

Philosophy Courses - Fall 2021

PHIL 150: Introduction to Logic

Professor:
Sean Ebels Duggan
Time:
MWF 9:00-9:50 AM

This course will introduce students to some perennial questions in the philosophy of morality. We will be concerned with questions about (1) the nature of morality: For instance, are there universal, objective truths about right and wrong? Or is morality ultimately a subjective or relative matter? (2) The substance of morality: Are there certain actions that are absolutely forbidden, no matter what the consequences? When evaluating a person's action, in what way do his or her motives matter? And (3) the importance of morality: Should we really care whether or not we do the right thing?

PHIL 210-1: History of Philosophy - Ancient

Professor:
Giuseppe Cumella
Time:
TTh 3:30-4:50 PM

This course is designed to provide an introductory sample of important texts and ideas of ancient Greek and Roman philosophy. Specifically, the course examines texts and ideas from Plato, Aristotle, and the Hellenistic philosophers.

PHIL 216: Introduction to Pragmatism

Classics of Pragmatist Thought

Professor:
Axel Mueller
Time:
TTh 2:00-3:20 PM

Pragmatism is probably the first, but certainly the most important genuinely North American philosophical tradition. The classical writings of Peirce, James, Dewey set the stage for a completely new orientation in epistemology, moral and political theory, psychology and many other fields. Basic to all Pragmatist writers is the belief that the active and interactive human being in its natural and social environment has to stand at the center of reflection. They thus emphasize volitional, procedural, social, and evolutionary aspects of knowledge of any kind. Given this focus on practically involved intelligent agents, political pragmatists like Dewey, Addams, Locke explore the natural origins, revisability and legitimacy of moral and political norms. They develop the idea of a critical use of knowledge and its connection to non-violent democratic conduct. Neopragmatists (Rorty and Putnam) explore the philosophical and political implications of critical thinking.

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PHIL 253: Introduction to the Philosophy of Language

Professor:
Megan Hyska
Time:
TTh 9:30 - 10:50
AM

In this introduction to the philosophical study of language, we will ask questions like: What is language anyway? What is meaning? And how does the meaning carried by language vary (if it does) from the sort of meaning we attribute to natural phenomena when we say, for instance, "smoke means fire" or "those rings mean that this tree is 106 years old"? We will also touch on the role that the study of language has sometimes been thought to play in philosophical inquiry broadly, and on the connection between the philosophy of language and the empirical investigation of language in other disciplines.

PHIL 260: Introduction to Moral Philosophy

Professor:
David Johnson
Time:
MWF 11:00-11:50
AM

What sort of life is best to live? How should we treat others? What are the best or most appropriate principles on which to base our ethical decisions? Questions such as these have occupied philosophers for millennia and will occupy us for a quarter. We will spend the first six weeks of the term examining some of the foundational theories of the Western tradition of moral philosophy, focusing on Aristotle's virtue ethics, Jeremy Bentham's utilitarianism, and Kant's deontological moral theory; we will spend the final four weeks of the quarter studying feminist and critical race theoretical critiques of this tradition in Carol Gilligan's care ethics and Charles Mills's radical Black Kantianism.

PHIL 269: Bioethics

Professor:
Chad Horne
Time:
TTh 2:00-3:20 PM

A study of ethical problems arising in public policy, as well as philosophical approaches to addressing these problems. Topics to be discussed include punishment, immigration, climate change, and global distributive justice.