in the 17th and 18th centuries: rationalism (Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz), empiricism (Locke, Berkeley, Hume), and the Kantian synthesis.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL
Identical With: COL360, COL360, COL360, COL360, COL360, COL360, COL360, COL360, COL360, COL360, COL360
Prereq: None

PHIL205 Classical Chinese Philosophy
Topics in this critical examination of issues debated by the early Confucian, Daoist, and Mohist philosophers will include the nature of normative authority and value, the importance of ritual, and the relation between personal and social goods.

Offering: Host
interdependence? What kinds of moral reflection might be adequate to problems of global theorists to overcome their preoccupation with exclusively human interests and argued for plural or relative ethics. Ecological critics have challenged moral giving an account of progress or the overcoming of bias, while others have challenge from social theorists who allege moral norms and judgments serve about moral difference, moral change, and the relation between morality and the last third of the course explores more recent preoccupations with ideas basic insights derive from experience.

Turning next to modern ideas of moral action (Kantian and utilitarian), we find insist that moral life is essentially connected to individual happiness. Yet both care reflection.

Students will come to understand the distinctive insights and arguments behind all of the positions considered, to recognize more and less cogent lines of response to them, and to shape their own patterns of moral reasoning through careful reflection.

PHIL211 Critical Philosophy of Race
This course will examine contemporary figures in the emerging field of critical philosophy of race. We will attempt to examine what contributions (if any) the critical philosophy of race has provided not only as a discipline, but also to more traditional and established modes of thinking race and racism. We will do so by exploring issues such as the differences between critical philosophy of race and critical race theory, the historical role of race and racism in philosophical thinking, and by attending to the major debates currently held in this emerging tradition.

PHIL212 Introduction to Ethics
We will begin with some ancient questions about values. We find that two ancient approaches to right living (Platonic-Stoic and Aristotelian) differ radically over how much philosophy or society can teach us about what is good. Yet both insist that moral life is essentially connected to individual happiness.

Turning next to modern ideas of moral action (Kantian and utilitarian), we find that they both emphasize a potential gulf between individual happiness and moral rightness. Yet like the ancients, they disagree over whether morality’s basic insights derive from experience.

The last third of the course explores more recent preoccupations with ideas about moral difference, moral change, and the relation between morality and power. Especially since Marx and Nietzsche, moral theory faces a sustained challenge from social theorists who allege moral norms and judgments serve hidden ideological purposes. Some have sought to repair universal ethics by giving an account of progress or the overcoming of bias, while others have argued for plural or relative ethics. Ecological critics have challenged moral theorists to overcome their preoccupation with exclusively human interests and ideals. What kinds of moral reflection might be adequate to problems of global interdependence?
PHIL216 Women, Animals, Nature
This course will focus on the gendered aspects of human relations with the rest of the natural world. Popular views about women's special relation to nature will be challenged while nonetheless exploring the ways that women, animals, and nature are thought to be "others." This course will also provide the analytical tools necessary to understand and analyze the roles that actual women (modified by race, class, and sexuality) play in reconceptualizing and reshaping relationships to the more than human world.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-ENV, SBS-ENV, SBS-ENV, SBS-ENV, SBS-ENV

PHIL217 Moral Psychology: Care of the Soul
Moral psychology is the study of our minds that is aimed at an understanding of how we develop, grow, and flourish as moral beings. In this course we will examine historical and contemporary texts from philosophy, psychology, and spiritual writings that deal with the nature of the good life for human beings, the development of virtues, and the cultivation of ethical understanding and moral sensibilities. Emphasis will be both on careful understanding of the texts and on the attempt to relate the theories discussed to our own moral lives.
Offering: Host
Grading: Cr/U
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL

PHIL218 Personal Identity and Choice
We will explore philosophical reflections on the problem of personal identity and its relationship to matters of choice and freedom. How do certain experiences and thoughts and physical materials compose oneself? Am I the same person over time even through complete transformations of experience, thought, and material? Can I choose which elements of my existence to count as essential? How do metaphysical views lead to ethical commitments? Despite their differences, Confucians, Daoists, Aristotelians, and Stoics all agreed that philosophy should aim at making us better people. Can such an idea still get traction in today's world?
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL

PHIL219 Evil, Responsibility, and Forgiveness
The problem of evil has long occupied an important position in the history of philosophy. In light, however, of the horrific events of the 20th-century, philosophers and other writers of the past hundred years have begun to ask whether it is time to rethink our own understanding of evil. Is it possible to understand genocide, colonialism, and systematic racism through existing conceptions of evil, responsibility, and forgiveness, conceptions drawn largely from religion and the law? What happens to our understanding of evil when, as Hannah Arendt famously suggested with her notion of the "banality of evil," mass murder is detached from wicked intentions and is made routine, mundane, even cliché? What happens to our understanding of responsibility when, on the one hand, a whole society, not just an individual, is implicated in a crime—and when, on the other hand, responsibility cannot be confined to geographical or national borders? What happens to our understanding of forgiveness when the very possibility or desirability of such an act becomes eminently questionable? In this course, we will draw from continental philosophy, critical philosophy of race, literature, and film. Readings may include selections from Emmanuel Levinas, Hannah Arendt, Frantz Fanon, Aimé Césaire, Primo Levi, Jacques Derrida, and Susan Neiman.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-PHIL

PHIL220 Existentialism, Platonism, Pragmatism
The class will explore three different, classic theories of reality and human beings' place in it, one from ancient Greece (that of Plato), one from modern America (that of John Dewey), and one from modern Europe (Sartre and Camus). Each of these theories provides a broad metaphysics, an ethics, and a conception of politics, art, and religion. Each is mind-opening, and when read in conjunction, provide the basis for discussions of some of the most important questions about what it means to be human.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL

PHIL221 Philosophy as a Way of Life
For many philosophers, East and West, philosophy has been more than an effort to answer fundamental questions. It has been an activity aimed at changing one's orientation to the world and, thus, how one lives one's life. We will explore Chinese, Greco-Roman, and contemporary versions of the idea that philosophy should be seen as a way of life. How does philosophical reasoning interact with lived practice? How do metaphysical views lead to ethical commitments? Despite their differences, Confucians, Daoists, Aristotelians, and Stoics all agreed that philosophy should aim at making us better people. Can such an idea still get traction in today's world?
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-PHIL, SBS-PHIL, SBS-PHIL, SBS-PHIL, SBS-PHIL

PHIL222 Ethical Theory and Practice
What is right action? What is it to be good? How do we incorporate these evaluations in matters of policy and personal life? In this course, we will survey four major Western ethical theories that provide a range of solutions to these questions: utilitarianism, Kantianism, virtue ethics, and feminist ethics. We will then consider contemporary problems in light of these theories. Students will
develop the ability to reason about ethical questions through classroom debates, presentations on an ethical problem, and writing assignments.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-PHIL, SBS-PHIL
Prereq: None

PHIL224 A History of Civil Disobedience
This course will explore some classic readings on civil disobedience and nonviolent political resistance in literature and philosophy. We will examine connections between some key moments in the history of intellectual thought in 4th- to 5th-century BCE Athens and in the 19th to 20th centuries. The lives of Socrates, Gandhi, and Martin Luther King, Jr., will be the focus of our study, though we will also read works of Greek tragedy (Sophocles), comedy (Aristophanes), and history (Thucydides), and writings by Thoreau, Tolstoy, and Orwell from the modern period. The course will conclude by examining the use and relevance of civil disobedience in the 21st century.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-COL, HA-COL, HA-COL
Identical With: COL109, COL109, COL109, COL109, COL109, COL109, COL109, COL109, COL109, COL109, COL109, COL109, COL109, COL109, COL109, COL109, COL109, COL109, COL109, COL109
Prereq: None

PHIL230 Elements of Logic
The basic principles of deductive reasoning.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: NSM-PHIL, NSM-PHIL
Prereq: None

PHIL231 Reason and Paradox
This course is an introduction to philosophy, logic, and conceptual issues underlying the foundations of the natural and social sciences. We will examine and analyze a range of patterns of reasoning that lead to surprising, even alarming, conclusions. These go from fallacious arguments whose mistakes can be clearly pinpointed, to conceptual puzzles whose resolution leads to insights about reasoning, to four genuine paradoxes for which there are no clear solutions at all. Most of these paradoxes have been known since antiquity: Zeno's Paradox, about the concepts of space, time, and motion; the Liar Paradox, about the notions of truth and reference; the Sorites Paradox, about the notion of vagueness; and a surprise paradox to be announced in class. The analysis and exploring in greater depth the meaning of key passages from the classical works students are reading in translation in PHIL205.

Offering: Host
Grading: Cr/U
Credits: 0.50
Gen Ed Area: HA-CEAS, HA-CEAS
Identical With: CHIN351, CHIN351, CHIN351, CHIN351
Prereq: None

PHIL232 Beginning Philosophy
This introduction to philosophy for first-year students will include close study and discussion of some major classical texts, as well as some contemporary works.

Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL
Prereq: None

PHIL233 Riddles of Existence: An Introduction to Metaphysics and Epistemology
Philosophy, according to one of the earliest philosophers, Aristotle, begins in wonder. This course is an introduction to some central aspects of the world and of our lives that give rise to wonder. Specifically, we will begin a rigorous examination of the natures of reasoning, knowledge, identity, mind, body, time, freedom, morality, and beauty.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL
Prereq: None

PHIL250 History of Political Philosophy
This course is a critical historical introduction to some of the central questions in political philosophy. We will begin by examining various arguments for and against the legitimacy of the state. We will then proceed to examine classic responses to the anarchist challenge. We will read a variety of positions including the liberal positions of Rousseau, Locke, Jefferson, and Mill; the communist position as expressed by Marx and Engels; and contemporary philosophical responses by Nozick, Rawls, and Sandel. Central to all of the views we will study are the concepts of equality, liberty, and justice. We will see that how these concepts are interpreted varies considerably among political philosophers. Although the bulk of the course will be devoted to analyzing classical and contemporary philosophical positions, we will spend time discussing how such positions inform contemporary controversies and current public policy debates.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-PHIL
Prereq: None

PHIL251 Classical Chinese Philosophy: Chinese Lab
This course is a half-credit course conducted in Chinese and designed to supplement the standard English-language Classical Chinese Philosophy (PHIL205) course. Students must have taken PHIL205 in the past or be enrolled in it simultaneously. The course will have two main foci: introducing students to modern and contemporary Chinese-language debates about Chinese philosophy and exploring in greater depth the meaning of key passages from the classical works students are reading in translation in PHIL205.

Both advanced learners of Chinese (fourth-year level or above) and native speakers are welcome. Familiarity with classical Chinese is desirable but not required. Assignments will include presentations in Chinese and some written work in English; evaluation will be tailored to each student's language background. If you are unsure whether your language background is sufficient for the course, please contact the instructor.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: Cr/U
Credits: 0.50
Gen Ed Area: HA-CEAS, HA-CEAS
Identical With: CHIN351, CHIN351, CHIN351, CHIN351
Prereq: None

PHIL252 19th-Century European Philosophy
This course presents a comprehensive survey of the major landmarks in modern European philosophy in the 19th century, from the German idealists to Nietzsche. Beginning with the problems generated by Kant's doctrine of transcendental idealism, this course charts the flourishing of German idealism (Fichte, Hegel) and its eventual dissolution when it was confronted with rival conceptions of individual religious experience (Kierkegaard) and social emancipation (Marx), culminating in a radically antifoundationalist challenge to both epistemology and ethics (Nietzsche).

Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
PHIL256 Existentialism
This course is an introduction to 20th-century French existentialism. "Existentialism" is both a philosophical tradition and term that is central to the intellectual history of Western thought. The term was explicitly adopted as a self-description by Jean-Paul Sartre and was widely disseminated both by his own literary and philosophical contributions and those of his associates—notably Simone de Beauvoir, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, and Albert Camus. Existentialism became identified with a cultural movement that flourished in Europe in the 1940s and 1950s. It also resonated widely with anti-colonial thinkers across the globe. Thus, through the work of Frantz Fanon, Richard Wright, and Sartre's own intellectual engagement with colonialism and oppression, we will also explore the ways in which existentialism gradually became an intellectual and political tool for contestation against racism and European imperialism.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL

PHIL258 Post-Kantian European Philosophy
In this study of 19th- and 20th-century philosophy in Europe (primarily France and Germany), special attention will be devoted to the interpretation of science and its significance for understanding the world as distinctly modern and ourselves and the world as natural (or as transcending nature). Related topics include the scope and limits of reason, the role of subjectivity in the constitution of meaning, the place of ethics and politics in a science-centered culture, and the problems of comprehending historical change. Philosophers to be read include Kant, Hegel, Marx, Nietzsche, Husserl, Heidegger, Weber, Habermas, and Foucault. The course is designed to introduce students to a very difficult but widely influential philosophical tradition and will emphasize close reading and comparative interpretation of texts. This course meets the Social, Cultural, and Critical Theory certificate's requirement in philosophical origins of theory.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL

PHIL259 Neo-Confucian Chinese Philosophy
This course will present critical discussion of issues central to Neo-Confucian (11th-19th centuries CE) philosophers that in many cases are still central in Chinese thought today. Topics will include the relation between knowledge and action, Neo-Confucian conceptions of idealism and materialism, and the connection between Neo-Confucian philosophy and spirituality.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL

PHIL261 Christianity and Philosophy
In this course we will examine a number of different ways in which Christianity and philosophy have crossed paths. After introductions to Christianity and philosophy in late antiquity, we will look at early Christian discussions of whether Christians could also practice philosophy and both early and recent apologetics and anti-apologetics, in which the merits of the Christian faith are disputed. We will then spend a substantial portion of the semester looking at ways that Christian doctrine was synthesized, first with Platonic philosophy and then with Aristotelian philosophy. Finally, we will look at the role religious belief played in the emergence of early modern science and at the dialogue between faith and science that has resulted.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL

PHIL263 Modern Chinese Philosophy
We will critically examine Chinese philosophical discourse from the late 19th century to the present, including liberalism, Marxism, and New Confucianism. Topics will include interaction with the West, human rights, the roles of traditions and traditional values, and the modern relevance of the ideal of sagehood.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL

PHIL265 Postanalytic Philosophy: Science and Metaphysics
The analytic movement in early 20th-century philosophy distinguished the domain of philosophy from that of empirical science. The sciences were empirical disciplines seeking facts, whereas philosophy primarily involved the analysis of linguistic meaning, often using the resources provided by formal logic. Criticisms of this conception of philosophy and its relation to the sciences have shaped much of the subsequent development of Anglophone philosophy. This course will examine closely some of the most influential later criticisms of the early analytic movement and the resulting reconceptions of philosophy as a discipline. The central themes of the course cut across the fields of epistemology, metaphysics, and the philosophy of language and mind. Special attention will be given to philosophy's relation to the empirical sciences, since this has been a prominent issue raised by the criticisms of the early analytic movement. Among the philosophers most prominently considered are Quine, Sellars, Davidson, Putnam, Dennett, Kripke, Brandom, and Haugeland.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-PHIL

PHIL266 Primate Encounters
What does it mean to see ourselves as primates, as close evolutionary relatives to other great apes and distant kin to old-world and new-world monkeys? In this course we will explore the wide-ranging philosophical implications of answers to this question by examining the evolution and behaviors of other primates, the ideas and assumptions (often gendered) of primatologists watching primates, and the thoughts of observers of the primatologists watching primates. We will pursue topics in the philosophy of science, philosophy of mind, and ethics. We will adopt a largely comparative perspective and examine philosophical, scientific, psychological, and popular writing (as well as films). We will end the course exploring how seeing ourselves as primates might have implications for the survival of our primate kin, and, ultimately, our own survival.

PHIL268 Postanalytic Philosophy: Science and Metaphysics
The analytic movement in early 20th-century philosophy distinguished the domain of philosophy from that of empirical science. The sciences were empirical disciplines seeking facts, whereas philosophy primarily involved the analysis of linguistic meaning, often using the resources provided by formal logic. Criticisms of this conception of philosophy and its relation to the sciences have shaped much of the subsequent development of Anglophone philosophy. This course will examine closely some of the most influential later criticisms of the early analytic movement and the resulting reconceptions of philosophy as a discipline. The central themes of the course cut across the fields of epistemology, metaphysics, and the philosophy of language and mind. Special attention will be given to philosophy's relation to the empirical sciences, since this has been a prominent issue raised by the criticisms of the early analytic movement. Among the philosophers most prominently considered are Quine, Sellars, Davidson, Putnam, Dennett, Kripke, Brandom, and Haugeland.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-PHIL

PHIL269 Primate Encounters
What does it mean to see ourselves as primates, as close evolutionary relatives to other great apes and distant kin to old-world and new-world monkeys? In this course we will explore the wide-ranging philosophical implications of answers to this question by examining the evolution and behaviors of other primates, the ideas and assumptions (often gendered) of primatologists watching primates, and the thoughts of observers of the primatologists watching primates. We will pursue topics in the philosophy of science, philosophy of mind, and ethics. We will adopt a largely comparative perspective and examine philosophical, scientific, psychological, and popular writing (as well as films). We will end the course exploring how seeing ourselves as primates might have implications for the survival of our primate kin, and, ultimately, our own survival.

PHIL271 Postanalytic Philosophy: Science and Metaphysics
The analytic movement in early 20th-century philosophy distinguished the domain of philosophy from that of empirical science. The sciences were empirical disciplines seeking facts, whereas philosophy primarily involved the analysis of linguistic meaning, often using the resources provided by formal logic. Criticisms of this conception of philosophy and its relation to the sciences have shaped much of the subsequent development of Anglophone philosophy. This course will examine closely some of the most influential later criticisms of the early analytic movement and the resulting reconceptions of philosophy as a discipline. The central themes of the course cut across the fields of epistemology, metaphysics, and the philosophy of language and mind. Special attention will be given to philosophy's relation to the empirical sciences, since this has been a prominent issue raised by the criticisms of the early analytic movement. Among the philosophers most prominently considered are Quine, Sellars, Davidson, Putnam, Dennett, Kripke, Brandom, and Haugeland.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-PHIL

PHIL272 Primate Encounters
What does it mean to see ourselves as primates, as close evolutionary relatives to other great apes and distant kin to old-world and new-world monkeys? In this course we will explore the wide-ranging philosophical implications of answers to this question by examining the evolution and behaviors of other primates, the ideas and assumptions (often gendered) of primatologists watching primates, and the thoughts of observers of the primatologists watching primates. We will pursue topics in the philosophy of science, philosophy of mind, and ethics. We will adopt a largely comparative perspective and examine philosophical, scientific, psychological, and popular writing (as well as films). We will end the course exploring how seeing ourselves as primates might have implications for the survival of our primate kin, and, ultimately, our own survival.
about the very purposes of art. Experiences of the ugly and the shocking that challenge traditional assumptions when modernist and postmodernist aesthetics began to experiment with rejection of these categories through the 19th century and into the 20th century, between these two basic categories of aesthetic experience, the beautiful aesthetic theory in which philosophers developed a fundamental distinction intermediate-level seminar, we will read some of the classic texts of 18th-century of order and harmony, that instead offer an experience of the sublime? In this is harmonious and pleasing? But what of objects that challenge our expectations of color perception; among others. While we will be primarily focusing on aesthetic theories, we will avoid cutting off aesthetic theory from facts about particular works that could possibly support, enrich, or refute aesthetic theories. Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-COL, HA-COL, HA-COL
Identical With: COL306, COL306, COL306, COL306, COL306, COL306, COL269
Prereq: None
PHIL270 Key Issues in Environmental Philosophy
Environmental philosophy is a broad discipline that explores a range of questions regarding both why and how we ought to protect the environment. In this class, we will study a number of the key issues that have and continue to concern, environmental philosophers. More specifically, we will examine questions about whether nature has value, the sort or sorts of value nature may have, and whether this value requires that we take efforts to conserve nature. Further, we will also consider the relationship between conservation and social justice. We will consider whether current efforts to protect the environment adequately address the needs of disadvantaged populations and how conservation efforts could be amended to better respond to those needs. Finally, we will think about and discuss how social values influence research within the environmental sciences and how the sciences in return influence social values regarding the environment.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-PHIL, SBS-PHIL, SBS-PHIL
Identical With: ENV5270, ENV5270, ENV5270, ENV5270, ENV5270, ENV5270, ENV5270
Prereq: None
PHIL271 Moral Responsibility
This intermediate philosophy course will examine several philosophical accounts of moral responsibility, with attention to several recurring themes: (1) For what do we hold people responsible: for their intentions? For consequences of their actions? For their character? For their response to others' deeds? (2) What do we presuppose about people or groups when we hold them responsible? (3) Is moral responsibility for something a static thing we discover, or does it emerge and shift with time and social context? (4) What is our aim and purpose in holding ourselves and others responsible, and how is that purpose best achieved?
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-PHIL, SBS-PHIL
Identical With: FG55270, FG55270
Prereq: None
PHIL272 Human Rights Across Cultures
Are human rights universal? Do cultural differences matter to judgments about human rights? We will look at the current international human rights institutional framework and at theoretical perspectives from Europe and America, China, and the Islamic world. We will look primarily at philosophical materials but will also pay some attention to the premises of international legal documents like the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and to the assumptions behind activist organizations like Amnesty International.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-PHIL, SBS-PHIL
Identical With: CEAS262, CEAS262, EAST262, CEAS262, CEAS262, EAST262, CEAS262, CEAS262, EAST262
Prereq: None

PHIL267 Aesthetics
Classical mimetic and literary theory and German aesthetic theory were two of the most exciting and revolutionary periods in philosophical aesthetics. Among the prominent philosophers working in the heyday of aesthetics, we will look at Plato, Aristotle and the influence of these classical debates on authors grouped under the label, German Romantic aestheticians, such as Herder, Schleiermacher, Dilthey, Schlegel, Novalis, Winkelmann, Hölderlin, Nietzsche, and Hegel. What emerged out of these debates for modern and contemporary aesthetics was a number of central topics, issues, arguments, and controversies having to do with perceptual normativity and the unity of aesthetic experience. In this course, in addition to gaining an overview of the development of philosophical aesthetics, we will examine in depth topics including Goethe's theory of color and its impact on the arts; Wittgenstein's remarks on color; whether our cognitive beliefs change what we see; a model of color perception as a standard of veridicality/error for aesthetic judgments; the concept of unity and disunity in color perception; among others. While we will be primarily focusing on aesthetic theories, we will avoid cutting off aesthetic theory from facts about particular works that could possibly support, enrich, or refute aesthetic theories.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-PHIL, SBS-PHIL
Identical With: COL266, COL266, COL266, COL266, COL266, COL266, COL266, COL266
Prereq: None

PHIL268 Gender and Justice
In this course, we will evaluate the requirements of gender equity in light of the human requirement to be cared for when vulnerable. First, we will consider the status of care as a value, practice, and socially necessary labor. We will then evaluate whether the concerns raised by feminist philosophers of care Eva Kittay and Virginia Held can be reconciled with a liberal theory of justice. Liberal philosopher John Stuart Mill was particularly insightful about gendered socialization, and we will focus on his views as well as those of John Rawls and Martha Nussbaum. Additional topics to be covered in the course include the role of autonomy in liberalism, the conflicts and potential for compatibility between autonomy and care, and the capabilities approach.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-PHIL, SBS-PHIL
Identical With: FG55270, FG55270
Prereq: None

PHIL269 The Beautiful and the Sublime
What do we mean when we appraise something as beautiful? Do we mean that it is harmonious and pleasing? But what of objects that challenge our expectations of order and harmony, that instead offer an experience of the sublime? In this intermediate-level seminar, we will read some of the classic texts of 18th-century aesthetic theory in which philosophers developed a fundamental distinction between these two basic categories of aesthetic experience, the beautiful and the sublime. We will then follow the elaboration, transformation, and the rejection of these categories through the 19th century and into the 20th century, when modernist and postmodernist aesthetics began to experiment with experiences of the ugly and the shocking that challenge traditional assumptions about the very purposes of art.
PHIL273 Justice and the Environment
So many of our environmental problems disproportionately burden certain groups. In this course, we will first examine competing conceptions of justice and then, through the lens of justice, exploring the intersectional injustices posed by environmental issues, we will discuss environmental justice, gender justice, food justice, and climate justice.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-ENVS, SBS-ENVS, SBS-ENVS
Identical With: ENV273, ENV273, ENV273, ENV273, ENV273, ENV273
Prereq: None

PHIL275 Key Concepts in Political Philosophy
This seminar offers an introduction to political philosophy. Establishing the key concepts of classical political philosophy through a reading of Plato's Republic, the course moves on to look at four challenges to the classical tradition in ecofeminism, anarchism, environmental sustainability, and the modern monetary reform movement. While offering the student a grounding in the foundational questions of Western philosophy, the class will be focused on contemporary problems related to social and economic injustice, development and globalization, possibilities for heterarchical or nonauthoritarian political community, and the political culture required for an economically and ecologically sustainable society.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-PHIL, SBS-PHIL, SBS-PHIL
Prereq: None

PHIL276 Virtue Ethics: Traditional, Comparative, and Contemporary Approaches
This course provides an overview and evaluation of various virtue-based approaches to ethics in the Western and Eastern traditions. In the first part of the course, we will get a basic sense for the structure and distinctive features of ancient virtue-based ethical theories. In the second part of the course, we will follow the trajectory of these approaches through to their revival in the late 20th century in the contemporary virtue ethics movement.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-PHIL
Identical With: COL275
Prereq: None

PHIL277 Feminist Philosophy and Moral Theory (FGSS Gateway)
This course explores the dialogue between feminist concerns and moral theory. It will explore not only how moral theory might support certain central feminist insights and aims, but also why some feminists cast doubt on the project of “doing moral theory.” Does the language of existing philosophical moral theories (reason, fairness, equality, utility, human nature, rights) sufficiently allow articulation of feminist problems? If not, how can feminist moral theorists move us beyond the grip of familiar gender-loaded oppositions? After surveying a range of perspectives on feminism and philosophy, we will give a deep reading to three book-length developments of feminist ethics: one from a Kantian perspective, one focused on care, and one focused on virtue ethics.
As a gateway course for the FGSS program, this course serves to introduce critical thinking about the construction of gender and the intersection of gender with race, ethnicity, class, and sexuality.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL
Identical With: FGSS277, FGSS277, FGSS277, FGSS277
Prereq: None

PHIL278 Political Philosophy
This course examines whether the principles that guide our political views on crime, punishment, and justice are to be found in nature or a rational source (right and law). We will examine these two main themes, beginning with authors who explain political life by referring to nature, naturalized norms, and power: Machiavelli, Hobbes, and Rousseau. We begin with the pessimistic moral psychology lying at the basis of Machiavelli and Hobbes’ political writings on power and sovereignty. We examine Rousseau’s account of natural inequalities in a state of nature; and his account of how the moral psychology of the pre-political condition (state of nature) gets developed in the political sphere through civic education. Other themes will include the power of individuals to cultivate themselves autonomously and free from constraints; radical autonomy; and expressive unity with nature. We examine problems with placing natural norms at the basis of political theories. Alternatively, in an attempt to rectify these problems, we will look at philosophers who relate the basic political concepts and principles to issues of right and law. Topics will include theories of property, crime, and punishment in Kant, Hegel, and Marx. We will discuss the conditions under which rebellion, resistance, and civil disobedience justified; whether Hegel’s organicist model of the state detrimental to the freedom of individuals; the contrast between acquired rights v. intrinsic rights; and finally, whether the transition away from nature toward right and law indicates a conservative bias detrimental to individualistic self-realization and self-expression.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-PHIL
Prereq: None

PHIL282 Reason and Revelation: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion
Throughout the medieval period in Europe, philosophy and theology were thought to be compatible, if not completely coextensive. With the dawning of modernity, however, a distinction of mutual suspicion began to emerge between the secular and sacred disciplines. Broadly speaking, the discipline of philosophy can be said to be the effort to evaluate the claims of revelation and reason in terms of one another and to reveal a deep consonance or dissonance between the two. We will examine some of the major texts within this field, whose authors include deep skeptics, committed Christians, committed anti-Christians, secular and nonsecular Jews, feminists, ethicists, idealists, empiricists, and romantics. Themes to be explored include proofs of God’s existence—along with refutations of those proofs and rebuttals to those refutations—the problem of evil, religious ethics, religious experience, the possibility of a “universal religion,” and the relationship between monotheism and gender.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-RELI, HA-RELI, HA-RELI
Identical With: RELI292, RELI292, RELI292, RELI292, RELI292, RELI292, RELI292, RELI292
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-PHIL, SBS-PHIL

PHIL284 African American Philosophy
This course will examine the philosophical questions that have been of particular interest to African American philosophers. We will explore the domains of knowledge in which African American philosophers and thinkers have felt compelled to intervene. We will approach these questions by engaging with canonical historical figures such as DuBois, Douglass, and Cooper, then we will assess the extent to which contemporary African American philosophers have remained (and continue to be) concerned with the same questions, albeit with different discursive methodologies. The purpose of this course is to trace the philosophical articulation of race, racism, identity, politics of freedom, and subject formation in the history of African American philosophical thought.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-PHIL, SBS-PHIL
Identical With: AFAM284, AFAM284, AFAM284, AFAM284

PHIL286 Philosophy of Mind
This course will examine several questions about the nature of the mind, such as the relationship between mind and body, the ontological status of the mind, and the nature of our access to mental states. Twentieth-century approaches to the mind, including behaviorism, reductive and eliminative materialism, functionalism, artificial intelligence, and cognitive science, will be examined against a backdrop of Cartesian assumptions about the nature of the mind and our ways of knowing it.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-PHIL, SBS-PHIL
Identical With: SISP286, SISP286, SISP286, SISP286

PHIL287 Philosophy of Science
This course is a fast-moving introduction to the philosophy of science. Topics include the relation between finished theories or explanations and ongoing research; the recognition and dissemination of discoveries; the justification of scientific claims; conceptual and technical (revolutionary) change in the science; the significance of instrumentation, experiment, and artifice in science; the places of laws, models, and causal relations in scientific understanding; and whether various sciences differ fundamentally in their aims, methods, and achievements. Considerable attention will be given to examples of scientific practice, both historical and contemporary.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL
Identical With: COL292, PHIL292, COL292, PHIL292, COL292, PHIL292, COL292, PHIL292, PHIL292, PHIL292, PHIL292, PHIL292, PHIL292,
PHIL292 Theory of Knowledge
This course is divided into four sections: knowledge of the world around us; self-knowledge; our knowledge of others; our knowledge from others, or testimony-based knowledge. We will focus on the problems that arise in trying to give a philosophical account of the possibility of knowledge in each of these areas. Topics to be considered include skepticism, subjectivism and objectivity, transcendental arguments, the scheme-content distinction, the naturalization of epistemology, the place of intersubjectivity in knowledge, and whether there is such a thing as practical, as distinct from theoretical, knowledge.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL
Identical With: PHIL294, PHIL292, PHIL291, COL292, COL292, COL292, COL292, COL292, COL292, COL292, COL292, COL292, COL292, COL292, COL292, COL292, COL292, COL292, COL292, COL292, COL292, COL292, COL292, COL292, COL292, COL292, COL292, COL292, COL292, COL292
Prereq: [PHIL202 or COL360] OR [PHIL201 or COL359 or CCIV217] OR PHIL231

PHIL293 Metaphysics
An advanced introduction to some central topics in traditional and contemporary metaphysics, topics may include some of the following: time, universals, causation, freedom of will, modality, realism, and idealism.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL
Prereq: None

PHIL294 Theory of Knowledge
This course is divided into four sections: knowledge of the world around us; self-knowledge; our knowledge of others; our knowledge from others, or testimony-based knowledge. We will focus on the problems that arise in trying to give a philosophical account of the possibility of knowledge in each of these areas. Topics to be considered include skepticism, subjectivism and objectivity, transcendental arguments, the scheme-content distinction, the naturalization of epistemology, the place of intersubjectivity in knowledge, and whether there is such a thing as practical, as distinct from theoretical, knowledge.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL
Identical With: PHIL292, PHIL292, PHIL292, PHIL292
Prereq: [PHIL202 or COL360] OR [PHIL201 or COL359 or CCIV217] OR PHIL231

PHIL303 Plato's REPUBLIC
The safest general characterization of the European philosophical tradition is that it consists of a series of footnotes to Plato.” This declaration, famously made by Alfred North Whitehead in the early 20th century, seems especially true of Plato’s REPUBLIC. No other work in the Western tradition can lay claim to setting the tone so influentially for the further development of philosophy as a discipline. Almost every branch of philosophical thought we are familiar with today—on matters of metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, moral psychology, politics, and aesthetics—receives a major formulation in this text. This seminar will be devoted to a close reading of each of the 10 books of the REPUBLIC, alongside relevant secondary literature on the dialogue and various perspectives that have been taken on this magisterial work in contemporary philosophy and literature.
thesis of subjective Idealism in the Prolegomena; Kant on the purposiveness of organic nature; late 18th-19th century empirical theories of life and nature, beginning with Enlightenment theories of matter, life, and generation in the age of Goethe (1749-1832); an application of Goethe’s empirical and scientific method in his botanical writings and theory of metamorphosis of plants. Goethe’s natural philosophy will provide the key background to examining how German Idealists’ romantic conception of life and nature peacefully coexist with materialist proposals. Our investigation of 19th c. natural philosophy will end by examining the concept of life and nature in Hegel’s natural philosophy.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL
Prereq: [PHIL202 or COL360] OR [PHIL252 or COL252]

PHIL310 Concepts of Matter: A Brief Philosophical History of the Concept of Matter
In this course, we will explore changing notions of matter in Western thought from classical Greek thought through the quantum revolution in physics, and philosophical debates about their implications. We will begin with views of matter in Plato, Aristotle, and the ancient atomists and how they were interrelated with views of human beings: the devaluation of matter and the body in Platonist and Gnostic thought, the perhaps surprisingly positive attitude taken toward death without a hope of continued existence by the materialist Lucretius, and the appropriation of Aristotle’s hylomorphic philosophy into Christian theology and scholastic science in the late middle ages. We will then look at the emergence of a conception of “material substance” in the 17th century, examining the differences between the mathematical formulations of Galileo and Descartes and those of atomists such as Gassendi. The remainder of the section will focus on the rise of materialism and reactions against it: Descartes and Hobbes on the question of whether human beings are merely machines, the Newton-Leibniz debate about the activity of God in nature, Laplace’s demon and the deterministic interpretation of classical mechanics, and the 19th-century reactions of romanticism and spiritualism. Finally, we will examine the radical and counterintuitive changes in the notion of matter occasioned by quantum mechanics, as well as interpretations that put consciousness and subjectivity back into the collapse of the wave function. We will consider whether contemporary physics really has the kind of notion of “material substance” needed for a traditional form of materialism before concluding with readings from philosophers and physicists in the recent revivals of dualism and panpsychism.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-PHIL
Identical With: CHUM313
Prereq: None

PHIL311 Spinoza’s ETHICS
This course is devoted to close reading of one of the philosophical masterpieces of the Western tradition. The ETHICS is of genuine contemporary interest, with its metaphysics that combine materialism with theism, its philosophical psychology that anticipates Freud, and its attempt to reconcile human freedom with a belief in scientific explanation. This is a difficult, vast, profound work that requires and will repay close study.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL
Identical With: COL311, COL311, COL311, COL311
Prereq: None

PHIL313 Kantian Epistemology
This seminar provides an intensive look at Kant’s first Critique, one of the most groundbreaking works in all of modern philosophy. We will alternate between close readings of Kant’s arguments in the CRITIQUE OF PURE REASON and broader comparative discussion of contemporary philosophical debates that have been shaped by Kant’s theory of knowledge. Themes will include the difference between human and animal perception, conceptual and nonconceptual content, the nature of human discursivity, and the relation between everyday cognition and scientific knowledge.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-PHIL, SBS-PHIL
Prereq: None

PHIL321 American Pragmatist Philosophy: Purposes, Meanings, and Truths
The course sketches and evaluates an American tradition of more or less overtly pragmatist thinkers in philosophy and the human sciences, stretching roughly from Emerson and Peirce at the beginning; through William James, George Herbert Mead, and John Dewey in the heyday of the pragmatist public intellectual; to recent and current writers as diverse as Cornell West, Robert Brandom, Richard Rorty, Ian Hacking, and Ruth Millikan. These thinkers offer variations on the premise that all meanings gesture not only backward to facts and things, but also forward to the practical circumstances and purposes of interpreters. As purposes shift, so do meanings, and as meanings shift, so does truth—for whether we accept a claim as true depends above all else on its meaning. Pragmatist theories have been subjected to frequent caricature as implying that ideas can mean whatever we take them to mean or that what is true varies according to what each individual finds convenient and expedient to believe. What does it mean, then, to retain a sense of respect for truth? While some pragmatist accounts do explicitly deflate the importance of the concept of truth, others claim not only to respect truth, but to offer an account of truth that allows us to inquire more clearly into the evolving but real meaning of moral judgments, religious and aesthetic claims, psychological attributions, and other deeply contested candidates for human belief.

Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL
Identical With: AMST327, AMST329, AMST327, AMST329
Prereq: None

PHIL322 Chinese Buddhist Philosophy
This seminar will focus on three of the key themes in Chinese Buddhist philosophy: interdependence, universal Buddha nature, and emptiness. On each theme, we will read classic scriptural materials, philosophical discussions by Chinese Buddhist thinkers from the 7th-12th centuries, contemporary secondary scholarship, and—in some cases—critical reactions by contemporary Buddhists. Our goals will be both to understand the Buddhist doctrines and to critically evaluate them as philosophy.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-PHIL, SBS-PHIL, SBS-PHIL
Identical With: CEAS322, RELI223, CEAS322, RELI223, EAST322, RELI223, CEAS322, RELI223, CEAS322, RELI223, EAST322, RELI223
Prereq: None

PHIL333 Beauty, Science, and Morality
Could our aesthetic experience of nature help us attain a deeper scientific understanding of its structure? Could our capacity to create and appreciate art aid our moral development? How could beauty help us remain steadfast in the face of chaos and destruction? In this advanced-level seminar, we will explore these questions through the lens of Kant’s CRITIQUE OF THE POWER OF
JUDGMENT (also known as the third Critique). Through a careful reading of the text, we will investigate Kant’s path-breaking argument about how aesthetics might help us bridge the gap between our scientific and moral viewpoints. And we will also trace how Kant’s third Critique has shaped debates concerning the relationship between beauty, science, and morality from the beginning of the 19th century to our present day.

Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-PHIL, SBS-PHIL
Identical With: COL333, COL333
Prereq: None

PHIL336 Photography and Representation
Photography has given rise to theoretical and critical reflections since its emergence in the 19th century. This seminar will examine some of the theoretical problems posed by photographic practice (in aesthetics, history, philosophy of mind, and philosophy of language) and the photographic problems that have been posited by modern theory (in genres as diverse as the snapshot, portraits, and forensic photography). Some of the themes to be explored include photography’s relation to problems concerning memory, identity, sexuality, realism, fantasy, and politics. The goal of the course is to enable students to think more clearly about how photographic images tell the truth, how they lie, how they inspire, and how they generally affect thinking and feeling.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-ART, HA-ART
Identical With: ARHA365, AMST364, ARHA365, AMST364
Prereq: None

PHIL337 Comparative Philosophy
This seminar will explore the substantive and methodological issues that arise when one takes seriously the idea that philosophy has been, and continues to be, practiced within multiple traditions of inquiry, in many different ways, and in many different languages. We will examine and critique some of the ways in which “comparison” has been used, as well as examine arguments that comparison across traditions is in fact impossible. Although most of our attention will be focused on written academic research, we will also attend to the challenges and benefits of interacting directly with philosophers in other countries and cultures.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-CHUM, HA-CHUM
Identical With: CHUM368, CEAS258, CHUM368, CEAS258, CHUM368, CEAS258
Prereq: None

PHIL338 Comparative Political Philosophy
Undertaking “comparative philosophy” means to do philosophy by drawing on multiple philosophical traditions. In this course, we will study key topics in political philosophy, such as the justification of political authority, the legitimacy of public critique of social rituals, and the scope of liberty and rights—from both modern Western and contemporary East Asian perspectives. We will examine potential obstacles to comparative theorizing, as well as benefits that can arise both for currently dominant traditions (e.g., Western liberalism) and for alternatives to liberalism such as Chinese and Korean Confucianism.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-PHIL
Identical With: CEAS338
Prereq: None

PHIL341 Confucianism and Virtue Ethics
In recent Western moral philosophy, virtue ethics has been undergoing a renaissance; many philosophers have been attracted to this approach to ethics that emphasizes a person’s character and cultivated dispositions rather than a rule-centred approach to right and wrong. Since the virtue ethics approach was more popular prior to the 20th century, philosophers have looked back to a variety of historical thinkers for inspiration, including Aristotle, Hume, and Nietzsche. In this course, we will explore the merits of drawing on thinkers from the Confucian tradition to develop virtue ethics. In what ways do Confucian thinkers lend themselves to being understood as virtue ethicists? What new stimulus might Confucianism offer to contemporary philosophers who so far have only drawn on Western sources? Is it fruitful to talk about a contemporary version of Confucianism that can enter into dialogue with both contemporary Western virtue ethicists and their critics?

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL
Identical With: CEAS341, CEAS341, EAST341, CEAS341, CEAS341, EAST341
Prereq: ANY TWO PHILOSOPHY COURSES

PHIL343 Concepts of Evil, Blame, and Moral Understanding
The question, What is evil, is awkward to answer except by posing the roundabout question, What are we doing when we call something evil? To speak of evil is often to posit a motive that is beyond moral understanding. Does this mean that there really are actions motivated by a morally opaque force of evil, or does it simply show that we wish to justify certain failures of understanding? While we represent evildoers as ideal targets for blame, they are simultaneously depicted as practically impervious to blame. Thus, we must examine the nature and point of blame. While some argue that the concept of radical evil can be abandoned, they risk charges of optimistic blindness and moral spinelessness. Are these charges justified? Given all of its function and connotations, does the wise moral critic employ the concept of evil?

Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL
Prereq: None

PHIL344 Moral Motivation
In this seminar, students will explore the systematic philosophical problem surrounding moral motivation and cultivate their own informed stance toward it. The problem is this: Moral expectations and ideals must be in some sense realistic or realizable; otherwise, they threaten to become irrelevant to ordinary lives. Yet morality always implicitly challenges our actual inclinations and habits. Taking morality seriously means holding myself and others to normative ideals and constraints even when we do NOT in any sense “feel like it.” So, how can it be realistic to expect or demand that people do what they are, in fact, not motivated to do? Is it helpful—or misguided—to insist that morality has something like reason on its side?

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL
Prereq: None

PHIL347 Ethics and Fluency: Metaphors in Moral Cognition
In responding to global climate crises, moral philosophers, policymakers, and activists may find ourselves relying on concepts that are poorly suited to the problems we now face. In thinking about water-related challenges, this course asks participants not only to conceive our situation in familiar moral terms—managing disputes about water rights or water pollution control, for
example—but also to see how our understanding of water, and our relation to it, transforms how we conceive of morality.

The shared moral reference points to which contemporary public discourse can most readily appeal include rights, reciprocal agreements, and alleviation of suffering. The first two principle-based concepts have been of some use in addressing clear cases of conflict among actual human beings’ claims. Yet such conflicts represent only a fraction of the challenges related to environmental interdependence. Meanwhile, public alarm over suffering can draw attention to other symptoms of environmental crisis—namely, to the desperation of sentient beings in circumstances of scarcity, toxicity, inundation, or niche loss. Yet such concern over suffering also remains insufficient to orient us to our responsibility with respect to Earth’s interdependent patterns of life.

This seminar will explore several marginalized and emerging ways of conceptualizing problems of value and agency, inquiring into how they help us recognize and rise to the challenges of environmental interdependence and volatility. We will attend especially to the challenge of making sense of an ethics animated by “water” metaphors such as fluency, dynamics, and circulation, rather than by the more “solid” conceptual touchstones of principles on one hand and results or outcomes on the other.

Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-PHIL, SBS-PHIL, SBS-PHIL, SBS-PHIL, SBS-PHIL
Identical With: ENV5347, ENV5347, ENV5347, ENV5347, ENV5347, ENV5347, ENV5347, ENV5347, ENV5347, ENV5347, ENV5347, ENV5347, ENV5347, ENV5347, ENV5347, ENV5347, ENV5347, ENV5347, ENV5347, ENV5347, ENV5347
Prereq: None

PHIL354 Hope and Hopelessness in an Age of Mass Incarceration

The United States incarcerates more people than any other country in the world. Over 2 million people are caught in the criminal justice system today. A disproportionate number of those incarcerated are people of color, particularly black, Latino/a, and indigenous men. Women, too, are a growing part of the prison population, as are queer, transgender, and gender nonconforming people. Young people, particularly impoverished black youth, are funneled into correctional supervision through the school to prison pipeline. For many people in the country today, avoiding prison seems hopeless.

This interdisciplinary course, grounded on philosophical reflections on hope, liberty, respect, and exclusion, will critically explore the moral, psychological, and political issues raised by mass incarceration in the US. We will be particularly interested in whether and under what conditions hope is possible for those marginalized under the carceral system.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-CHUM, HA-CHUM
Identical With: CHUM3354, CHUM3354, CHUM3354, CHUM3354
Prereq: None

PHIL355 Animal Minds

Can animals, particularly great apes, reason? Do they form intentions, do they have beliefs, might they act ethically? What can other animals tell us about our minds? Perhaps thought and the capacity to deliberate are unique to our own species. In this course we will adopt a largely comparative perspective and examine philosophical, scientific, psychological, and popular writing about the relation of humans to the other animals. We will examine evidence for mindedness and reasoning in social species with an emphasis on primates (human and non). We will also explore the ethical implications of this research.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL
Prereq: None

PHIL357 Michel Foucault: Power and Its Products

Is power productive of reality? What does Michel Foucault (1926-1984) mean when he famously declares that power is not just prohibitive, but productive? Foucault’s work has been enormously influential in the fields of philosophy, social theory, history, anthropology, queer theory, and feminist theory, among others. The primary topic of Foucault’s work is the way in which we have come to categorize not only our world but ourselves and in particular to categorize ourselves in terms of madness, criminality, disease, and sexuality. Foucault, however, is interested in more than these categories themselves: he aims to investigate the conditions through which these categories come to be seen as capable of capturing truths about ourselves. This investigation leads him, in the mature phase of his work that begins in the 1970s, to the problem of power, which is best thought of as a set of relations and not as a thing or a possession. Foucault takes power relations to be (a) implied in relations of knowledge and (b) to be “productive,” in a certain sense, of social reality. In this course, we will try to clarify the relationship between power, the production of the social, and knowledge in Foucault’s work.

On the one hand, to call power productive opens the door to a major reconsideration of the basic problems of social and political philosophy, which can no longer be assured of having a timeless set of basic questions or objects (the state, the citizen-subject). On the other hand, there is a risk in this approach of ascribing almost magical qualities to power and of reifying it. Since his death, Foucault’s thought has often been taken to end up in a curious impasse, caught between extreme activism that accepts no system of power as established and cynicism that sees co-optation everywhere and resistance as futile. What are the political implications of Foucault’s shifting conception of power? What follows for our understanding of ourselves? What is really at stake in the ways that we classify and categorize ourselves today?

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-PHIL
Prereq: None

PHIL360 Topics in Christianity and Philosophy
In this seminar, we will explore classic and contemporary texts by Christian philosophers and their critics. Topics and readings will vary from year to year, ranging from close reading of a classic text such as Augustine’s CITY OF GOD or Kierkegaard’s FEAR AND TREMBLING to topics such as Christian thought and the rise of modern science.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-PHIL, SBS-PHIL
Prereq: None

PHIL362 Origins of the Human Mind
Since classical antiquity, philosophers have often characterized human beings by way of contrasts between ourselves and nonhuman animals, particularly in terms of mental abilities humans possess and nonhuman animals (putatively) lack, such as reasoning and language. Only recently, however, have the sciences—particularly evolutionary biology, cognitive psychology, anthropology, and cognitive ethology—begun to offer the tools needed to characterize differences in the cognitive toolkits of different species and to attempt to piece together hypotheses about how human minds differ so greatly from those of our nearest relatives, the great apes, in spite of our genetic similarity and the comparatively brief period since the time of our last common ancestors. In this course, we will read several recent works by philosophers and scientists presenting theories of the evolution of distinctively human cognition.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-PHIL
Prereq: None

PHIL366 Bodies, Machines, and Meaning: Cultural Studies of the Sciences
Cultural studies of the sciences shift the focus of interdisciplinary science studies from understanding the sciences as producing and justifying knowledge, to understanding them as meaning-making and world-transforming practices. Cultural studies attend to scientific meaning-making at multiple levels, and to the interactions among them: concrete material relations among bodies, technologies, and their settings or situations; verbal, visual, corporeal, mathematical, and other expressive performances; and social, cultural or political institutions, practices, boundaries, and movements across and within them. Cultural studies of science also emphasizes political engagement with scientific practices and their broader cultural entanglements. This course explores what it means to do cultural studies of science, with a focus on three interrelated themes: alternative conceptions of what it means to make claims and reason about what happens in “nature”; case studies in how scientific meaning and understanding are embodied and prosthetically extended technologically; and some specific conceptual and material relations among scientific understandings of life, bodies, sex, reproduction, and being-human.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-PHIL, SBS-PHIL
Identical With: SISP366, SISP366, SISP366, SISP366
Prereq: None

PHIL375 Paternalism: Its Problems and Promise
Although many ethical and political traditions—including Confucianism—embrace the idea that benevolent concern can render legitimate at least some efforts to shape the character or behavior of others, perhaps even when the “shaping” is done by the state, liberalism has long rejected such “paternalism.” In this seminar, we will examine arguments for and against various forms of paternalism, including issues like state regulations, “libertarian paternalism,” efforts to insist on civility in public discourse, and moral education. Most of the readings will be drawn from current Western philosophy, but lying in the background are Confucian interests in potentially paternalistic values like filial piety, deference, and ritual propriety, as well as arguments from Confucians (and others) against the idea that we are, most fundamentally, atomistic individuals with complete sovereignty over our choices. Students with interests in such issues will be able to explore them in their research projects.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-PHIL, SBS-PHIL
Prereq: None

PHIL381 Topics in Philosophy of Mind
This course will explore recent discussions in philosophy of mind. Topics will change from year to year.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-PHIL
Prereq: None

PHIL383 Mind, Body, and World
Social-pragmatist conceptions of language and mind have sought to accommodate the normativity of meaning and justification within a broadly scientific, naturalistic understanding of ourselves and the world by treating mental life as grounded in public practices and norms of communication in partially shared causal circumstances. Such accounts have sometimes been criticized for neglecting the experiential, affective, and first-person aspects of mind and, at other times, for disconnecting linguistic communication from accountability to the world. This advanced seminar critically assesses some influential recent efforts to account for objective accountability, perceptual experience, first-person perspectives, and affectivity as constructive components of broadly social-pragmatist approaches to mindedness. With a brief introduction to Quine’s and Davidson’s criticisms of semantic empiricism as background, we will examine John McDowell’s attempt to develop a post-Davidsonian empiricism, Hubert Dreyfus/Samuel Todes’ phenomenological dualism of bodily coping and linguistic articulation, Alva Noe’s treatment of perception as bodily activity, John Haugeland on embodied “existential commitment,” and Rebecca Kukla and Mark Lance on the pragmatic normativity of the space of reasons.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL
Prereq: None

PHIL384 The Metaphysics of Objectivity: Science, Meaning, and Mattering
Objectivity is often understood epistemically as a stance, attitude, methodology, or relation to the world that is conducive to or even necessary for adequate knowledge. Such epistemic conceptions of objectivity have been widely criticized. Yet some philosophers now argue that these very criticisms uncover a more basic commitment to objective accountability as the condition for meaningful thought and understanding. This advanced seminar in philosophy and science studies will explore three attempts to reconceive objectivity as a condition of intelligibility rather than of knowledge: Robert Brandom’s neopragmatist conception of objectivity as socially constituted, John Haugeland’s understanding of objectivity as an “existential commitment” constitutive of scientific understanding, and Karen Barad’s poststructuralist feminist conception of objectivity as constituted “intra-actively” in ways that invoke ethical as well as epistemic responsibilities. We shall be especially attentive to how these approaches might change how we think about the sciences.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
This advanced seminar explores the philosophical significance of recent developments in evolutionary, developmental, and genomic biology, with special emphasis upon topics that bear on biologically-grounded conceptions of mind and language. After initial treatment of preparatory topics such as naturalism and reductionism, the course takes up four primary themes: organism/environment relations; relations between genetics, epigenetics, and genomics; developmentalist challenges to orthodox neo-Darwinist conceptions of evolution; and evolutionary approaches to understanding mind and language, especially those that emphasize niche construction and the co-evolution of language and homo sapiens.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL
Identical With: SISP384, SISP384
Prereq: None

PHIL385 Understanding Life and Mind: Topics in the Philosophy of Biology
This year's topic is language, logic, and necessity in Wittgenstein's TRACTATUS LOGICO-PHILOSOPHICUS.

Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL
Identical With: SISP385, SISP385
Prereq: PHIL293 OR [PHIL202 or COL360]

PHIL388 Topics in Philosophy of Language
This year's topic is language, logic, and necessity in Wittgenstein's TRACTATUS LOGICO-PHILOSOPHICUS.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL
Prereq: None

PHIL389 Heidegger and the Temporal Sense of Being
Martin Heidegger claims in BEING AND TIME that the most fundamental philosophical question is the question of the sense of being, but that this question has been obscured and trivialized in the Western philosophical tradition. His book aimed to recover an understanding of this question and to show how temporality and time are central to an adequate grasp of the sense of being. We are reading BEING AND TIME and various secondary literature as guides to what it would mean to "reawaken" that question. Since this question is also thought to replace or reformulate many familiar problems in philosophy--about meaning and intentionality, knowledge, agency/normativity, and metaphysics (as about entities rather than the being of those entities)--and to relocate others (truth, objectivity, historicity, and what it is to be human), we shall consider the significance of and rationale for these replacements and relocations. We shall give special attention to the role accorded to time and temporality in understanding being, and especially to the claim that any understanding of being is and must be finite.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-CHUM, HA-CHUM
Identical With: CHUM327, CHUM327
Prereq: None

PHIL390 Topics in Metaphysics
This course explores recent discussions in metaphysics. Topics change from year to year.

Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL, HA-PHIL

Prereq: [PHIL231 AND [PHIL201 or COL359 or CCIV217]] OR (PHIL231 AND [PHIL202 or COL360]) OR (PHIL231 AND PHIL292)

PHIL401 Individual Tutorial, Undergraduate
Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

PHIL402 Individual Tutorial, Undergraduate
Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

PHIL403 Department/Program Project or Essay
Project to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F

PHIL404 Department/Program Project or Essay
Project to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

PHIL407 Senior Tutorial
Downgraded Senior Thesis Tutorial - Project to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F

PHIL408 Senior Tutorial
Downgraded Senior Thesis Tutorial - Project to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F

PHIL409 Senior Thesis Tutorial
Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

PHIL410 Senior Thesis Tutorial
Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

PHIL411 Group Tutorial, Undergraduate
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

PHIL412 Group Tutorial, Undergraduate
Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

PHIL419 Student Forum
Offering: Host
Grading: Cr/U

PHIL420 Student Forum
Offering: Host
Grading: Cr/U

PHIL465 Education in the Field, Undergraduate
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

PHIL470 Independent Study, Undergraduate
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: None
Prereq: None

PHIL491 Teaching Apprentice Tutorial
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

PHIL492 Teaching Apprentice Tutorial
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT