PHILOSOPHY (Div. II)
Chair, Professor STEVEN GERRARD

Professors: DUDLEY, GERRARD, SAWICKI, WHITE. Associate Professors: BARRY, CRUZ, MLADENOVIC. Assistant Professors: MEETING, PAYD, PAYD, HARRY C. PAYD. Visiting Professor in Liberal Arts: AL-ASIM. Visiting Assistant Professor: J. PEDRONI. Boskey Visiting Professor in Philosophy: KARLIS. Bolin Fellow: WELCH.

To engage in philosophy is to ask a variety of questions about the world and our place in it. What can we know? What should we do? What may we hope? What makes human beings human? These questions, in various forms, and others like them are not inventions of philosophers; on the contrary, they occur to most people simply as they live their lives. Many of us ask them as children, but later either ignore them, or accept answers we can live with. Philosophers, however, seek to keep such questions open, and to address them through reasoned discussion and argument, instead of accepting answers to them based on opinion or prejudice.

The program in philosophy is designed to aid students in thinking about these issues, by acquainting them with influential work in the field, past and present, and by training them to grapple with these issues themselves. The program emphasizes training in clear, critical thinking and in effective writing. Philosophy courses center around class discussions and the writing of interpretive and critical essays.

MAJOR

Philosophy is a discipline with a long and intricate history, a history that remains an integral part of the discipline. In this way, it differs dramatically from the natural sciences: for example, although no contemporary physicists or biologists embrace Aristotle’s physics or biology, among philosophers there continue to be champions of Aristotle’s metaphysics and of his ethics. Because of the richness and continuing importance of the history of philosophy, the program is designed to give students a historical background that will acquaint them with a wide variety of approaches in philosophical issues, and will provide them with a basis for evaluating and contributing to contemporary debates.

A total of nine courses is required in Philosophy. Students should begin with Philosophy 101 and 102, in either order; both are required for the major. The courses provide introductions to historical figures and themes that continue to be influential in many contemporary discussions in the two major areas of philosophical inquiry, i.e., practical inquiry into issues of ethics and politics, and theoretical inquiry into issues of knowledge, belief, understanding, and reality. The final required course is the Senior Seminar, Philosophy 401. Each student selects the six electives that complete the major. The exposure to figures and topics in 101 and 102 provides students with some basis for choice, but optimal shaping of an individual curriculum requires in addition consultation with faculty members and other students.

Generally speaking, as students progress from 100- to 300-level courses, there will be increasing breadth and depth. In addition, writing assignments become longer, and students assume increasing responsibility for identifying and developing the topics of their essays. Finally, students in 300-level courses must either assume responsibility to assign responses or to write significant parts of class discussions.

Students considering graduate study in philosophy are strongly urged to develop reading competence in German, French, or Greek before graduation.

THE DEGREE WITH HONORS IN PHILOSOPHY

The degree with honors in philosophy is awarded to the student who has demonstrated outstanding achievement in a program of study that extends beyond the requirements of the major. The extension beyond major requirements may take the form of either of independent work culminating in a senior essay or thesis (the independent-study route) or of additional course work (the directed-study route). Candidates must have GPAs of 3.6 or higher in their courses in philosophy at the end of the junior and senior years. Juniors interested in pursuing honors should contact the Department Chair no later than mid-April.

The independent-study route to honors requires the completion and defense of either a senior essay produced in the fall semester plus winter study period (maximum 40 pages) or a year-long senior thesis (maximum 75 pages). Plans for either essay or thesis (including a brief proposal and bibliography, worked out in consultation with a faculty advisor) must be submitted to the department in April of the junior year. A recommendation for graduation with honors will be made on the basis of the thoroughness, independence, and originality of the student’s work.

The directed-study route to honors requires the completion of two courses in philosophy in addition to the nine required for the major. Candidates taking this route must also submit to the department revised copies of two term papers (10 pages or longer) written in philosophy courses they have taken; each student will be assigned an adviser to help guide the process of revision. A recommendation for graduation with honors will be made on the basis of the scope of the student’s course work, the quality of the student’s participation in Philosophy 401, and the thoroughness, independence, and originality reflected in the submitted papers.

PHIL 101(FS) Introduction to Moral and Political Philosophy (W)
Throughout the history of Western philosophy, there have been debates concerning how human beings should live. What should we do both with our lives as we understand them, and with the problematic situations we have addressed us both as individuals and as members of political communities. This course aims to help us in responding to these debates, and in living our lives, on the basis of reasoned conclusions rather than from unrecognized presuppositions. This course concentrates on some of the most influential ethical and political texts in Western philosophy: Plato, Aristotle, Kant, Mill, and others.

Format: lecture/discussion. Requirements: class discussion, frequent short papers (totaling 20-30 pages).

No prerequisites. Enrolment limit: 19 per section (expected: 19 per section). Preference given to first-year students and sophomores.

Second Semester: BARRY, MLADENOVIC, SAWICKI

PHIL 102(FS) Introduction to Metaphysics and Epistemology (W)
Metaphysics and epistemology are the two core pursuits of theoretical philosophy (as opposed to practical philosophy, the focus of Philosophy 101). Metaphysics is concerned with ultimate character of reality. The metaphysician seeks to develop knowledge (as opposed to mere opinion or belief) of all things natural, human, and divine. She asks, for example: Are we free, or are our acts determined? Is there a God? If so, what must God be like? Epistemology is concerned with how we determine the difference between knowledge and mere opinion. The epistemologist thus asks: What does it mean truly to know something? How can we acquire such genuine knowledge? Answers to these epistemological questions are essential if we are to have any confidence in the methods and results of our investigations. This course will familiarize the student with the great classical works that provide the basis for understanding contemporary work on metaphysics and epistemological issues; we will consider, among others, the work of Descartes, Hume, and Kant.

Format: lecture/discussion. Requirements: class discussion, frequent short papers (totaling 20-30 pages).

No prerequisites. Enrolment limit: 19 per section (expected: 19 per section). Preference given to first-year students and sophomores.

Hour: 11:00-11:50 MWF, 9:55-11:10 TR, 9:00-9:50 MWF First Semester: GERRARD, MCPARTLAND, WHITE
12:00-12:50 MWF, 10:00-10:50 MWF Second Semester: GERRARD, WHITE

PHIL 103 Logic and Language (Not offered 2009-2010) (Q)
Logic is the study of reasoning and argument. More particularly, it concerns itself with the difference between good and bad reasoning, between strong and weak arguments. We all examine the virtues and vices of good arguments in both informal and formal systems. The goals of this course are to improve the critical thinking of the students, to introduce them to sentential and predicate logic, to familiarize them with enough formal logic to enable them to read some of the great works of philosophy, which use formal logic (such as Wittgenstein’s Tractatus), and to examine some of the connections between logic and philosophy.

Format: lecture/discussion. Requirements: a midterm, a final, frequent homework and problems sets.

No prerequisites. Enrolment limit (expected: 50-80). GERRARD

PHIL 109(T) Skepticism and Relativism (W)
Intellectually, we are ready skeptics and relativists. We doubt, we point out that no one can be certain in what she believes, and we are suspicious of declarations of transcendent reason or truth (unless they are our own). Emboldened by our confidence in skeptical arguments, we claim that knowledge is inevitably limited, that it depends on one’s perspective, and that everything one believes is relative to context or culture. No domain of inquiry is immune to this destructive skepticism and relativist stance.

Science is only “true” for some people, aagnosticism is the only alternative to foolish superstition, and moral relativism and, consequently, nihilism are obvious.

But is the best conclusion we can come to with respect to our intellectual endeavors that skepticism always carries the day and that nothing at all is true? In this tutorial, we will investigate the nature of skepticism and the varieties of relativism it encourages. Our readings will come primarily from philosophy, but will be supplemented with material from anthropology, physics, psychology, and linguistics. We will look at material from anthropology with respect to reason and truth in general as well as with respect to science, religion, and morality. Along the way, we will need to come to grips with the following surprising fact. With few exceptions, thorough-going skepticism and relativism have not been the prevailing views of the greatest minds in the history of philosophy. Were they simply too unsophisticated and confused to understand what is for us the irresistible power of skepticism and relativism? Or might it be that our skepticism and relativism are the result of our own laziness and failure? Of course, this question cannot really be answered, nor is there any value in trying to answer it, and any “answer” will only be “true” for you. Right?

Format: tutorial. Requirements: participants will present substantial written work in the tutorial every other week, and will be responsible for commenting on their tutorial partner’s work over weeks.
PHYL. 131(F) Introduction to Logic and Semantics (Same as Linguistics 230) (Q)
(See under LING 230 for full description.) SANDERS

PHYL. 210(F) Continental Philosophy: Reading the Critics of Reason
Nineteenth- and twentieth-century European philosophy gave rise to an astounding number of brilliant thinkers (including Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Heidegger, Arendt, Lacan, Adorno, Gadamer, Habermas, Irigaray, Deleuze, and Derrida), who in turn initiated an equally astounding number of important philosophical movements (including existentialism, structuralism, critical theory, hermeneutics, French feminism, and post-structuralism). Fortunately, this bewildering diversity of philosophical traditions in a common theme has not gone unnoticed. Many of these critiques are written in ways that attempt to undermine and transform our notions of rationality, and they can be maddeningly difficult to read. This course will introduce students to continental philosophy through guided readings of these challenging texts aimed at developing students interpretative skills. Format: lecture/discussion. Requirements: several short papers, final 8- to 10-page paper, regular attendance and participation. No prerequisites. (PHYL 102 recommended). Enrollment limit: 15 (expected: 10-15). This course is part of the Critical Reasoning and Analytical Skills initiative.

PHYL. 202 Philosophy of Mind and Philosophy of Language (Not offered 2009-2010) (W)
This course is designed to introduce students to twentieth-century philosophy by focusing on two of its premier research areas, language and mind. Each of these topics has been studied independently of the other, with the philosophy of language dominating the first half of the century and the philosophy of mind surging in the second half. Research on language and mind have also enjoyed a fruitful liaison, as much of the technical apparatus of the philosophy of language has been used to illuminate the mind. The other side of this coin is that language is something that minds achieve, and some of the most recent questions in the philosophy of language have emphasized psychological elements of language use. The course will begin with the work of Frege, Russell, and Wittgenstein, and end with the work of Putnam, Dennett, Fodor and Churchland. The course is intended to prepare students for more advanced research on either language or mind. At the same time, the course aims to offer an overview of the methods and style of analytic philosophy. Thus, it will also serve as preparation for advanced work in epistemology, philosophy of science, metaphysics, and ethics. The syllabus can be found at: http://www.williams.edu/philosophy/fourth_layer/faculty_pages/jrjosa/courses/ lang&mind.html. Format: lecture/discussion. Requirements: short writing assignments each week, and two longer papers. Prerequisite: Philosophy 102 or permission of the instructor. Enrollment limit: 19 (expected: 12-18). Preference given to Philosophy, Psychology, Linguistics and Computer Science majors.

PHYL 204 Endtimes: Messianism in Modernity (Same as Jewish Studies 204 and Religion 204) (Not offered 2009-2010) (W)
(See under REL 204 for full description.) HAMMERSCHLAG

PHYL 207(S) The Unconscious (W)
Modern Philosophy of mind—from Descartes through Hume to Kant—relies on the natural assumption that all mental states are at least potentially conscious. Beliefs, desires and intentions must belong to someone, to some subject—and from this it follows that some subject must be aware of them as his or her own. Sigmund Freud offers a radical challenge to this Cartesian paradigm by proposing the idea that consciousness arises from an unconscious—a domain of which we are currently aware, if at all. In this course we explore theories of the unconscious in contemporary analytical and continental philosophy. We begin with close readings of Freud’s seminal texts (including his case-studies) in order to elucidate his concept of unconscious mental states and his view that human action cannot be understood without postulating unconscious beliefs and desires. We discuss the nature, evidence and reliability of Freud’s theories in the context of the writings of his many critics and defenders, including later Freudians. Finally we will turn to radical transformations and applications of the idea of the unconscious in post-Freudian philosophy of mind, moral philosophy, political theory and feminism. In addition to Freud, readings may include writings by Adler, Winnicott, Sartre, Davidson, Rorty, Lear, Gardiner, M. Cavell, Dennett, Moran, Wilkes, Marx, Marcuse, Foucault, and Butler. Format: four weeks of lecture/discussion, six weeks of tutorials, and two weeks of seminar. Requirements: class participation, four 5- to 6-page papers and a final paper. Prerequisites: Philosophy 101 and 102, or consent of the instructor. Enrollment limit: 20 (expected: 20). Preference given to Philosophy majors.

PHYL 209 Philosophy of Science (Not offered 2009-2010)
It is a generally held belief, in our times and culture, that science is the best source of our knowledge of the world, and of ourselves. The aim of this course is to examine the methodological, epistemological, and normative bases of this belief. We will analyze a range of scientific methodology, scientific practice and the justification of scientific methodology, and the idea that scientific knowledge is progressive. The course will begin with the "received view" of scientific methodology, methods, and knowledge, advanced by logical positivists, which assumes the objectivity and the rationality of science. We will then discuss philosophies of science that emerged out of various criticisms of this view—especially those of Popper, Lakatos, Kuhn and Feyerabend—and the challenges to the assumptions of scientific methodology and rationality that their works provoked. This discussion will naturally lead us to the relativist and social-constructivist views developed within contemporary science studies. Finally, we will analyze the current debate about the cognitive credentials of science and the proper approach to the study of science, which came to be known as "the science wars." Requirements: frequent short assignments, class presentation, class participation, and a longer (5-7 pages) term paper. Prerequisites: Philosophy 102; or permission of instructor. Enrollment limit: 19 (expected: 19). MADLENOVIC and SAWICKI

PHYL 210(F) Philosophy of Social Sciences (W)
Is it possible to have scientific knowledge of human thought, feelings, behavior, social life and history? If so, is that knowledge importantly different in kind or in rigor from the knowledge we have of natural phenomena? Do social sciences legitimately employ different methodology than natural sciences? If so, what is that methodology? How is the one single, and what is the cognitive goal it serves? If not, could social sciences improve their scientific credibility by emulating the methodology of natural sciences? To answer these questions, we will discuss some of the following issues in the philosophy of social sciences: nature of "social facts" and social reality; holism vs. reductionism; teleological, functional and structural explanations; theory formation, evidence, and the role of values in social science; the relationship between knowers and the known; and some issues concerning agency, rationality, intentionality and understanding. The readings will include materials by Durkheim, Weber, Hempel, Rudner, Nagel, Popper, Winch, Taylor, Geertz, Rosenberg, MacIntyre, Hacking, Longino, Nelson, Wylie, and other contemporary philosophers of social sciences. Format: lecture/discussion. Requirements: class participation, 8 short weekly response papers (1-2 page), three longer (5 page) papers. Prerequisites: Philosophy 101 or 102 or 103, or consent of the instructor. Philosophy 200 is highly recommended. Enrollment limit: 19 (expected: 10-15). Preference given to philosophy majors, students who have taken Philosophy 209, and students who demonstrate serious interest in the course.

Hour: 11:00-12:15 MWF MADLENOVIC

PHYL 212(S) Ethics and Reproductive Technologies (Same as Women's and Gender Studies 212) (W)
(See under WGST 212 for full description.) J. PEDRONI

PHYL 213T Biomedical Ethics
Much like the construction of medical knowledge itself, it is from specific cases that general principles of biomedical ethics arise and are systematized into a theoretical framework, and it is to cases they must return, if they are to be both useful and comprehensible to those making decisions within the biomedical context. In this tutorial, we will exploit this characteristic of biomedical ethics by using a case-based approach to examining core concepts of the field. The first portion of the course will be devoted to developing medical knowledge and understanding four moral principles which have come to be accepted as canonical: respect for autonomy, beneficence, nonmaleficence, and justice. The remainder of the course will consider key concepts at the core of medical ethical and clinical issues for the field, such as privacy and confidentiality, the distinction between killing and "letting die" therapy vs. research, and enhancement vs. therapy. To this end, each week we will (1) read and discuss material focused on one principle or concept, and (2) consider in detail one bioethics case in which the principle or concept has special application or relevance. In some weeks, students will be asked to choose from a small set which case they would like to address; in others the case will be assigned. Students will meet with the professor in pairs for approximately one hour per week, writing and presenting 5- to 7-page essays every other week, and commenting orally on partners’ essays in alternate weeks. Format: tutorial. Evaluation will be based on written work, oral presentations of that work, and on oral critiques. No prerequisites. Enrollment limit: 10 (expected: 10). Preference will be given to sophomores and first-year students. Tutorial meetings to be arranged. CRUZ

PEDRONI

220
PHIL 220T Immortality and the Soul in Ancient and Medieval Thought (Same as Religion 282T) (Not offered 2009-2010) (W)

According to a 2003 poll, 64% of Americans believe that the soul survives death. Ideas about immortality and the soul have a long history, and have been at the center of philosophy and religious traditions. The aim of this course is to examine how some central figures in those traditions think about immortality and the soul. In addition, we will discuss some of the philosophical difficulties that come to the fore when thinking about these issues. Is the immortality of human persons even coherent? What would it mean for an individual to survive her own death? Does belief in the indestructibility of the human soul have ethical implications? What evidence is there for the existence, let alone immortality, of the soul?

Format: tutorial. Requirements: students will be expected to write a short paper every other week, and to give a presentation based on their papers. They will also be expected to write a final paper. We will pay close attention to revising papers in light of peer and instructor feedback. We will also work on critically reading and evaluating texts in the history of philosophy. Readings for the class may include: Homer, Plato, Aristotle, Fragments from the Stoics and Pre-Socratics, Plotinus, Origen, Tertullian, Augustine, Moses Maimonides, Ibn Sina, Averroes, and Aquinas.

No prerequisites. Enrollment limit: 10 (expected: 10). Preference given to sophomores.

MCPARTLAND

PHIL 221 (F) Greek Philosophy (Same as Classics 221)

Very few people believe that everything is water, that we knew everything before birth, that philosophers ought to rule the state, or that some people are natural slaves. Why then should we spend our time studying people who in addition to having these crazy beliefs have been dead for 2500 years? First of all, Greek thinkers, especially Plato and Aristotle, radically shaped the trajectory of western thought in every area of philosophy. No one can have an adequate understanding of the history of philosophy without some familiarity with the central figures of our intellectual history can deepen our understanding of our own situation. More importantly, many of the thinkers that we will read in this class are simply excellent philosophers, and it is worthwhile for anyone interested in philosophical problems to read treatments of these problems by excellent philosophers. We will begin the course by looking at some of the primary Greek philosophers active in the Mediterranean world of the seventh through fifth centuries BCE, and some of the sophists active in the fifth century. We will then turn to several of Plato’s dialogues, examining Plato’s portrayal of Socrates and his development of a new and profoundly powerful philosophical system. We will then read some of Aristotle’s works on metaphysics, epistemology and ethics, and see how Aristotle’s thought responds to that of predecessors. We will begin the course with a brief examination of some of the major figures in Hellenistic philosophy: Skepticism, Stoicism and Epicureanism. Roughly equal amount of time will be spent on metaphysics and epistemology, and ethics and political philosophy.

Format: lecture/discussion. Requirements: several short papers, term paper, attendance and active participation in class.

Prerequisites: at least one class in philosophy is strongly recommended. Enrollment limit: 25 (expected: 20). Preference given to current and prospective Philosophy and Classics majors.

PHIL 222 (F) Minds, Brains, and Intelligent Behavior: An Introduction to Cognitive Science (Same as Cognitive Science 222 and Psychology 222)

(See under COGS 222 for full description.)

KIRBY

PHIL 224(S) The Philosophy of Sex and Domination (Same as Women’s and Gender Studies 223) (W)

Why are so many of women’s actions affected by the desire to be considered sexually desirable? In order to understand the complexity and conflicted nature of women’s sexuality, one must ask which social practices have shaped it. While pornography is a common focus for inquiry into women’s sexuality, this course aims to examine the more subtle and embedded effects of patriarchy on sex and sexuality. We will discuss the works of theorists such as Sandra Bartky and Catherine MacKinnon to understand the philosophical questions concerning the social meaning of sex/sexuality and its actual practice. These questions range over seemingly uncontroversial gender differences, such as why women cross their legs, to more explicit questions, such as why the number of sexual occurrences is determined by male orgasm. We will then look at particular examples of the effects of male domination on sex/sexuality in daily life, including examples such as sex work and family history standards and the continuum between violence and sexism, and compare them to social images about sex, including sexually explicit images. This comparison will allow us to investigate the relation between woman’s sexual powerlessness and social meanings of sex. The goal is to better understand the deeper, more steadfast impressions of patriarchy on sex. This course aims to refine students’ critical thinking and to engage them dialectically in controversial social issues.

Format: lecture and discussion. Requirements: several short papers, final 8- to 10-page paper, regular attendance and participation.

No prerequisites. Enrollment limit: 19 (expected: 7-10).

Hour: 7:00-9:40 p.m. M

WELCH

PHIL 225 Classics in Western Feminist Thought (Not offered 2009-2010; to be offered 2010-2011) (Same as Women’s and Gender Studies 225) (W)

(See under WGST 225 for full description.)

SAWICKI

PHIL 226(F) Big Games: The Spiritual Significance of Sports (Same as Religion 279)

Sports matter beyond all apparent reason. They are children’s games, yet grip adults. They serve as entertainment, yet are taken most seriously. They demand physical excellence, yet drive athletes to injury and spectators to become obese. The significance of contemporary sports is thus unquestionable, but it is also unexplained. Diversion and fitness alone cannot account for the extraordinary amounts of time, money, and emotion invested in the playing, watching, and analysis of sports.

This course will attempt to comprehend the significance of sports by attending to their role as a source of three distinctive forms of “spiritual” experience: patriotism, beauty, and divinity. We will consider the extent to which the fundamental elements of contemporary sports (games, athletes, equipment, arenas, fans, and media) can be interpreted as together comprising a complex phenomenon that provides opportunities for all participants to share in these experiences. Throughout we will investigate actual examples, taken from particular sports, chosen for their ability to illuminate different aspects of spiritual experience.

Format and schedule: scheduled discussion groups once per week. Requirements: quizzes, short writing assignments, final exam.

No prerequisites. Enrollment limit: 100 (expected: 80-100).

Hour: 1:10-2:25 TF; Conference: 2:25-3:30 W; 2:25-3:30 R

DUDLEY

PHIL 227 Death and Dying (Not offered 2009-2010) (W)

In this course we will examine traditional philosophical approaches to understanding death and related concepts, with a special focus on the ethical concerns surrounding death and care for the dying. We will begin with questions about how to define death, as well as reflections on its meaning and function in human life. We will then examine the normative ethical issues of our family members, decisions about living wills and other planning treatments, the care of seriously ill newborns, physician-assisted suicide, euthanasia, and research efforts to extend the human life-span. In addition to key concepts of death, dying, and terminal illness, we will develop and refine notions of medical futility, paternalism and autonomy, particularly within the context of advance directives and surrogate decision making.

Format: lecture/discussion. Requirements: active participation in class discussions, two mid-length papers (7-10 pages), and weekly short writing assignments (2 pages). Possible experiential learning component.

No prerequisites. Enrollment limit: 19 (expected: 19).

J. PEDRONI

PHIL 228 Feminist Bioethics (Same as Women’s and Gender Studies 228) (Not offered 2009-2010) (W)

In this course we will explore the ways in which feminist approaches to moral thinking have influenced both the methodology and the content of contemporary bioethics. The first portion of the course will address the emergence of the “Ethics of Care,” critically assessing its origins in feminist theory, its development within the context of the caring professions, and its potential as a general approach to bioethical reasoning. The second portion of the course will use feminist philosophy to inform our understanding of the ways in which gender structures the individual’s interactions with the healthcare system. To do this, we will explore topics that might traditionally be considered “women’s issues” in health care, such as medicine and body image (e.g., cosmetic surgery, eating disorders), reproduction and genetic technologies, and research on women and their health care needs. In addition we will also look at feminist analyses of topics that traditionally haven’t been identified as particularly gender-specific, such as resource allocation and end of life issues.

Format: lecture/discussion. Requirements: active participation in class discussions, two mid-length papers (7-10 pages each), and weekly short writing assignments (app. 2 pp. each).

No prerequisites. Although previous coursework in Women’s and Gender Studies is desirable. Enrollment limit: 19 (expected: 8-10). Preference given to Women’s and Gender Studies and Philosophy majors.

J. PEDRONI

PHIL 229 Ethics and Genetics (Not offered 2009-2010) (W)

The Human Genome Project, among other recent advancements in genetic technology, has already profoundly affected the conduct of basic biological sciences and has the potential to revolutionize medical practice and agriculture. In this course we will examine the philosophical and ethical concerns that accompany the use of genetic information and interventions. We will begin by addressing foundational conceptual questions, the first of which will be: what constitutes specif-
ently genetic information and manipulation? In addition, we will consider the formulation and moral relevance of the distinctions between nature and artifice in the genetic realm, the contribution of genetics to various notions of identity, and the relationship between moral responsibility and genetic influence or determinism. The remainder—and bulk—of the course will take up specific ethical issues relating to genetic information and technology. Such topics may include privacy and the disclosure of genetic information, genetic testing and screening, preimplantation genetic diagnosis and the creation of “savior” siblings, human gene transfer (a.k.a. “gene therapy”), cloning of human and nonhuman animals, patenting and intellectual rights, genetic experimentation with humans, and the agricultural use of genetically modified organisms.

Fundamental to the seminar will be active participation in class, periodic short writing assignments (2-3 pages each), and one long term paper (10-15 pages) on a topic of the student’s choosing. Previous coursework in biology, genetics or philosophy may be helpful but is by no means required.


J. PÆDRØN

PHIL 231(F)  Ancient Political Thought (Same as Political Science 231)  (See under PS21 for full description.)

PHIL 232  Modern Political Thought (Same as Political Science 232) (Not offered 2009-2010; to be offered 2010-2011)  (See under PS232 for full description.)

DEVEAUX

PHIL 235T  Morality and Partiality: Loyalty, Friendship, Patriotism (Not offered 2009-2010)  (W)

The aim of this tutorial is to critically examine the nature, importance, and ethical value of personal attachments and loyalties. Loyalty is frequently expected by family, friends and lovers, and demanded by institutions, religious and political communities, as well as by the state. A person incapable of loyalty is often characterized as fickle, cold, self-serving and sometimes even pathological. However, the status of loyalty as a virtue has always been suspect: it has been argued that it is incompatible with impartiality, fairness and equality, and claimed that it is always exclusionary. So, some relationships with other people—such as friendships, familial ties, love, patriotism—seem to be ethically desirable, central to the quality of our lives, and yet prima facie in tension with the widely held belief that each person should be justly treated and have their due, and that, for our friends, family, community or nation? Does morality require that we always subordinate our personal relationships to universal principles? Is patriotism incompatible with cosmopolitanism, and if so, which of the two should we value? If loyalty is a virtue, what are the proper limits of its cultivation and expression? Philosophical literature on this topic will include Plato and Aristotle on friendship and civic virtues (supplemented by secondary literature), contemporary discussion of the moral value of personal relationships (B. Williams, A. Rorty, D. Velleman, L.A. Bloom, P. Railton) as well as texts on nationalism, patriotism, cosmopolitanism and universal human rights written by contemporary philosophers, sociologists and political theorists (M. Nussbaum, R. Rorty, K.A. Appiah, S. Nathanson, I. Primoratz).

Format: tutorial. Requirements: tutorial pairs will meet with the instructor for one hour a week; each student will write a 5-page paper every second week, and comment on the tutorial partner’s paper on alternate weeks. There will be no final paper.

No prerequisites. Enrollment limit: 10 (expected: 10). Preference given to sophomores.

MLADENOVIC

PHIL 236(F)  Contemplative Ethical Theory (W)

Is sacrificing an individual’s welfare for the sake of the community ever justified, or does each individual have an inviolable status that must be respected? Should moral considerations always take priority over personal projects and intimate relationships, or are there some spheres in which we should be free to pursue our goods, and not be constrained by morality? We will explore these and related questions by systematically comparing the two dominant ethical theories of the 20th century, consequentialism and deontology. While both theories find their roots in earlier thinkers—consequentialism in Mill and Sidgwick, deontology in Kant—our focus will be on contemporary developments of these views. After examining these approaches in depth, we’ll turn our attention to recent theories that attempt to transcend the distinctions that divide consequentialist and deontological views. Readings include works by Bentham, Mill, Nozick, Railton, Brink, Williams, Wolf, Taurek, Rawls, Smart, Scheffler, Nagel, Kant, Kamm, Quinn, Kagan, Ross, and Scanlon. This is a writing intensive course.

Format: lecture/discussion. Requirements: several short response papers; an 8- to 10-page midterm paper; a 10- to 12-page final paper.

Prerequisite: Philosophy 101, Philosophy 102, or permission of the instructor. Enrollment limit: 19 (expected: 10-15). Preference will be given to Philosophy majors.

Hour: 1:10-2:25 MR

BARRY

PHIL 237  What Does a Work of Art Mean? (Not offered 2009-2010)

According to myth, the Philosopher’s Stone could turn iron into gold. According to this course, even more amazing is that configurations of colored paint or sound waves or ink stains can be turned into art, music, and literature. How is that a work of art can have a meaning? What does it mean for a work of art to have a meaning? Must a work of art have a meaning? Is the meaning of art similar to, or different from, the meaning of language?

We will study a variety of visual art, such as Marcel Duchamp’s L.H.O.O.Q., works of music, such as Duke Ellington and Louis Armstrong’s 1961 recording of “It Don’t Mean a Thing (If It Ain’t Got That Swing),” and works of literature such as Vladimir Nabokov’s Pale Fire. We will read such philosophers as Gottlob Frege, Ludwig Wittgenstein, Arthur Danto, Nelson Goodman, and Catherine Elgin. Most of the art we investigate and most of the philosophers we read will be from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

Format: seminar with some lectures. Requirements: frequent imaginative short assignments and a final project.

No prerequisites; open to first years. Enrollment limit: 30 (expected: 20). Preference given to seniors and juniors.

GERRAD

PHIL 238(F)  Justice, Terrorism, and Weapons of Mass Destruction (Same as Political Science 238)

What is generally known as Just War Theory (JWT), first clearly formulated by Augustine and then developing both theistic and non-theistic variants, both of which have been forced to adapt as technological advances have brought with them new forms of violence that the theories must take into consideration, are currently challenged by terrorism, torture, and weapons of mass destruction. The focus of this course will be on the application of the JWT to contemporary topics, including terrorism, torture, cloning, biotechnology, and the formulation and moral relevance of the distinctions between nature and artifice in the definition of weapons of mass destruction.

Format: seminar. Requirements: attendance, preparation, participation; regular short writing assignments and/or class presentations; a term paper (10-15 pages).

Prerequisites: Philosophy 101 or Political Science 203 or permission of the instructor. Enrollment limit: 19. Preference given to prospective and current Philosophy and Political Science majors.

Hour: 1:10-2:25 TF

WHITE

PHIL 239(F)  Issues in Contemporary Islamic Thought (Same as Religion 239)  (See under REL 239 for full description.)

AL-AZM

PHIL 241T  Philosophy of Education: Why Are You Here? (Not offered 2009-2010)  (W)

Students compete ferociously for the opportunity to pay large sums of money for the privilege of attending Williams College. The value of the educational experience is usually taken to be self-evident. Less obvious, however, is the nature of education itself. What is education? Which purposes can and should it serve? Is it education the sort of thing that can be “received” and, if so, how? These questions about the nature of education are essential to philosophy, and also to the history and future of Williams College. Since the time of Plato and Aristotle philosophers have sought to determine the educational practices most conducive to human wisdom and flourishing. American liberal arts colleges offer a distinctive form of educational experience, and thus a distinctive response to the philosophical challenge to specify the optimal means of human development. In this seminar students will read and discuss classic texts in the philosophy of education in close conjunction with materials concerning the emergence and present practices of liberal arts colleges in America. Special attention will be paid to Williams College, and students will be encouraged to reflect upon their own educational goals and choices in light of the philosophical works that they read.

Format: tutorial. Requirements: each week one tutorial partner will write a 5- to 7-page paper on the assigned reading, which the other partner will critique. The two partners will switch roles in alternate weeks.

Prerequisite: Philosophy 101, or Philosophy 102, or permission of the instructor. Enrollment Limit: 10 (expected: 10). Preference will be given to majors or prospective majors in philosophy. Several spaces will be reserved for sophomores.

DUDLEY

PHIL 243(F)  The Philosophy, Politics, and Economics of Poverty (Same as Economics 243 and Political Science 243)

This course will look at poverty in the developed nations from the perspective of three disciplines—philosophy, political science, and economics. Poverty in many of the developed nations has not responded to antipoverty efforts in recent decades. In the United States, for instance, the percentage of people in poverty has remained basically unchanged for forty years, and Americans born poor are much likelier than other Americans to be poor in their adult lives. We will begin by asking what political factors and what philosophical and economic assumptions have shaped these unsuccessful antipoverty efforts since 1970. To what extent has poverty been seen as a function of restricted opportunity? To what degree has poverty been seen as a function of character, culture, and public policy itself?
PHIL 271T Woman as “Other” (Same as Women’s and Gender Studies 271T) (Not offered 2009-2010) (D) (W)

At mid-century, Simone de Beauvoir, existential philosopher and perhaps the greatest feminist theorist of the twentieth century, described woman as “living in a world where men compel her to assume the status of the Other.” At the same time, Beauvoir asserts: “One is not born a woman, one becomes one.” How, given their objectification, can women become subjects for themselves? Is authenticity even possible? Must the relation between self and other inevitably be one of othering? How can women embrace the reciprocity and mutuality in self-other relations possible? In our efforts to deepen our understanding of these important philosophical questions, questions that have been at the center of social and political thought at least since Hegel introduced the dialectic of master and slave, we will engage in close readings of writings by Beauvoir (including autobiography and biography), as well as philosophers responding to her—Franz Fanon, Luce Irigaray and Judith Butler.

Format: tutorial. Students will work in pairs. Requirements: each student will write and present orally a 5-page essay every other week. Students not presenting essays will prepare oral critiques of their partners’ essays. Evaluation will be based on written work, oral presentations of essays, and oral critiques.

Prerequisites: one course in either Philosophy or Women’s and Gender Studies. Enrollment limit: 10 (expected: 10). Preference given to current and prospective Philosophy and Women’s and Gender Studies majors.

SAWICKI

PHIL 272T Free Will and Responsibility (Not offered 2009-2010) (W)

In moral and legal decisions we hold people responsible for their deliberate actions. This practice seems justified as long as people are free to make the choices that they do. But what criteria must a decision meet in order to qualify as free? Clearly, a free decision must not be the result of external coercion. But must the decision also be free from any outside influence at all? If so then freedom may seem impossible, for we are all deeply influenced by external factors ranging from the specific features of the environment including religion, political ideology, and advertising. These affect not only our particular choices but also, more fundamentally, who we are and what we value. Since it is undeniable that we are pervasively influenced by such forces, the real question is whether, and how, free choice is possible amidst all of these influences. In this course we will examine the best-known recent philosophical attempts to make sense of the nature of free will and responsibility. Since these issues have a direct bearing on which theory of legal punishment we shall adopt, we shall also examine theories of punishment and our duty to prevent crime. Our focus will also be on works by contemporary authors.

Format: tutorial. Requirements: students meet with the instructor in pairs for roughly an hour each week; each student will write a 5- to 6-page paper every other week (6 in all) and comment on his or her tutorial partner’s paper in alternate weeks. Emphasis will be placed on developing skills in reading, interpretation and oral and written critical reasoning and writing.

Prerequisites: Philosophy 101 or 102, or permission of the instructor. Enrollment limit: 10 (expected: 10). Preference will be given to current and prospective Philosophy majors and students committed to taking the tutorial.

BARRY

PHIL 274T Messing with People: The Ethics of Human Experimentation (Not offered 2009-2010) (W)

From the now infamous Tuskegee Syphilis Study and Stanley Milgram’s Obedience experiments, to lesser known but equally important landmarks in research ethics, such as the Willowbrook experiment, in which residents of a state home for mentally retarded children were intentionally infected with a virus that causes hepatitis, and the Kennedy-Krieger Lead Abatement study, which tested the efficacy of a new, inexpensive lead paint removal procedure by offering to low-income parents of young children reduced-rate housing in lead-attenuated units and testing those children for lead exposure—in this sophomore tutorial we will closely examine a series of contemporary and historical cases of human experimentation (roughly, one case per week) with an eye toward elucidating the moral norms that guide our understanding of human subjects research. A number of conceptual themes will emerge throughout the course of the term, including notions of exploitation and coercion, privacy and confidentiality, and the balance between public interests and individual rights. Specific issues will include the ethics of placebo research, deception in research, studies of illicit/illegal behavior, genetic research, experimentation with children, pregnant women and fetuses, and persons with diminished mental capacity, among other topics. Students will meet with the professor in pairs for approximately one hour per week, reading and presenting 5- to 7-page papers every other week, and continuing orally on their partners’ essays in alternate weeks.

Format: tutorial. Evaluations will be based on written work, on oral presentations of that work, and on oral critiques.

No prerequisites. Enrollment limit: 10 (expected: 10). Preference will be given to prospective philosophy majors and students committed to taking the tutorial.

J. PÉDROÑI

PHIL 280 Frege, Russell, and the Early Wittgenstein (Not offered 2009-2010)

The last line of Ludwig Wittgenstein’s Tractatus famously reads: “Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent.” Are there things that cannot be put into words? What are the limits of language? What is the nature of language? How do logic and language relate? We will examine these (and other questions) in the context of the great philosophical revolution at the beginning of the last century: the linguistic turn and the birth of analytic philosophy. We will see how a focus on language affects our understanding of many traditional philosophical questions, ranging from epistemology and metaphysics to aesthetics and ethics. Our texts will include Gottlob Frege, The Foundations of Arithmetic, Bertrand Russell, Principles of Mathematics, and Ludwig Wittgenstein, Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus.

While you’re debating whether to take this class, consider the following puzzle. There is a village where the barber shaves (a) all those and (b) only those who do not shave themselves. Now, ask yourself: who shaves the barber? You will see that if the barber does not shave himself, then by condition (a) he does shave himself. And, if the barber does shave himself, then by condition (b) he does not shave himself. Thus, the barber shaves himself if and only if he does not shave himself. Can you see if figure out why this is sometimes called a paradox, and then ask yourself what this has to do with our opening questions.

Format: seminar. Requirements: two short papers (5 pages) and one longer final paper (12-15 pages).

Prerequisite: Philosophy 102. Expected enrollment: 12-15. Preference given first to Philosophy majors, and then to seniors and juniors of any major.

GERRARD

PHIL 281(T)S Philosophy of Religion (Same as Religion 302) (W)

Our goal in this course will be to try to determine how far reason can justify belief in God. We will spend at least half of the semester examining the best-known philosophical arguments for and against the existence of God (including the ontological argument, the cosmological argument, the teleological argument, the natural theology argument, and the inconceivability argument). For the remaining half of the course we shall examine the relationship between god and morality. Authors will include Plato, Anselm, Aquinas, Pascal, Paley, Hume, Kant, Kripke, Peirce, Richard Wurmbrand, and several contemporary philosophers.

Format: tutorial. Format: tutorial. Emphasis will be placed on developing skills in reading, interpretation and oral argument as well as critical reasoning and writing. Requirements: students meet with the instructor in pairs for roughly an hour each week; each student will write a 5- to 6-page paper every other week (six in all) and comment on his or her tutorial partner’s paper in alternate weeks.

Prerequisites: Philosophy 101 or 102, or permission of the instructor. Enrollment limit: 10 (expected: 10). Preference will be given to current and prospective philosophy majors.

Tutorial meetings to be arranged.

BARRY

PHIL 282 The Turn to Religion in Post-Modern Thought (Same as Jewish Studies 280 and Religion 305) (Not offered 2009-2010; to be offered in 2010-2011) (W)

(See under REL 303 for full description.)

HAMMERSCHLAG

PHIL 288(S) Embodied Mind: A Cross-Cultural Exploration (Same as Religion 288)

(See under REL 288 for full description.)

DREYFUS and CRUZ

PHIL 290 The Philosophy and Economics of Higher Education (Same as Economics 214 and INTR 290) (Not offered 2009-2010) (W)

Students compete ferociously for the opportunity to pay large sums of money for the privilege of attending Williams College. The value of the educational experience they receive is usually taken to be self-evident. Less obvious, however, are the nature of education, and the factors that determine how much it costs, who has access to it, and how successful it is.
This interdisciplinary seminar will explore both the philosophy and the economics of higher education. Which purposes can and should college serve? Which curricular and extra-curricular programs best accomplish those purposes? How can we measure and evaluate the effects of policies concerning college admission, pricing, and financial aid? How can we assess and enhance educational productivity? Students will read and discuss texts in the philosophy of education, while also learning to apply economic and econometric techniques to the analysis of educational issues.

Format: lecture/discussion. Evaluation will be based on the writing and revision of three 8-page papers, as well as the quality of contributions to class discussion.

Prerequisites: Economics 110 and at least one philosophy course. Enrollment limit: 19 (expected: 19). Preference given to sophomores intending to or juniors majoring in either philosophy or economics.

Students will get credit for one philosophy course, which fulfills one-semester of the Division II requirement.

DUDDLEY

PHIL 301 Textual Meaning and Interpretation (Same as Linguistics 330) (Not offered 2009-2010) (W)
Each language focuses on the meaning of assertions, denials and descriptions. However, this approach is too narrow, since people use language to do a myriad of things: to ask, demand, promise, praise, blame, threaten, command, insinuate, evoke, express feelings, and sometimes just to play. The philosophical study of what we do in language and how we understand one another, is called pragmatics; within the analytic tradition, the main philosophical contributions to the study of pragmatics in language came from Peirce, Wittgenstein, Austin, Grice and Searle. Other philosophers and literary theorists have used some of their insights to shed light on the nature of textual meaning and the interpretation of literary texts. We shall first explore the salient features of the pragmatic approaches to language, paying special attention to Austin’s notion of illocutionary force and Grice’s notion of non-natural meaning. We will then examine how these notions may be exploited in the consideration of various long-standing issues in the theory of literary interpretation. We will discuss the importance of specific genre conventions and broader contextual matters to the interpretation of literary texts (along the lines suggested by Quentin Skinner); the possibility of using intention to rule out mistaken and arrive at acceptable interpretations, if not a single correct interpretation (a possibility denied by so-called relativists as Stanley Fish); the use and meaning of metaphors; and the host of questions surrounding the “intentional fallacy” (the alleged result of invoking authorial intention to determine textual meaning).

Format: seminar. Requirements: class participation, 10 short weekly response papers, and 2 longer (5-7 page) papers.

Prerequisites: Philosophy 102 or 103. Enrollment limit: 19 (expected: 6-10). Open to all students, preference given to philosophy majors.

MALĐENOVIC

PHIL 304(T) Authenticity: From Rousseau to Poststructuralism (W)
The eighteenth-century aesthetician Edward Young once asked: “Born originals, how comes it to pass we die copies?” In the same century Jean-Jacques Rousseau responds to this question by charting the individual’s “fall” into society; that is, into artifice, hypocrisy, vanity, and conformism. This tutorial begins with Rousseau’s reflections on authentic individuality as they are developed in several of his works. We then trace the idea of authenticity (as an aesthetic and ethical category) to the Romantic and philosophical and literary texts associated with romanticism, existentialism, critical theory, psychoanalytic theory, and posthumanism. We conclude with recent challenges to the coherence, viability, and value of the ideal of authenticity as it applies not only to individuality, but also to group identities. Themes and questions investigated include the following: (1) Must “authenticity” refer to some notion of an innate core or deep self? Are other other terms in which we can imagine “being ourselves”? (2) Does being authentic require that one defy social conventions or is it compatible with adopting conventional roles? (3) What impact do consumerism, mass media and contemporary technologies (particularly human-machine couplings and nanotechnology) have on thinking about authenticity? Students will work with peers. Each student will write and present orally an essay of 5-6 pages every other week on an assigned topic in the reading for that week and serve as a commentator on alternate weeks.

Format: tutorial. Evaluation will be based on written work, presentation of essays, and critiques.

Prerequisite: one course in Philosophy or permission of instructor. Enrollment limit: 10 (expected: 10).

Tutorial meetings to be arranged.

SAWICKI

PHIL 305 Existentialism and Phenomenology (Not offered 2009-2010) (W)
According to Jean-Paul Sartre, the only philosopher to ever refer to himself as an “existentialist,” existence precedes essence. What is essential to human being is not any fixed set of characteristics, but rather what a human being becomes and how it defines itself under conditions it does not choose. In this course we will explore a wealth of philosophical and literary works and key figures from two of the most influential movements in twentieth-century European philosophy, namely, existentialism and phenomenology, a philosophical approach to which existentialism is indebted. We will discuss major works (philosophical, literary, visual) by such figures as Edmund Husserl, Martin Heidegger, Jean-Paul Sartre, Simone de Beauvoir, Albert Camus, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, and Richard Wright, Ingram Bergman and Jean-Luc Godard. We will raise questions concerning the task of philosophy, the structure and meaning constituting function of consciousness, the relationship between self and other, the mind-body relationship, freedom, authenticity, and absurdity.

Format: seminar. Requirements: short critical response papers, occasional short class presentations based on outlines of the texts, and three 5- to 6-page papers. Students will be required to re-write one of the three papers in lieu of a final exam.

Prerequisites: Philosophy 101 or 102 or 240 or 2711 or 304T or permission of instructor. Enrollment limit: 19 (expected: 10-15). Preference given to majors and those considering a major in philosophy.

SAWICKI

PHIL 307(F) Exploring Creativity (Same as ArtsS 309, English 309, EXPR 309 and Mathematics 309)
(See under EXPR 309 for full description.)

PHIL 308(F) Wittgenstein’s Philosophical Investigations
Bertrand Russell claimed that Ludwig Wittgenstein was “perhaps the most perfect example I have ever known of genius as traditionally conceived—passionate, profound, intense, and dominating.” Wittgenstein’s two masterpieces, the Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus and the Philosophical Investigations, stand like opposing poles around which schools of twentieth-century analytic philosophy revolve. The Wittgenstein of the Tractatus is known as the “earlier Wittgenstein,” the Wittgenstein of the Investigations is known as the “later Wittgenstein.” This course is an intensive, line-by-line study of the Investigations—one of the greatest (and thus, one of the most controversial) books in the history of philosophy. Aside from its overwhelming influence on 20- and 21st-century philosophy and intellectual culture, any book which contains the remark, “if a lion could talk, we could not understand him,” deserves serious attention.

Format: seminar. Requirements: one short midterm paper (5-7 pages) and one longer final paper (12-15 pages).

Prerequisites: Philosophy 102. Enrollment limit: 19 (expected: 12).

Hour: 2:35-3:50 TF

GERRARD

PHIL 309 Kant (Not offered 2009-2010)
This course will provide an intensive study of the philosophy of Immanuel Kant. Kant’s transcendental idealism is profoundly important: it constitutes a challenge to rationalist metaphysics, a response to Hume’s empiricist skepticism, and systematically integrates epistemology, ethics, and aesthetics in a way that has shaped modern Western thought. It is also profoundly difficult: more than 200 years after its development, there is still vehement disagreement not only over whether or not certain aspects of Kant’s philosophy are correct, but also over what Kant actually said. In this course our goal will be to understand Kant’s philosophy as a systematic whole, in terms of the tight-knit relationships that bind all his ideas into one comprehensive vision. We will attempt to understand what Kant said and why, how it is important, and the extent to which it is right. We will read significant portions of all three of Kant’s most important works (the Critique of Pure Reason, the Critique of Practical Reason, and the Critique of Judgment), and may occasionally make use of secondary literature. Required reading: the entire text of Kant’s Critique of Practical Reason, a 12-15 page paper.

Prerequisites: Philosophy 102. Expected enrollment: 5-15.

DUDDLEY

PHIL 310 Evil (Not offered 2009-2010)
What is evil, and why does it exist? Can nature be evil, or is all evil attributable to the freely willed actions of human beings? Is evil compatible with God, or is it a powerful argument for atheism? Can evil be understood, or is it necessarily incomprehensible? These persistent and perplexing questions, which arise from the suffering of people in every time and place, have driven the sustained attention of the greatest thinkers in the Western philosophical tradition. This course will examine some of the most important and influential responses to the problems that the existence of evil poses. We will begin with Leibniz, who coined the term “theodicy” to name the project of defending God from the charge that a truly perfect being could not have created a world that contains evil. Other authors to be considered may include: Rousseau, Kant, Hegel, Marx, Voltaire, Hume, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Freud, Camus, and Arendt. In the course of our reflections we will discuss some of the events that make evil not merely an intellectual challenge, but also an immediate and pressing practical concern, including Auschwitz, 9/11, and Hurricane Katrina.

Format: discussion. Requirements: several short assignments, final research paper, attendance, and participation. Prerequisites: Philosophy 101 or 102. Enrollment limit: 19 (expected: 19). Preference to students majoring or intending to major in philosophy.

DUDDLEY
PHIL 317 The Philosophy of Hilary Putnam (Not offered 2009-2010)

Hilary Putnam (1926–2016) is regarded by many of the profession as the world’s foremost living philosopher. Putnam is famous for both changing his mind and for the breadth of his interests. He was one of the earliest proponents of the view that human beings are inherently analogous to computers, and then later, one of the chief critics of that view. Putnam’s works range from the philosophy of logic and physics to the philosophy of education and history. He has written on philosophers from Aristotle and Kant to Levinas and Dewey. He has examined both the consistency of mathematics and the consistency of religion. In this seminar, we will study the full range of Putnam’s work.

Format: seminar. Requirements: frequent short assignments and presentations and a major final paper.


GERRARD

PHIL 318(S) Necessity and Possibility (W)

You are reading this course description right now. However, it seems true to say that you might have been doing something else, something more fun, instead. In other words, it is quite possible that many of you are reading this text and are thinking that you might be doing something else. This leads us to wonder whether there is such a thing as a necessary truth. Perhaps, we should wonder whether there is nothing that is necessarily true, but really, it doesn’t seem to be possible to say this. On the other hand, we do have a sense of necessity and possibility. For example, it seems to be necessary that anything that is reading this description exists, and it seems to be necessary that it not be possible to say anything to the contrary. If this is true, then what is it for a claim to be necessary? Is necessity a feature of our world that the way we think about the world, or is it a feature of a possible world? These questions are typically asked within a framework where the overarching goal is attaining truth and avoiding falsity. Beyond this common ground, however, epistemologists are much divided. Some maintain that these issues are solely the province of philosophy, using traditional a priori methods. Others maintain that they are part of a wider social and political concern.

Epistemologists seek answers to the following kinds of questions:

—What is it to have a belief?
—What is knowledge (as opposed to mere opinion)?
—In order to be justified in holding a belief, must someone know (or believe) that she is justified in holding that belief?
—What, if anything, justifies our scientific knowledge?
—What is it to have a central place in our beliefs?
—What is it to be a central place in our beliefs?
—What is it to be a necessary truth?
—What is it to be a possible truth?
—What is it to be a necessary truth?

These questions are typically asked within a framework where the overarching goal is attaining truth and avoiding falsity. Beyond this common ground, however, epistemologists are much divided. Some maintain that these issues are solely the province of philosophy, using traditional a priori methods. Others maintain that they are part of a wider social and political concern.

Epistemologists seek answers to the following kinds of questions:

—What is it to have a belief?
—What is knowledge (as opposed to mere opinion)?
—In order to be justified in holding a belief, must someone know (or believe) that she is justified in holding that belief?
—What, if anything, justifies our scientific knowledge?
—What is it to have a central place in our beliefs?
—What is it to be a central place in our beliefs?
—What is it to be a necessary truth?
—What is it to be a possible truth?
—What is it to be a necessary truth?

These questions are typically asked within a framework where the overarching goal is attaining truth and avoiding falsity. Beyond this common ground, however, epistemologists are much divided. Some maintain that these issues are solely the province of philosophy, using traditional a priori methods. Others maintain that they are part of a wider social and political concern.

Epistemologists seek answers to the following kinds of questions:

—What is it to have a belief?
—What is knowledge (as opposed to mere opinion)?
—In order to be justified in holding a belief, must someone know (or believe) that she is justified in holding that belief?
—What, if anything, justifies our scientific knowledge?
—What is it to have a central place in our beliefs?
—What is it to be a central place in our beliefs?
—What is it to be a necessary truth?
—What is it to be a possible truth?
—What is it to be a necessary truth?

These questions are typically asked within a framework where the overarching goal is attaining truth and avoiding falsity. Beyond this common ground, however, epistemologists are much divided. Some maintain that these issues are solely the province of philosophy, using traditional a priori methods. Others maintain that they are part of a wider social and political concern.

Epistemologists seek answers to the following kinds of questions:

—What is it to have a belief?
—What is knowledge (as opposed to mere opinion)?
—In order to be justified in holding a belief, must someone know (or believe) that she is justified in holding that belief?
—What, if anything, justifies our scientific knowledge?
—What is it to have a central place in our beliefs?
—What is it to be a central place in our beliefs?
—What is it to be a necessary truth?
—What is it to be a possible truth?
—What is it to be a necessary truth?

These questions are typically asked within a framework where the overarching goal is attaining truth and avoiding falsity. Beyond this common ground, however, epistemologists are much divided. Some maintain that these issues are solely the province of philosophy, using traditional a priori methods. Others maintain that they are part of a wider social and political concern.

Epistemologists seek answers to the following kinds of questions:

—What is it to have a belief?
—What is knowledge (as opposed to mere opinion)?
—In order to be justified in holding a belief, must someone know (or believe) that she is justified in holding that belief?
—What, if anything, justifies our scientific knowledge?
—What is it to have a central place in our beliefs?
—What is it to be a central place in our beliefs?
—What is it to be a necessary truth?
—What is it to be a possible truth?
—What is it to be a necessary truth?

These questions are typically asked within a framework where the overarching goal is attaining truth and avoiding falsity. Beyond this common ground, however, epistemologists are much divided. Some maintain that these issues are solely the province of philosophy, using traditional a priori methods. Others maintain that they are part of a wider social and political concern.

Epistemologists seek answers to the following kinds of questions:

—What is it to have a belief?
—What is knowledge (as opposed to mere opinion)?
—In order to be justified in holding a belief, must someone know (or believe) that she is justified in holding that belief?
—What, if anything, justifies our scientific knowledge?
—What is it to have a central place in our beliefs?
—What is it to be a central place in our beliefs?
—What is it to be a necessary truth?
—What is it to be a possible truth?
—What is it to be a necessary truth?

These questions are typically asked within a framework where the overarching goal is attaining truth and avoiding falsity. Beyond this common ground, however, epistemologists are much divided. Some maintain that these issues are solely the province of philosophy, using traditional a priori methods. Others maintain that they are part of a wider social and political concern.
PHIL 335 Contemporary Metaethics (Not offered 2009-2010) (W)
We often speak as if moral judgments can be true or false, well-reasoned or not. But how should objectivity in this domain be understood? Is moral objectivity like scientific objectivity, assuming we have a clear sense of what it involves? If not, should that concern us? Are there other models for understanding moral objectivity besides science? While answers to such questions are implicit in historically important accounts of morality, these issues became the topic of explicit, sustained attention in the twentieth century. Our focus will be on the most recent and sophisticated work in this area. We will examine several different approaches in depth, including realism, constructivism, expressionism, and skepticism. Readings will include works by Moore, Stevenson, Harman, Mackie, Railton, Boyd, Blackburn, Williams, McDowell, Korsgaard, and Nagel.

Format: seminar. Requirements: final paper, several short assignments, attendance and participation.
Prerequisites: Philosophy 101 required; one 200- or 300-level Philosophy course is recommended.
Enrollment limit: 19 (expected: 5-15). Preference given to Philosophy majors and those considering the Philosophy major.

BARRY

PHIL 337F (F) Justice in Health Care
Justice is a notoriously complex and elusive philosophical concept, the conditions of which are even more difficult to articulate within real world institutions and contexts. In this course we will explore justice as a fundamental moral principle and as a desideratum of the US health care system. The first portion of the course will be devoted to considering general theories of justice as well as alternative conceptions of justice within the health care context. This will provide the background for subsequent examination of specific topics, which may include, among others: justice in health care financing and reform, which may include an analysis of any Obama administration proposal(s); justice in health care rationing, with particular attention to the relationship between rationing criteria and race, gender, age, and justice in the procurement and allocation of organs for transplantation; AIDS and personal responsibility for illness; and justice in medical research, including “double standards” for research conducted in less developed countries.

Format: tutorial. Evaluations will be based on written work, oral presentations of that work, and oral critiques.
Prerequisites: none. Enrollment limit: 10 (expected: 10). Preference will be given to Philosophy majors, to students in the International Relations Global Health Track, and to students committed to taking the tutorial.
Tutorial meetings to be arranged.

PEDRONI

PHIL 340 Contemporary Metaphysics (Not offered 2009-2010) (W)
In this course, we will examine a number of issues in contemporary metaphysics. Possible topics include: realism and anti-realism, the problem of universals, the nature of necessity, causation, material constitution, the nature of time, personal identity, and freedom of the will. While we will be concerned to place our discussions in the current context, almost all of the reading for the class will consist in articles written by contemporary philosophers working in what is sometimes called the “analytic” tradition.

Format: lecture and discussion. Evaluation: two long papers (at least one of which will be re-written), short response papers, and active participation in class.
Prerequisites: Philosophy 102 (familiarity with formal logic helpful but not required). Enrollment limit: 15 (expected: 10).

MCPARTLAND

PHIL 351 (F) Philosophy of Art
Philosophical debates about art are both an important part of philosophy and a useful way for students of the arts to deepen their understanding of painting, literature, drama, film, and the media. We will begin with a series of classic texts and debates: Plato, Rousseau, and Hegel on the value of art as a source of moral insight and moral growth; Hume and Kant on the universality and objectivity of taste; and (from the 20th century) Roger Fry, E.H. Gombrich and Arthur Danto on the value of representational and abstract art. Then we will turn to contemporary philosophers of art. Kendall Walton and others have built on the idea that representational works are props in rule-governed games of make-believe, and that together these rules and props give rise to “fictional worlds.” How is the fictional world of a work of art like and unlike the real world? Are fictional worlds more or less knowable than the real world? Can spelling out the rules of the games of make-believe that are played with artistic objects deepen our understanding of the various media and genres, and in turn deepen our understanding of particular works of art?

Format: lecture/discussion, often using particular works of art for illustration. Requirements: four 1- to 2-page papers, a midterm, a quiz, a 10-page final paper and thoughtful class participation.
Prerequisites: one introductory course in philosophy or permission of the instructor. Enrollment limit: 20 (expected: 10-15). Preference given to Philosophy majors.

KARELIS

PHIL 360 (F) The Political Thought of Frantz Fanon (Same as Africana Studies 402 and Political Science 360)
(See under AFR 402 for full description.)

ROBERTS

PHIL 379(S) American Pragmatism (Same as American Studies 379)
Along with jazz, American pragmatism stands as the greatest uniquely American contribution to world culture. As the music wafts in the background, we will study the classic pragmatists: William James, C. S. Peirce, and John Dewey. We will continue with the contemporary inheritors of the tradition: Cornel West, Richard Rorty, and Hilary Putnam. Although it has influenced both analytic and continental philosophy, pragmatism is a powerful third philosophical movement. Always a confounding mixture of liberal and socialist thought, the pragmatists engaged in disputes about how these movements would make our world better and sought to uncover the role of science and technology in the arts and in society.

Format: seminar. Requirements: final paper, several short assignments.
Prerequisites: Philosophy 102. Expected enrollment: 12-15. Preference given first to Philosophy and American Studies majors, and then to seniors and juniors of any major.

Hour: 2:35-3:50 MR

GERRARD

PHIL 380 Relativism (Not offered 2009-2010) (W)
‘Relativism’ is a term often used in philosophy for a great number of very different views. The aim of the course is to survey, analyze and discuss many varieties of relativism in metaphysics, epistemology, ontological and moral—among Plato, Thucydides to contemporary social constructivism. We will pay special attention to the structure of arguments for and against relativism, as well as to the moral motivations and perceived consequences of its endorsement or rejection. We will thus be led to discuss some of the concepts common to epistemology, metaphysics and ethics: reason, justification, objectivity, understanding, reality and truth. Some of the questions we will consider are: Are moral standards relative to cultural frameworks? Are there incompatible but equally true ways of describing the world? Is rationality—our notion of a good reason to believe something—relative to cultural norms? Is relativism a form of skepticism? Is it forced on people who endorse cultural pluralism as their political ideal as well as the only viable philosophical position?

Our readings will include the relevant works of Plato, Sextus Empiricus, Bayle, Locke, Berkeley, Carnap, Quine, Davidson, Goodman, Elgin, Hacking, Krausz, Forster, Williams, Harman and Thomton.

Format: seminar. Requirements: This is a writing intensive course. Each student will write 10 weekly short papers (1000 words each); give a class presentation and lead the ensuing discussion; and write a final paper (7-10 pages). Prerequisites: Philosophy 101 and 102, and at least one 200 level philosophy course.
Enrollment limit: 19 (expected 7-10).

MILANOVIC

PHIL 388T(S) Consciousness (W)
The nature of consciousness remains a fundamental mystery of the universe. Our internal, felt experience—what chocolate tastes like to oneself, what it is like to see the color red, or more broadly, what it is like to have a first person, waking perspective at all—resists explanation in any terms other than the conscious experience itself in spite of centuries of intense effort by philosophers and, more recently, by scientists. As a result, some prominent researchers propose that the existence of consciousness requires a revision of basic physics, while others (seemingly desperately) deny that consciousness exists at all. Those positions remain extreme, but the challenge that consciousness poses is dramatic. It is at the same time the most intimately known fact of our humanity and science’s most elusive puzzle.

In this tutorial we will read contemporary literature on consciousness. We will concentrate both on making precise the philosophical problem(s) of consciousness and on understanding the role of the relevant neuroscientific and cognitive research. Tutorial partners will have an opportunity to spend the end of the semester working on a special topic of their choosing including, for instance, consciousness and freewill, pain and anesthesia, consciousness and artificial intelligence, or disorders of consciousness.

Format: tutorial. Requirements: Participants will present substantial written work in the tutorial every other week, and will be responsible for commenting on their tutorial partner’s work on off weeks. Expect several short lectures by the instructor over the course of the semester where all the tutorial members converse.

226
Prerequisites: Philosophy 102 and at least one upper-level course in philosophy. Preference will be given to majors in Philosophy, or concentrators in Neuroscience or Cognitive Science. Open to sophomores with permission of the instructor. Every effort will be made to pair students according to similar or complimentary background. This course is writing intensive. Enrollment limit: 10 (expected: 10).

Tutorial meetings to be arranged.

PHIL 389(S) The Structural-Systematic Philosophy
The history of theoretical inquiry since the seventeenth century is plausibly viewed as a process whereby philosophy, for the Greeks the home of virtually all theoretical inquiry, is increasingly deprived of subject matters by the developments of the natural and social sciences. At an extreme, it can appear—and does appear, to many philosophers—that philosophy is left with no proper subject matter except perhaps those sciences themselves. On a different view, however, this process can appear instead as one that clarifies a proper subject matter for philosophy; that subject matter is the all-encompassing domain from which each natural and social science carves its specific domain. Comprehensive philosophical treatments of this all-encompassing domain may reasonably be termed “theories of everything.” This seminar examines central components of such a theory that is currently under development; this is the structural-systematic philosophy presented in *Structure and Being* (Lorenz Puntel, translated by collaboration with Alan White) and *Toward a Philosophical Theory of Everything* (Alan White). Among the topics to be examined, as systematically interconnected, are language, knowledge, truth, mindedness, ethics, aesthetics, world history, God, being as such. Format: seminar. Requirements: attendance, preparation, participation; regular short writing assignments and/or class presentations; a term paper (10-15 pages). Prerequisites: Philosophy 102 or permission of instructor. Enrollment limit: 10 (expected: 10). Preference will be given to majors in Philosophy, or concentrators in Neuroscience or Cognitive Science.

PHIL 393 Hegel: Freedom and History (Not offered 2009-2010)
Hegel pointed out that although freedom is one of our highest values, it is “open to the greatest misconceptions.” This remains true today; although appeals to freedom are used to justify governments, institutions, policies, and practices (and to sell cars, soft drinks, and rock-n-roll), those making and responding to such appeals rarely thematize freedom explicitly, much less adequately. This has the ironic (and perhaps dangerous) consequence of making our culture one in which people follow appeals to freedom unfreely, without knowing what freedom is or why it is worth pursuing. This course will begin with the *Philosophy of Right*, in which Hegel critiques the most powerful “misconceptions” of freedom (those of liberalism and Kant), and develops a new conception that grounds his own social and political philosophy. We will then read the *Philosophy of History*, in which Hegel interprets history as the temporal process whereby humans come to understand their freedom and actualize it in the world. Format: lecture/discussion. Requirements: two short papers, one longer paper, regular and active participation. Prerequisites: Philosophy 101, or Philosophy 102. Enrollment limit: 25 (expected: 15). Preference given to Philosophy majors. Hour: 1:10-2:25 MR

PHIL 401(F) Senior Seminar: Skepticism
In this course we will examine and evaluate some of the most important historical and contemporary skeptical arguments. Students will be responsible for presentations on the assigned readings, and for the development of a final paper involving independent research. Format: seminar. Requirements: several short assignments, final paper, attendance and participation. Prerequisites: required of, and open only to, senior philosophy majors. Enrollment limited to senior Philosophy majors. Hour: 1:10-3:50 W

PHIL 491(F)-W30 Senior Essay
This course involves Independent Study under the supervision of a member of the department. The objective is the presentation and writing of a senior essay (maximum 40 pages).

PHIL 493(F)-W31-494(S) Senior Thesis
This course involves Independent study under the supervision of a member of the department. The objective is the preparation and writing of a senior thesis (maximum 75 pages).

PHIL 497(F), 498(S) Independent Study