UNDERGRADUATE
SPRING 2017 COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

PHI 100 (B, HUM) Concepts of the Person, Main Focus

An historical introduction to philosophy through readings and discussions on topics such as human identity, human understanding, and human values.

- **PHI 100.01**
  - TuesThurs 1:00-2:20
  - E. Lee

- **PHI 100.02**
  - MonWed 5:30-6:50
  - H. Bacon

This class will question, examine, trouble, critique, and rework our understanding of how we conceive of the human being. How is this question yoked to our self-understanding, to our historical situated-ness, to our ideas of what it means to live and think as human beings? How do we link this question of what a person is to what a person should be? How does the world we live in and the recognition of others affect our identity as human? Has the idea of what it is to be a person changed over time and why?

- **PHI 100.03**
  - MonWedFri 11:00-11:53
  - A. Dobbyn

PHI 101 (G, HUM) Historical Introduction to Western Philosophy

An introduction to pivotal theories of the Western philosophic tradition. Readings may be drawn from ancient Greek medieval, and modern classics of philosophy. Topics may include philosophic theories of politics, morality, metaphysics, knowledge, anthropology, art, and religion.

- **PHI 101.01**
  - MonWed 2:30-3:50
  - M. Craig

This course provides an introduction to key figures and concepts in the history of Western Philosophy. We will be guided by three primary texts: Plato’s *Republic*, Aristotle’s *Ethics*, and Descartes’ *Meditations on First Philosophy*. Topics to be discussed include justice, political regimes, education, habit formation, philosophical psychology, religion, doubt, skepticism, trauma, and the nature of truth. In conjunction with the classical texts we read, we will investigate contemporary writings by relevant philosophers dealing with issues in feminism, critical race theory, ethics, and politics. Students taking PHI 101 will develop a strong foundation in core issues animating Western Philosophy. In the course of the semester, students will hone their own philosophical voices and their ability to critically reflect on some of the most pressing ethical/political questions of our time.

PHI 103 (B, HUM) Philosophic Problems (II)

An introduction to philosophy through the analysis of one or more aspects of contemporary life such as technology, war, international relations, families and friendships, or race, class and gender. A variety of texts are used.

- **PHI 103**
  - TuesThurs 10:00-11:20
  - A. Ellis

PHI 104 (B, CER, HUM) Moral Reasoning, Main Focus

An introduction to philosophy through inquiry into the formation justification, and evaluation of moral judgments.
Students introduced to the major theories and problems of ethics, such as utilitarianism, Kant's categorical imperative, ethical relativism, egoism and classical conceptions of the good and virtue. Against this background students engage in discussions of contemporary moral issues.

**PHI 104.02**

**TuesThurs 4:00-5:20**

E. Granik

This course approaches canonical historical ethical theories from both Western and classical Chinese thinkers. Some of these thinkers and ethical theories include: Hobbes and Yang Zhu on Egoism, Mill and Mozi on Consequentialism, Aristotle and Confucius on Virtue Theory, and Kierkegaard and Zhuangzi on Existentialist and Nonrationalist Ethics. We will explore conceptions of what it means to be “good”, whether there is a human nature and if there is one whether it is inherently good or not, what it means to act freely, what we value, and as well as modes of ethical cultivation. There will be about 40 pages of reading a week and regular writing exercises ranging from informal free-writing and journaling to short formal essays, and quizzes.

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**PHI 104.03**

**TuesThur 8:30-9:50**

C. Fremaux

This course will focus upon the processes, nuances, and inherent difficulties of moral reasoning by exploring five major thinkers in the history of philosophy: Aristotle, Seneca, Augustine, Thomas Hobbes, and Immanuel Kant. However, this course will not merely be a historical survey of ideas. Instead, we will be using these philosophers and their theories as a basis for our own reflection upon, and critical engagement with, the central questions of moral reasoning as they apply to our experience today; such as: What constitutes a good human life? What principles should guide our action? What is happiness? Can morality be objective? What is human nature? How should we live in society? What is the relationship between morality and the law? What is the cause of evil? Throughout the semester, you will be asked to address these questions in light of both the thinker/theory we are studying and your experience. Ultimately, this course is meant to foster your own moral reasoning and how you understand the role of moral reasoning in your life and actions.

**PHI 104.04**

**MonWedFri 11:00-11:53**

A. Pharaa

The principal aim of this course is to help students fine-tune their skills in thinking, reading, and writing critically on debates and systems of morality and ethics. Plato’s *Republic* is the primary text for this class, with particular emphasis on justice, virtue, education, character building, and regime types. There will also be briefer, yet substantial, encounters with Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics*, Kant’s *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, Nietzsche’s *Genealogy of Morals*, and other major works depending on student interests in thinkers, such as, Hegel, Marx, Rawls, Levinas, Adorno, Foucault, Derrida, Edward Said, Malcolm X, Bell Hooks, Irigaray etc. There will be intense and deep reading for this class. Each class has at least 15 to 20 pages of dense philosophic material, homework assignments due the night before, and quizzes at the beginning of each class. Participation, group work, and debate are significant for the final grade. There will be four main (cumulative) exams spread throughout the semester evaluating students using multiple choice and essays.

**PHI 105 (G, CER, HUM) Politics and Society (II)**

An historical introduction to philosophy through an analysis of political theories, theories of action, and styles of political life. Main themes will include the relation of the individual to the state, the scope of social responsibility, and the nature of human freedom.

**PHI 105.01**

**TuesThurs 11:30-12:50**

A. O’Byrne
This course serves as an introduction to contemporary political discourse within the context of the history of political thought. Throughout the semester, we will foreground an analysis of social and political oppression that will serve as the unifying theme for this course. We will begin historically with texts by Plato, Rousseau, Spinoza, Hegel, and Marx, before turning to a wider variety of texts and figures of the twentieth century. Course topics for the second part of the course include: political subjectivity, intersectionality, analyses of political power, different conceptions of history, theories of political time, the possibility of utopia, environmental politics, colonialism and contemporary postcolonial discourse, the history and theory of feminist and queer politics, as well as the various histories at play that have led to our current state of incarceration. The authors for the second part of the course include Iris Marion Young, Angela Davis, Michel Foucault, Theodor Adorno, Gayatri Spivak, Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor, Ernst Bloch, Susan Stryker, Frantz Fanon, Sara Ahmed, Linda Alcoff, Gloria Anzaldúa, W.E.B. Du Bois, Dean Spade, and Claudia Rankine, among others. Over the entirety of the semester, we will engage with a number of fundamental questions of political thought. How should we organize society? Which principles should we prioritize when trying to figure out how to organize society? What is freedom? What is justice? What constitutes a political subject? What is and should be the individual’s relation to the state? How should we conceive of social responsibility? How should we conceive of dissent? What is our responsibility to future generations?

This course will provide a comprehensive introduction to the problem of justice in social and political philosophy. Theories of equality, property, sovereignty, race, gender, and sexuality will be explored through works spanning several millennia of intellectual history, divided into three units: ancient, modern, and contemporary thought. Our guiding assumption will be that peoples everywhere, in all times, have thought seriously about social and political theory, and our curriculum will reflect the truly global scope of this tradition. Key ideas include: Platonism, contractarianism, Eurocentrism, patriarchy, Marxism, postmodernism, Black feminism, and decolonial theory.

The principle aim of this course is to help a student acquire the skills of thinking, reading, and writing critically. The student develops a sensitivity to language and argumentation that is applicable to a wide range of situations and subject matters.

Reasoning, analyzing, and arguing are part of our everyday lives, and they certainly operate across disciplines, which makes this course a good opportunity to explicitly study and hone a practice of which we are sometimes only implicitly aware. This course is designed to familiarize students with the skills necessary to recognize, analyze, and even construct arguments. By introducing students to critical thinking, and both informal and formal logic (as its foundation), this course will provide students with the opportunity to enhance common practices such as reading, writing, and thinking. The course will be taught in three units: an introduction to using logic; formal logic; and critical thinking in action. In the first, we will learn how to recognize good and poor arguments, in the second we will learn how to symbolize and analyze them, and in the third, we will learn to recognize fallacious reasoning in everyday arguments.
**PHI 108.03**  
**TuesThurs 1:00-2:20**  
A. Adamson

The goal of this course is to get you to think more critically and logically about the things you think about yourself, others, and our shared socio-political world. The course readings and activities are aimed at helping you build reading, writing, and argumentative skills—as well as getting you more familiar with contemporary issues and debates. We will study cognitive biases, fallacies, and styles of argumentation to improve your ability to both articulate your own views as well as evaluate others. The focal point of this course will be a semester long writing assignment where you will work on articulating, justifying, and defending one or two of your core beliefs.

**PHI 108.04**  
**MonWedFri 11:00-11:53**  
E.B. Marinez

**PHI 112 Technology and Modern Life (H, STAS)**  
**MonWedFri 10:00-10:53**  
E. Hallerman

Our course will focus on conceptions of technology as knowledge, activity, and form of culture. We will examine how conceptions of technology necessarily involve conceptions of what human beings are, what nature is, and what history is. We will work on thinking through technology’s impacts on daily life, perception, and social organization. We will study some different theories for interpreting technology’s meaning and importance, including areas of overlap and disagreement among the theories. Your grade will be based on writing assignments and active participation in class. Written homework responses, quizzes, short essays, and class discussion will contribute to your grade.

**PHI 113 Philosophical Engineering**  
**MonWed 5:30-6:50**  
C. Lovette

This course is accessible to the non-engineering major, and is an introduction to what makes engineering similar to and different from other kinds of problem-solving. Students discuss the social and humanistic contexts of engineering, its implications for human identity and experience, and its political and ethical implications. For their final projects, students work individually or in teams in a simple engineering project.

### Intermediate Courses

**PHI 200 Intro to Ancient Phil (I, GLO, HUM)**  
**TuesThurs 1:00-2:20**  
TBA

**PHI 220 Introduction to Symbolic Logic**  
**TuesThurs 10:00-11:20**  
G. Mar

This course introduces students to symbolic logic, including sentential and predicate logic. We will translate statements in English into symbolic notation, and construct formal derivations – developing skills that will help you evaluate the validity of reasoning in any discipline. The course does not presuppose prior experience with philosophy, or any advanced knowledge of mathematics.

### Upper Division Courses

**PHI 300 Ancient Philosophy (I, HFA+)**  
**TuesThurs 10:00-11:20**  
D. Dilworth

**PHI 306 Modern Philosophy**  
**TuesThurs 1:00-2:20**  
R. Ben-Shai

**PHI 309 20th-Century Philosophy**  
**TuesThurs 10:00-11:20**  
R. Ben-Shai
Faith vs. Reason. Religion vs. Science. Etc. The debates (both public and private) seem to go on interminably, without end and with no likely winner anywhere in sight. But does that have to be so? To see if we can answer this big question, we at least need to understand what we’re supposed to be talking about when we talk about ‘God’ and related notions. So just what is God—that is, what are the attributes that God must have in case the being that we call God actually exists? What exactly is God’s relation to nature? Can the existence of God be demonstrated? Or must a rationally thinking person conclude that God does not—and indeed cannot—exist? How do we understand the relationship between God and human morality? And what happens to the basis of human morality in case God doesn’t exist? Given the historical significance of the theistic religions, these are among the most important philosophical questions that we can ask and attempt to answer. This course is devoted to their proper clarification.