Spring 2013
Philosophy Department Course Descriptions

*Philosophy 101 Philosophical Problems—Staff*
MTWR 0900-0950 303 GER
Philosophical study of morality (e.g., ethical relativism; justification of moral judgments; concepts of duty, right, and wrong). The course is about relations with others that concern human well being. Its philosophical aim is for students to understand the intellectual beliefs assumed in their opinions and values and to learn how to analytically defend those beliefs and engage in critical dialogue about them. Student participation is encouraged throughout and the focus is on the individual’s moral or ethical system. Ideas that all moral beliefs are relative are challenged early on and a concept of moral universalism is built up through the practice of giving reasons for beliefs. The reading, thinking and writing in the course is abstract in its focus on philosophical views but also concrete through the use of literary and real life examples. Students are required to engage in moral theory by contrasting, comparing and choosing among the different moral systems of deontology, utilitarianism and virtue ethics.

*Philosophy 110 Human Nature—Staff*
MTWR 0900-0950 204 CHA
What does it mean to be human? What makes us “human”? What is the place of humans in the world? This course will explore influential traditional, modern, and contemporary approaches to human nature. Thinkers examined include Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala, Plato, Hobbes, Foucault, Frantz Fanon, Julia Kristeva, and Enrique Dussel. Teaching will take the form of large group lectures and dedicated discussion sections.

*Philosophy 120 Ethics of Enterprise and Exchange—Professor Morar*
MW 1200-1320 30 PAC
In a free market world, what are the limits that a society or government should impose on the corporate world? In the absence of universal ethical standards in business ethics, how should we hold individual entrepreneur players responsible? What is ethically problematic about Gordon Gecko’s famous proclamation “greed is good”? Is self-interested behavior determined by an individual’s character, or is it more the product of the capitalist system in which individuals operate? Are there moral obligations that go beyond legal restrictions? This course provides a moral examination of business by considering the nature of enterprise and exchange. Topics will include corporate and consumer responsibility, meaningful work, and leadership.

*Philosophy 170 Love & Sex—Professor Mann*
MW 1000-1050 180 PLC
Love and sex are so central to human life that many would argue that our intimate relationships are the key to self-esteem, fulfillment, even happiness itself; in fact, our intimate relationships are probably more important to our sense of well-being than our careers. Yet we spend remarkably little time thinking about love and sex, even as we spend years preparing ourselves for the world of work. In this course you will be ask to reflect on the most intimate sphere of human existence. We will draw on historical, sociological, religious, feminist and philosophical work to shed critical light on a variety of questions, including: What is love exactly? Why do we continually associate love and sex with happiness and pleasure when they often make us so utterly miserable? Is there, or should there be, an ethics of love and sex? What is moral, what is normal, and who gets to decide? What happens to sex when it is associated with “scoring” (the conquest model of sex)? How are our understandings of masculinity and femininity tied in with what we believe about love and sex?

*Philosophy 211 Existentialism—Professor Warnek*
MWF 1600-1650 180 PLC
Basic ideas of the Christian and atheistic divisions of the existentialist movement; some attention to the philosophical situation that generated the existentialist rebellion. The course begins with a consideration of the historical origins of existential thought in the writings of Kierkegaard and then continues with readings from existential thinkers of the twentieth Century, from Karl Jaspers, Martin Heidegger and Gabriel Marcel to Albert Camus, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Jean-Paul Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir. We will have occasion to discuss the pervasive presence of existential themes in contemporary literature and film. We consider the existential criticism of the rationalist philosophy and scientism as these dominate the modern era. The course continually concerns itself with the basic experiences taken up within existential writings: anxiety, the absurd, hope, freedom, mortality, presence, love.
Philosophy 312 History of Philosophy, 19th Century—Professor Zambrana
MWF 1300-1350 240C MCK
Hegel, Marx, and Nietzsche have been described as “masters of suspicion.” In different yet equally groundbreaking ways, they call into question perennial philosophical assumptions about reality, knowledge, and value. What they share, however, is a deep suspicion of abstract accounts of the self. In their texts we find accounts of the self as embodied—as bound to desire, need, and affect. We also find accounts of the self as social—other selves, relations of labor and power, and history are constitutive of the self. Albeit in different ways, then, the body, other selves, and socio-historical relations constitute the self. In this course, we will explore these themes by examining selections from Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Marx’s *1844 Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts*, *On the Jewish Question*, and *Capital*, and Nietzsche’s *Genealogy of Morals*. Although not exclusively, Hegel, Marx, and Nietzsche were responding to Kant’s Copernican Revolution. Therefore, we will begin the course by examining selections from Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason*.

Philosophy 315 Introduction to Feminist Philosophy—Staff
TR 1000-1120 204 CHA
This course examines basic concepts and important texts in feminist philosophy. We will talk about what the great philosophers have said about women’s ability to do philosophy, what it means to do philosophy as women, how feminism has challenged the most basic assumptions of the Western philosophical tradition, and contemporary issues in feminist philosophy. This course is a prerequisite for some upper division courses in feminist philosophy.

Philosophy 339 Introduction to Philosophy of Science—Professor Zack
TR 1200-1320 111 LIL
Science rules as a primary source of factual knowledge about our physical world. Science is also closely related to technology, which has changed the social world, for examples, via: modern transportation, the internet, vaccinations against infectious diseases, birth control. Philosophers work with ideas, rather than facts, and they may shy away from the social as well as the physical sciences, because those sciences do not belong to the humanities, while philosophy is a humanistic discipline. However, philosophers have played an important role in founding the modern sciences—most of them began in philosophy. In our day, some philosophers accept both the physical and social sciences as ultimate authorities about reality, while others have challenged both hegemony of science and its basic principles about scientific objectivity. In the process of historically creating the sciences and accepting or criticizing them, the philosophical subfield known as Philosophy of Science has resulted. The aim of this Introduction to Philosophy of Science course is for the student to understand and be able to discuss specific answers to the following.

1. WHAT MAKES A FIELD OF STUDY A SCIENCE?.
2. WHAT A FACT IS AND IS NOT?
3. HOW ARE THE SOCIAL SCIENCES ‘SCIENCES’?
4. WHAT IS SCIENTIFIC EXPLANATION?
5. WHAT ARE SCIENTIFIC THEORIES AND HOW ARE THEY CHOSEN?
6. HOW ARE VALUES RELATED TO SCIENCE?
7. HOW IS SCIENCE ‘OBJECTIVE’ AND WHAT LIMITS ARE THERE TO ITS OBJECTIVITY?
8. WHAT IS A CAUSE IN SCIENCE?
9. WHAT IS SCIENTIFIC REALISM?
10. HOW DOES SCIENCE RELATE TO RACE AND GENDER?

Course text - *Arguing About Sciences*, Alexander Bird and James Ladyman, eds. Routledge, 2012/13

Philosophy 340 Environmental Philosophy—Professor Brence
MWF 0900-0950 123 GSH
Considers the nature and morality of human relationships with the environment (e.g., the nature of value, the moral standing of nonhuman life). Environmental philosophy addresses the human relationship with the non-human world from a variety of philosophical perspectives: ethical, political, aesthetic, epistemological, and metaphysical. In what sense are human beings a ‘part of nature’? Does the natural world have intrinsic value, and what are our ethical obligations toward it? Can a distinction be drawn between humans and animals? Can nature be compared aesthetically to a work of art? How is the exploitation of nature linked to the exploitation of women, indigenous people, and other groups? What political options are open for developing a sustainable relationship between society and the natural world? To address these questions, the course will begin with a survey of dominant movements in recent environmental philosophy, including animal rights, deep ecology, ecofeminism, social ecology, bioregionalism, environmental pragmatism, and eco-phenomenology. The second half of the course explores key topics of current debate in the field, such as human/animal relations, holism and individualism, our proper relationship with technology, environmental aesthetics, and the ethical and political implications of radical environmental activism.
The aim of this course is to deepen a philosophical understanding and questioning of the human place in the cosmos through close reading of seminal texts in the Western tradition. To question our place in the cosmos requires that we reflect on the notions of cosmos or world, of place and space, and that we question our place in relation to other living and non-living things, to planets, stars, and the divine or divinities. The course considers Ancient cosmogonies and cosmologies, traces the development of different views of the cosmos in Medieval thought, and highlights fundamental changes occurring in our relation to the cosmos with the scientific revolution and mathematization of nature in the 17th century. Among the primary texts we will read are Plato’s *Timaeus*, Descartes’ *Principles of Philosophy*, and texts by Heidegger. The course requires close reading and text analysis, and leads to the critical comparison of different approaches to the question of the human place in the cosmos, as well as to questioning ourselves with respect to how we view our place in the cosmos today.

Undergrad Prereq: one 300-level PHIL course.

In the empiricist tradition, David Hume (1711-1776) is considered the leading sceptic and George Berkeley (1685-1783) the leading idealist. However, there is a sense in which Hume’s reliance on the notion of ‘ideas’ is a form of idealism, and Berkeley’s insistence on the reality of only those ideas that pass a stringent empiricist test is a form of scepticism. Moreover, Berkeley’s beliefs in the existence of minds, ideas, and God render him a realist. And, his attempt to create an egalitarian Christian college in Bermuda that would include Negroes and Indians and his quixotic project of growing food for that failed enterprise on a farm in Rhode Island, render him an “idealist” in a social/political sense. By contrast, Hume’s pragmatic political philosophy which reduces ideas of justice to property rights takes him beyond scepticism into cynicism.

The main focus of this course will be on the Hume and Berkeley’s epistemology and metaphysics. Both shared an emphasis on the principle that all we know is our ideas, a principle that did not vacate empirical philosophy through the efforts of the Scottish common sense philosopher Thomas Reid ((1710-1796), but was finally evicted by G. E. Moore (1873-1958). We will primarily aim to understand Hume’s *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, Berkeley’s *A Treatise Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge*, and essays in The Empiricists: Critical Essays on Locke, Berkeley, and Hume (Critical Essays on the Classics Series) by Margaret Atherton

**REQUIRED TEXTS**


In this course, we will read Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit* as an introduction to his theory of determinacy (his ‘metaphysics’), which we will see relies on a theory of modernity. In the *Phenomenology*, Hegel sets out to transform what he took to be the most compelling insights of Kant’s critical philosophy. He does so by showing that the norms that provide determinacy to our experience in the world are socio-historical institutions, and that the fact that such norms have a grip on us has to do with normative authority. We will therefore track Hegel’s views on the relation between normativity
and authority in his theory of concepts, action, morality, and history. More than providing an account of authoritative norms, however, Hegel is interested in tracking the way in which norms lose their authority over us. We will thus pay particular attention to the prevalent role of negativity, loss, and diremption in Hegel’s theory of determinacy. As we advance in our reading, we shall compare and contrast various interpretive perspectives on the text, such as epistemological, historicist, ethical, and feminist readings of the *Phenomenology*. Knowledge of Kant, while not required, will be most helpful.

**Philosophy 463/563 20th Century Philosophers: Heidegger—Professor Vallega-Neu**

TR 1200-1350 204 CHA

This course focuses on Heidegger’s thinking after *Being and Time* and introduces what is considered by many Heidegger's second major work, *Contributions to Philosophy: Of the Event* (Indiana University Press 2012). We will read his lecture course *Basic Questions in Philosophy* of 1937-38, which he gave the same time he was writing *Contributions*. This lecture course allows for an introduction to some of the main themes of *Contributions* and focuses especially on the question of truth by making recourse to Heidegger’s engagement with Ancient Greek philosophy. As far as *Contributions* is concerned, the course will place special emphasis on the first three junctures of the book, which respectively focus on Heidegger’s reflections on machination and the end of metaphysics (“Resonating”), his engagement with the beginning of metaphysics (“Interplay”), and the transition to what Heidegger calls inceptive thinking or the thinking of the historicality of being (“Leap”). Prior acquaintance with the project of *Being and Time* is expected.

**Philosophy 463/563 20th Century Philosophers: Rodolfo Kusch—Professor Vallega**

TR 1800-1950 121 MCK

This course focuses on the recently published translation of Rodolfo Kusch’s *Indigenous and Popular Thinking in America*, originally published in Spanish in 1970. This work gathers the material Kusch develops while living in the Andean Highlands in 1967. Rodolfo Kusch was an Argentinean philosopher who engaged indigenous thought in Andean native peoples as ways of thinking fundamental to the development of Latin American philosophy and distinct from the Western tradition. Kusch develops a philosophy situated in Latin American experience. He does so by engaging the distinct ways of being-in-displacement or being-in-between that entail the senses of being Latin American in light of the history of coloniality (being between European and native identities and traditions, between the colonizer and the colonized). This distinct sense of being-in-between is found and articulated particularly by exposing native experience as central to contemporary Latin American consciousness. Rodolfo Kusch was a student of Martin Heidegger and he thinks in departure from Heidegger's *Dasein* analysis and the understanding of being-in-the-world in *Being and Time*, as well as from Heidegger’s later understanding of language. Suggested readings: *The First New Chronicle and Good Government: On the History of the World and the Incas up to 1615*, by Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala; *Being and Time* and The *Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*, both by Martin Heidegger.

**Philosophy 607 Seminar: Philosophy & Teaching—Professor Pratt**

R 0900-0950 314 PLC

This course is offered for philosophy graduate students who are also in their first year of service as graduate teaching fellows. The course runs for the entire year, each quarter offering a different focus. The first quarter concerns pedagogical technique, the second course design, and the third broader issues in the philosophy of education. During the fall quarter, the goal is to improve teaching effectiveness and to provide new teachers with a forum for discussing some of the challenges they face in the classroom. Note that this is a one credit course that meets weekly.

**Philosophy 607 ProSeminar Continental Philosophy—Professor Stawarska**

MW 1200-1350 314 PLC

This course will serve as an introduction to some major traditions and themes in the Continental philosophical tradition. The course will be organized topically, and will take up recent concerns with subjectivity, and its overcoming; the personal and the political; embodiment and ethical responsibility; philosophical and literary language, and other. Traditions represented will include phenomenology, structuralism and post-structuralism, hermeneutics, Marxism, psychoanalysis, deconstruction, reconstruction, and critical theory.

**Philosophy 614 Issues in Ethics—Professor Johnson**

T 1500-1750 314 PLC

This seminar will be an assessment of naturalistic approaches to ethics that have become so popular over the past two decades. We will start with John Dewey's influential articulation of a naturalized ethics and then move on to recent work from psychology, anthropology, and cognitive science that takes an empirical approach to the origins and development of moral values and the nature of ethical deliberation.
This course will focus on normativity, with a special interest on the resources of the pragmatist tradition for engaging normativity. We will tour through a range of readings in classicopragmatism and neopragmatism with an eye toward two questions. First, what is at stake in William James' inaugural claim of pragmatism as "a method only"? What does this facilitate? What does it elide? What makes possible "philosophy as method"? And what is excluded by the "only"? Second, how does pragmatism, construed as a philosophical methodology (if that's possible), engage the structure of normativity (both epistemic and ethical normativity) as well as particular normative orders? How do the classicopragmatist categories of "problems" and "reconstructions" facilitate an understanding of normative content? How do neopragmatist social construals of social assessments (e.g., Brandomian "entitlements", "commitments", and "material incompatibilities") facilitate the same? What is the relation in both moments of pragmatism to Hegelian determinacy (and indeterminacy), not to mention the category of contradiction often (perhaps too-often) attributed to Hegel? Course readings will include selections (to be finalized later) from Peirce ("How to Make Our Ideas Clear" and "The Fixation of Belief"), James (from Pragmatism and elsewhere), Dewey (from Logic: The Theory of Inquiry and elsewhere), Rorty (probably only very lightly but perhaps drawing from Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity), and then more recent work by Robert Brandom (we will likely spend up to three weeks on Making It Explicit), and possibly also others (Huw Price, Phillip Kitcher, Joseph Margolis, Richard Bernstein, and maybe even Ludwig Wittgenstein) but only if time allows. Course work will include a final research paper, some kind of short presentation, and preparation to intensively participate in discussion.