Philosophy Department
University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Course Offerings
for
Fall Semester 2016
(1168)
PHILOSOPHY 101-150  
Introduction to Philosophy  
Instructor: Reina HAYAKI

PHILOSOPHY 101-250  
Introduction to Philosophy  
Instructor: Colin MCLEAR

PHILOSOPHY 101-350  
Introduction to Philosophy  
Instructor: Jennifer MCKITRICK

We will examine a range of important topics that have been discussed by philosophers through the ages: the existence or non-existence of God and the rationality of religious belief; the concept of knowledge, and whether we have any knowledge of the world around us; the nature of the mind and its relationship to the body, and how the two are related to the self; determinism, free will, and moral responsibility; the relationship between morality and rationality, and conflicting accounts of what makes an action right or wrong. These topics cover a lot of ground, but they are united by a couple of broad themes: Who are we, and how do we fit into the world?


Major assignments: two papers and a final exam. Additional smaller assignments, to be determined.

This course is certified for both ACE 5 (Humanities) and ACE 8 (Ethics). You choose which one of these two requirements you want this course to count for.

The subject matter of philosophy traditionally concerns the articulation of ‘big’ questions such as, “Can we know anything?”; “What is real?”; “What kinds of things exist?”. Philosophers use rigorous and disciplined methods of thinking, in the hopes of bringing such questions under intellectual control. This course will be an in-depth look at a few specific topics, rather than a comprehensive survey of the field and its history. You will learn what philosophy is all about and how to do it yourself.

This course is certified for both ACE 5 (Humanities) and ACE 8 (Ethics). You choose which one of these two requirements you want this course to count for.

This course introduces philosophical methods and explores fundamental philosophical questions, including: Can I be certain of anything? Is morality relative? What’s the relation between the mind and the brain? Can I survive the death of my body? Do I have free will? Does God exist?

Requirements: 2 essay exams, a 5-page paper, and participation in both lecture and quiz sections.

Textbooks:
- *Introduction to Philosophy: Classical and Contemporary Readings, 7th Edition*, edited by John Perry, Michael Bratman and John Martin Fischer
- *What Does It All Mean? A Very Short Introduction to Philosophy*, by Thomas Nagel
- *Writing Philosophy*, by Lewis Vaughn

This course is certified for both ACE 5 (Humanities) and ACE 8 (Ethics). You choose which one of these two requirements you want this course to count for.
PHILOSOPHY 101-450  
*Introduction to Philosophy*  
Instructor: **TBA**  
M W 11:30 am - 12:20 pm  

Historical-cultural introduction to philosophy. Considers a broad range of philosophical problems in relation to the major historical and cultural conditions which have influenced their formulations and proposed solutions. Topics: the principles of rational inquiry; the nature of knowledge; the metaphysics of mind, world, and God; and the sources and authority of morality.

This course is certified for both ACE 5 (Humanities) and ACE 8 (Ethics). You choose which one of these two requirements you want this course to count for.

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PHILOSOPHY 106-101  
*Philosophy & Current Issues*  
Instructor: **TBA**  
W 6:30-9:20 pm  

Critical survey of current issues and the role of philosophy in attempts to resolve them. Recent topics: sexual morality, pornography and the law, capital punishment, sexism and racism, extraordinary treatment for the terminally ill, abortion, church and state, and nuclear war and disarmament.

This course is certified for both ACE 8 (Ethics) and ACE 9 (Global Awareness/Knowledge of Human Diversity). You choose which one of these two requirements you want this course to count for.

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PHILOSOPHY 106-150  
*Philosophy & Current Issues*  
Instructor: **Mark VAN ROOJEN**  
M W 11:30 am – 12:20 pm  

The class will focus on a number of ethical topics of current interest, in particular world hunger, war, economic inequality, rights to sexual privacy, capital punishment, and incarceration. Each of these issues presents various choices between different and even conflicting individual and social policies. The class will focus on reasons for and against adopting various courses of action, and will explore the cogency of the reasons offered.

Students will work out their own positions and, hopefully, come to better understand opposing views. In the course of examining these reasons, we will become more familiar with a very general distinction between various forms of ethical justification - the distinction between consequentialist justifications and nonconsequentialist justifications. We will explore how various positions about the specific issues are amenable to either form of justification.

Readings for the class will encompass both classic texts and current articles from philosophy journals, but most of these will be available on line and on reserve so there will be very little if any reading to buy.

Major Assignments: Two tests; two papers; clicker participation.

This course is certified for both ACE 8 (Ethics) and ACE 9 (Global Awareness/Knowledge of Human Diversity). You choose which one of these two requirements you want this course to count for.
PHILOSOPHY 106-250  
Philosophy & Current Issues  
Instructor: Edward BECKER

M W 9:30 – 10:20 am

This course deals in a philosophical manner with political and ethical issues that are of current interest. Among the topics to be discussed will be drug legalization, abortion, pornography, same-sex marriage, and distributive justice.

Readings will be from both contemporary and classical sources.

Requirements include an hour exam, a term paper, and a final exam.

Textbooks: REQUIRED: Daniel Bonevac, Today’s Moral Issues, 7th edition (McGraw-Hill Education; 2012);


This course is certified for both ACE 8 (Ethics) and ACE 9 (Global Awareness/Knowledge of Human Diversity). You choose which one of these two requirements you want this course to count for.

PHILOSOPHY 106-350  
Philosophy & Current Issues  
Instructor: John BRUNERO

M W 10:30 – 11:20 am

The course will introduce some of the important questions of moral philosophy: What is it for a life to go well? (Is the good life one of happiness, one in which you get what you want, or one in which you accomplish something of value?) What is it to act in a morally right way? (Is it to produce the best consequences possible? Is it to act in accordance with certain moral principles? If so, which principles?) Why should we act in a morally right way, especially when doing so often appears contrary to our self-interest? What is the relationship between morality and religion? Are there objective moral truths, or is ethical truth relative to cultures or individuals? We’ll then consider the application of moral philosophy to some current ethical issues: Is it morally acceptable to kill and eat animals or use animals in experiments? Is abortion immoral? Is capital punishment unjust? Is torture ever permissible? What are our obligations to relieve world poverty? Is euthanasia ever morally permissible? Is there an obligation to obey the law? When is civil disobedience justified? Should the recreational use of drugs be illegal?

The course will consist of two lectures and one discussion section per week. Students are required to attend both the lectures and their assigned discussion section. There are no prerequisites for this course.

This course is certified for both ACE 8 (Ethics) and ACE 9 (Global Awareness/Knowledge of Human Diversity). You choose which one of these two requirements you want this course to count for.
PHILOSOPHY 110-150  Logic & Critical Thinking  Instructor: Albert CASULLO
T TH 9:30-10:20 am

This course provides an introduction to the principles of formal reasoning and their application, with an emphasis on improving skills of critical thinking, analyzing and evaluating arguments objectively, and constructing sound arguments based on relevant evidence.

Requirements: Four examinations. Exam 1 (30 points) covers the basic concepts of logic. Exam 2 (80 points) covers the principles of syllogistic logic. Exam 3 (60 points) and Exam 4 (80 points) cover the principles of propositional logic. Nine quizzes, based on the weekly homework assignments, will be given in the Friday quiz sections. Each quiz is worth 10 points. Your lowest quiz score will be dropped, resulting in a combined quiz total of 80 points.


This class is certified for ACE 3 (Mathematical, Statistical, or Formal Reasoning).

PHILOSOPHY 211-001  Introduction to Modern Logic  Instructor: Reina HAYAKI
M W 2:30-3:45 pm

PHIL 211 is an introduction to symbolic logic, covering sentential (propositional) logic, monadic predicate logic (with one-place predicates and simple quantifiers), and polyadic predicate logic (with relational predicates and nested quantifiers). At each stage, you will learn how to translate English sentences into the relevant logical language and vice versa, and how to construct proofs of valid arguments using natural deduction, and how to test arguments for validity using the tree method. This course is highly recommended for those planning to take the LSAT, GRE, or other standardized tests with an analytical component.

PHIL 211 has no prerequisites. It does not presuppose PHIL 110 (Introduction to Logic and Critical Thinking). There is a small amount of overlap between the last part of PHIL 110 and the first part of PHIL 211.


Major assignments: three in-class exams and six take-home problem sets.

This course is certified for ACE 3 (Mathematical, Statistical, or Formal Reasoning).
PHILOSOPHY 213-001  
Medical Ethics  
Instructor: Aaron BRONFMAN  
T TH 11:00 am -12:15 pm  
This course covers a wide variety of moral issues in the ethics of medicine and the allocation of healthcare. These issues include the moral status of the embryo and fetus (abortion, stem cell research), the current or future ways in which parents seek to change their children's physical attributes or genetic makeup (cochlear implants, genetic enhancement, cloning), the limits in a medical context of what can be bought and sold (commercial surrogacy, organ sales), the role of rights and fairness in a healthcare system (rights to healthcare, allocation of scarce resources), and the proper extent of control over one's own body (amputation by choice, assisted suicide, euthanasia, advance directives). The focus of the course is on assessing arguments for and against different positions on these moral issues, with background information provided as needed.  
The course requires a reading response for most weeks, two 4-page papers, and class participation.  
This course is certified for both ACE 5 (Humanities) and ACE 8 (Ethics). You choose which one of these two requirements you want this course to count for.  

PHILOSOPHY 221-001  
Political Philosophy  
Instructor: Edward BECKER  
CONTENT: A discussion of the basic concepts and problems of political theory. Particular attention will be paid to freedom, equality, democracy, justice, and the relation of the individual to the state. Readings will be selected from both classical and contemporary sources. Some consideration will be given to current political issues.  
Written work for the course will include one hour-exam, a paper, and a final exam at the end of the semester.  
This course is certified for both ACE 5 (Humanities) and ACE 8 (Ethics). You choose which one of these two requirements you want this course to count for.  

PHILOSOPHY 225-001  
Environmental Ethics  
Instructor: David HENDERSON  
T TH 9:30 – 10:45 am  
This course begins with a reflective overview of general approaches in philosophical ethics. This is background. The bulk of the class then is a survey of approaches specific to environmental ethics. We will consider the central matter of what persons, groups, things, and systems are properly taken to have fundamental “moral considerability.” What things are properly the focus of one’s the fundamental—or nonderivative—moral valuing or obligations, and what things are derivatively valuable or matters of obligation? Various positions treat persons, perhaps just humans or sentient beings, as the objects of fundamental concern. Some suggest that the environment can have such status. After this tour of some philosophical positions we focus on applications of these positions in connection with two matters: food and global climate change.  
This course is certified for both ACE 8 (Ethics) and ACE 9 (Global Awareness/Knowledge of Human Diversity). You choose which one of these two requirements you want this course to count for.
This course is divided into three parts. In the first part, we’ll discuss various issues concerning the relationship between law and morality. In the second part, we’ll consider several important legal and moral concepts, including liberty, privacy, justice, and equality. In the third part, we’ll consider issues related to punishment and responsibility. We’ll read essays by philosophers and lawyers, as well as the judicial opinions in several important US Supreme Court cases. The course does not presuppose any background in philosophy or in law.

Here are some of the questions we'll consider in this course: Are unjust laws legally valid? Is there a moral obligation to obey the law? Which standards should we employ when we attempt to interpret the law and the Constitution? Why is liberty important and to what extent should people be left free to do as they choose? What are the proper limits to free speech and expression? What are the Constitutional and moral grounds for personal privacy and autonomy? What does it mean to treat people justly and equally? Why, and to what extent, should we punish criminals? Is capital punishment morally permissible? Should we punish unsuccessful attempts at murder less severely than successful attempts, and, if so, why? Should people be held legally responsible for their omissions as well as their actions? When are people excused from responsibility for their acts?

Western philosophy began in ancient Greece when people started to think systematically about the world and themselves. We’ll look at some of their most interesting and influential questions and answers, concentrating on the two greatest Greek philosophers, Plato and Aristotle. We'll discuss three questions. What is moral, and why should anyone care about morality? What gives us good reason for believing something? What is there in the world? (For example, are humans simply matter arranged in various ways?)

The required written work will (probably) be one short paper (two versions), and three essay exams (one on each of the three questions).

This course is certified for ACE 5 (Humanities).
PHILOSOPHY 325-001 Advanced Social & Political Philosophy Instructor: Mark VAN ROOJEN
M W 2:30 – 3:45 pm

CONTENT: This class will take an in depth look at various relatively contemporary approaches to the theory of justice and what it requires of societies. Approaches examined will include: Utilitarianism, Democratic Egalitarian theories, Libertarian theories, and Feminist theories. We may also look at some particular issues, such as free-speech or the value of democracy in greater depth.

GRADING: A least two papers and one in-class presentation will be required.

This course is certified for both ACE 8 (Ethics) and ACE 9 9 (Global Awareness/Knowledge of Human Diversity). You choose which one of these two requirements you want this course to count for.

PHILOSOPHY 333-001 History of Philosophy – 19th Century Instructor: Jean CAHAN
T TH 12:30-1:45 pm

This course will survey principal movements in 19th Century European philosophy, including Hegelianism; early existentialism (Kierkegaard and Nietzsche); and utilitarianism. Some material relating to neo-Kantianism, as well as the crisis of European thought at the end of the century, may also be included.

In addition to reading and discussing assigned texts, students will be required to write a few short papers (2-3pp) and a final research paper (8pp).

This course is certified for ACE 5 (Humanities).

PHILOSOPHY 341-001 Contemporary Continental Philosophy Instructor: Jean CAHAN
T TH 3:00-4:15 pm

Survey of main trends in 20th Century European philosophy, especially existentialism. Some texts from phenomenology, the Frankfurt School of Critical Theory, and French postmodernism may also be included.

In addition to reading and discussing assigned texts, students will be required to write a few short papers (2-3pp) and a final research paper (8pp).

This course is certified for ACE 5 (Humanities).
PHILOSOPHY 400-001  
*Undergraduate Seminar*  
Instructor: Jennifer MCKITRICK

T TH 2:00 – 3:15 pm

Advanced philosophy majors will work on developing philosophical skills while learning the fundamentals of metaphysics. Topics include truth, causation, possibility, time, and identity. Assignments will focus on close reading and critical evaluation of texts, formulation of philosophical arguments, and clear written expression of philosophical ideas.


This course is certified for ACE 10 (Generate a creative or scholarly product).

PHILOSOPHY 420/820-001  
*Philosophy of Social Science*  
Instructor: David HENDERSON

TH 3:30-6:05 pm

The epistemological character of the social sciences. Character and explanatory role of social scientific generalizations, various explanatory strategies for social matters, the continuity or discontinuity of the social sciences with the special sciences, the importance of interpretation, and the place of rationality.

PHILOSOPHY 423/823-001  
*Advanced Ethics*  
Instructor: Aaron BRONFMAN

T 1:30 – 4:05 pm

An advanced survey of contemporary work in metaethics and normative ethics, with roughly equal time devoted to each. Topics include (1) the nature of moral concepts, moral properties, and moral facts according to non-naturalists, error theorists, naturalistic realists, sensibility theorists, and expressivists, (2) internalism and externalism as pertaining to morality, reasons, and motivation, (3) theories of value and well-being, and (4) varieties of consequentialism, deontology, and virtue ethics.

Requirements consist of weekly writing assignments, two 7-page papers, and class participation.

PHILOSOPHY 471/871-001  
*Kant*  
Instructor: Colin MCLEAR

M 3:30 – 6:05 pm

This course surveys views of some key figures in early modern (17th—18th century) European philosophy. These include at least the following: Descartes, Locke, Leibniz, Hume, and Kant. Our discussion begins with the enormously influential theories of René Descartes, specifically his theories of mind and nature, and examines subsequent reactions, criticisms, and (partial) defenses of his views in the writings of other prominent philosophers. The course culminates with an analysis of central themes in Immanuel Kant’s "critical" philosophical work. Major themes of the course include the nature of mind and matter, the structure of scientific explanation, causation and necessity, free will, and the existence of God.
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<td>PHILOSOPHY 913-001</td>
<td>Advanced Epistemology</td>
<td>Albert CASULLO</td>
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<td>T 4:30 – 6:35 pm</td>
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<td>PHILOSOPHY 914-001</td>
<td>Philosophy of Mind</td>
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<td>PHILOSOPHY 952-001</td>
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<td>Topic to be announced.</td>
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