

Philosophy

Humanities Division

The great philosophers seek to answer the most basic questions about the world and our place in it. Can we distinguish between what is real and what is unreal? What is knowledge? What are the roles of reason, perception, and feeling in shaping our relations with the world and with each other? What does it mean to be a person? What is the value of art? What are we to think about religion?

Many philosophical questions are inescapable. How is one to live one's life? What are good and bad, right and wrong? How do we acquire obligations? How are we to make moral decisions? In every life, such questions arise, and everyone assumes one answer or another. To attempt to articulate your answer and to search for better answers is to become a philosopher.

Original works of the great classical and contemporary philosophers are used in all courses. Texts are analyzed critically in order to understand what is being said and judge their merit. In class discussion and in written work, we raise questions, develop additional ideas, and construct new arguments. Classes in philosophy are generally small and usually emphasize discussion and dialogue. Students are encouraged to engage in critical thought and to come to their own conclusions.

FACULTY

Joel F. Richeimer, Chair, Associate Professor

Juan E. De Pascuale, Associate Professor (on leave)

Rebecca J. Lloyd-Waller, Assistant Professor

Donald Nightingale, Visiting Associate Professor

Yang Xiao, Associate Professor (on leave)

EMERITUS FACULTY

Cyrus W. Banning, Professor Emeritus

Ronald E. McLaren, Professor Emeritus

THE PHILOSOPHY CURRICULUM

Nearly all courses are designed to be of interest and accessible to both majors and non-majors. Regardless of background, students should normally take the introductory course, PHIL 100, before they take any other philosophy course at Kenyon. Each member of the philosophy faculty offers a section of the introductory course. This course serves as an introduction to the subject through the reading of original works by major philosophers. Although many of our texts derive from earlier centuries and from classical Greece, we are concerned with what is of timeless and present importance in them. We emphasize classroom discussion, focusing on interpretation of the texts and consideration of the philosophical issues raised by them. We assign several short papers and we give a final examination. Other courses especially recommended for first-year students are PHIL 105 Introduction to Logic and PHIL 115 Practical Issues in Ethics.

Courses that may be taken without prerequisites are: PHIL 105 Introduction to Logic; PHIL 110 Introduction to Ethics; PHIL 115 Practical Issues in Ethics; PHIL 200 Ancient Philosophy; PHIL 208 Contemporary Political Philosophy; PHIL 210 Modern Philosophy; PHIL 225 Existentialism; PHIL 235 Philosophy of Law; PHIL 240 Philosophy of Religion; PHIL 270 Political Philosophy.

Intermediate-level courses include such courses as PHIL 120 Symbolic Logic; PHIL 215 Nineteenth-Century Philosophy; PHIL 245 Philosophy of Science; and PHIL 270 Political Philosophy. PHIL 310 Heidegger's Ontology; PHIL 335 Wittgenstein; PHIL 340 Sartre and Merleau-Ponty; and PHIL 345 Kant are among the more advanced courses. Although the seminars—PHIL 400 Ethics; PHIL 405 Epistemology; and PHIL 410 Metaphysics—are primarily for majors, they may be of interest to other advanced students as well.

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MAJOR

1. Course Requirements

- 4.5 units of philosophy (9 courses), including the following courses:
 - PHIL 105 Introduction to Logic or PHIL 120 Symbolic Logic
 - PHIL 200 Ancient Philosophy
 - PHIL 210 Modern Philosophy
- Three electives of the student's choice
- Three core-area courses (one course from each of the three core areas—ethics, epistemology, metaphysics—one of which must be chosen from the group of advanced seminars):
 - PHIL 400 Ethics Seminar
 - PHIL 405 Epistemology Seminar
 - PHIL 410 Metaphysics Seminar
- Any two electives

2. Senior Exercise

3. Friendly Advice

Here are some tips on course planning:

PHIL 100 is normally the first course majors take, but it is not mandatory.

PHIL 105 Introduction to Logic or PHIL 120 Symbolic Logic, PHIL 110 Introduction to Ethics, PHIL 200 Ancient Philosophy, and PHIL 210 Modern Philosophy should normally be taken as early as possible. The advanced seminars, PHIL 400 Ethics, PHIL 405 Epistemology, and PHIL 410 Metaphysics should normally begin no earlier than the second semester of the junior year.

Students who expect to do graduate work in philosophy are strongly encouraged to take PHIL 120 Symbolic Logic.

SENIOR EXERCISE

The Senior Exercise consists of a comprehensive essay examination with questions drawn from ancient philosophy, modern philosophy, and one of the core-area advanced seminars of the student's choice.

HONORS

Central to the Honors Program is a series of two related courses culminating in a thesis at the end of the senior year. The first, PHIL 497, enables the student to pursue the search for and development of a suitable topic. By the second semester of the senior year, the student should have the background necessary for writing an honors thesis in PHIL 498. Students interested in the Honors Program should submit a written request to the chair of the department before the second semester of their junior year.

In the spring semester of their junior year, honors candidates submit a thesis proposal for approval. Upon departmental approval, honors candidates will register for two .25-unit courses to be taken senior year, PHIL 497 (fall semester) and PHIL 498 (spring semester). Honors candidates write complete drafts of their theses in PHIL 497 and refine and defend their theses in PHIL 498.

1. Course Requirements

- 5 units of philosophy, including the following courses:
 - PHIL 120 Symbolic Logic
 - PHIL 200 Ancient Philosophy
 - PHIL 210 Modern Philosophy
 - PHIL 215 Nineteenth-Century Philosophy
 - Three electives of student's choice
 - All three core-area course seminars:
 - PHIL 400 Ethics Seminar
 - PHIL 405 Epistemology Seminar
 - PHIL 410 Metaphysics Seminar
 - PHIL 497 and 498 Senior honors thesis independent studies
- For normal sequence of courses, see "Friendly Advice," above.

2. Senior Exercise

3. Honors Thesis and Oral Examination

Upon completion of the thesis, the honors candidate will stand for an oral examination on the thesis, conducted by an outside examiner and the candidate's thesis advisor, in the presence of the entire department.

4. Divisional Approval

The candidate must meet the requirements of the College and

of the Humanities Division for admission to and retention in the Honors Program.

CORE-AREA COURSES

There are three core areas: ethics, epistemology, and metaphysics. The courses that may be selected to satisfy the core-area requirements are listed below under the core area they satisfy. Additional courses may be announced.

Ethics

PHIL 110 Introduction to Ethics
PHIL 203 Hellenistic and Roman Philosophy
PHIL 208 Contemporary Political Philosophy
PHIL 275 Moral Psychology
PHIL 400 Ethics Seminar

Epistemology

PHIL 220 Pragmatism
PHIL 245 Philosophy of Natural Science
PHIL 340 Sartre and Merleau-Ponty
PHIL 345 Kant
PHIL 405 Epistemology Seminar

Metaphysics

PHIL 205 Medieval Philosophy
PHIL 215 Nineteenth-Century Philosophy
PHIL 255 Philosophy of Language
PHIL 260 Philosophy of Mind
PHIL 310 Heidegger's Ontology
PHIL 410 Metaphysics Seminar

GRADUATE SCHOOL CONSIDERATIONS

Philosophy majors interested in attending graduate school are strongly encouraged to select PHIL 120 Symbolic Logic to satisfy the logic requirement, and to select PHIL 400 Ethics Seminar, PHIL 405 Epistemology Seminar, and PHIL 410 Metaphysics Seminar to satisfy the core-area course requirements. Such students should also consult with a faculty member as early as possible.

SYNOPTIC MAJORS

Philosophy courses are often suitable for inclusion in synoptic majors, and the department welcomes such majors.

OFF-CAMPUS STUDIES

Philosophy majors who wish to do so are generally able to participate in off-campus study programs, particularly if they begin their major programs as sophomores.

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MINOR

The minor in philosophy consists of 2.5 units of work (5 courses) in the department, including the following courses:

- PHIL 100 Introduction to Philosophy
- PHIL 105 Introduction to Logic or PHIL 120 Symbolic Logic
- One course from the history sequence: PHIL 200 Ancient Philosophy or PHIL 205 Medieval Philosophy or PHIL 210 Modern Philosophy or PHIL 215 Nineteenth-Century Philosophy
- Any two electives

PHILOSOPHY COURSES

PHIL 100 Introduction to Philosophy

Credit: .5 unit

The primary aim of this course is to acquaint the student with the spirit, methods, and problems of philosophy. An attempt is made to show the range of issues in which philosophical inquiry is possible and to which it is relevant. Major works of important philosophers, both ancient and modern, will be used to introduce topics in metaphysics, theory of knowledge, ethics, and other traditional areas of philosophical concern.

PHIL 105 Introduction to Logic

Credit: .5 unit

This course is an examination of the informal reasoning used in everyday life as well as in academic contexts. We will aim to both describe and understand that reasoning, on the one hand, and improve our competence in reasoning, on the other. Central to these informal patterns of reasoning are practices of explanation involving causal relations. We will explore the nature of explanation and causation, and we will discuss ways of articulating our reasoning patterns that make their nature clear. Thus we aim both to improve critical thinking and reading skills, and to understand in a deeper way the role that those skills play in human life. Offered every year.

PHIL 110 Introduction to Ethics

Credit: .5 unit

The central question in ethics is "How should I live my life?" This course explores this question by examining major ethical traditions such as honor ethics, Stoicism, Aristotelian virtue ethics, utilitarianism, Kantian deontology, and Nietzsche's genealogy of morality. The emphasis is on classical texts, as well as their connections with our contemporary life. This course is suitable for first-year students.

Instructor: Xiao

PHIL 115 Practical Issues in Ethics

Credit: .5 unit

This course examines moral issues we encounter in our private as well as public lives from a philosophical point of view. We discuss various ethical approaches such as Kantianism, utilitarianism, and value pluralism through analyzing issues such as abortion, capital punishment, euthanasia, the moral status of nonhuman animals, the environment, war, world poverty, inequality, and the ecology of rural life. There is a strong emphasis on discussion, and we use diverse methods such as Brandeis Brief and moral heuristics. This course is suitable for first-year students.

Instructor: Xiao

PHIL 120 Symbolic Logic

Credit: .5 unit QR

There are many different ways to get someone to do what you want. These include threatening violence, lying, conditioning, bribery, begging, and providing an argument. An "argument" (in logic) is an appeal to evidence in the support of a conclusion. (It should not be confused with the ordinary usage of the term "argument," which means quarrel.) An argument—unlike the other methods of persuasion—is an appeal to what is rational in the person to whom one is speaking. It

is the *only* method that respects the other person's ability to think. An argument does this in two ways. First, an argument is an attempt to show the evidence supports the conclusion. Second, an argument is the only method that invites the other person to assess whether the evidence in fact does support the conclusion. An argument invites a conversation. Logic is the study of what makes some arguments successful and some not. We will develop a procedure for assessing whether an argument is good (i.e., valid). We will examine the uses and the limits of this method. Offered every year.

Instructor: Richeimer

PHIL 200 Ancient Philosophy

Credit: .5 unit

Ancient Greek philosophy is not only the basis of the Western and the Arabic philosophical traditions, but it is central for understanding Western culture in general, including literature, science, religion, or values. In this course, we examine some of the seminal texts of Greek philosophy, focusing on the work of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. But we also examine the work of the pre-Socratics (such as Heraclitus, Zeno, and Democritus) and the Sophists (such as Protagoras and Gorgias). This is a lecture/discussion course. It is recommended that students complete PHIL 100, but there are no formal prerequisites for this course. Offered every year.

Instructor: Richeimer

PHIL 203 Hellenistic and Roman Philosophy

Credit: .5 unit

The Hellenistic and Roman period of Western philosophy has long been neglected by mainstream philosophers. Contemporary philosophers rarely mention philosophers from this period, and you will look long and hard before you find a department of philosophy, undergraduate or graduate, that offers a course on this subject. One reason for this neglect is that many do not regard what the philosophers of this period were doing as "philosophy" in the accepted academic sense of the term. The Epicureans, Sceptics, and Stoics practiced philosophy not as a detached intellectual discipline in the manner of professors of the subject, but as a worldly art of grappling with issues of daily and urgent human significance: the fear of death, love and sexuality, anger and aggression, the duties of friendship, the relative value of different life pleasures. Philosophy for these thinkers and writers was a way of life, a way of coping with life's difficulties and the mystery of human existence. This seminar will not be a strict historical survey of Hellenistic and Roman philosophy. Instead, we will critically analyze some of the best and most influential writings of this period in order to understand and evaluate what these philosophers thought was the best way to live life. We will read and discuss the writings of Epictetus, Lucretius, Seneca, Marcus Aurelius, Cicero, Plutarch, and others. Prerequisites: Introduction to PHIL 100 and 200 or permission of instructor.

Instructor: DePascuale

PHIL 205 Medieval Philosophy

Credit: .5 unit

Philosophically speaking, the period between the eleventh and sixteenth centuries was a remarkably fertile one that both warrants and rewards close study. In this course we will examine some of the major thinkers and themes from the Jewish,

Muslim, and Christian late medieval traditions, with an emphasis on understanding both how the medievals synthesized the wisdom of Aristotle with their dominant religious concerns and how they developed the world view against which early modern philosophy (seventeenth to eighteenth century) must be understood. Prerequisite: two philosophy courses, including either PHIL 200 or 210.

Instructor: Nightingale

PHIL 208 Contemporary Political Philosophy

Credit: .5 unit

This course is a survey of English-language political philosophy since World War II, with a focus on work published since 1970. The contemporary debate is primarily about the proper goals of political society. Here is a short list of political goals: equality, justice, respect for rights, liberty, and the elimination of oppression. Though difficult to define, these goals are widely shared. Thus the debate is largely internal to the power of a political society—a debate about how we should understand and distribute political goods. But, in addition, we will consider the feminist challenge to political theory as so understood: Is this "we" just men? Are the concepts of political theory constructed in such a way that women's contributions and interests are systematically marginalized, even when they participate in the political system? Offered every other year.

PHIL 210 Modern Philosophy

Credit: .5 unit

This course examines seventeenth- through eighteenth-century philosophy. Major emphasis will be placed on Descartes, Locke, Berkeley, Hume, and Kant, but we will also stop in on figures such as Malebranche, Arnauld, and Reid. We will stress metaphysical and epistemological issues throughout. It wouldn't be unfair to say that Descartes sets the agenda by creating a certain conception of the mind and the nature of knowledge, while each of the subsequent figures works out various implications of that conception. As such, the course content takes something of a narrative form, where we start with a certain optimism about knowledge and work our way into a deepening skepticism, only to be rescued at the end (by a rescuer whose price may not be worth paying). There are no official prerequisites, but PHIL 100 is recommended.

Instructor: Nightingale

PHIL 212 Early Chinese Philosophy

Credit: .5 unit

This course is a survey of early Chinese philosophy (in translation). We focus on the major thinkers of the classical period of Chinese philosophy (550-221 BC), such as Confucius, Mozi, Mencius, Laozi, Zhuangzi, Xunzi, and Han Feizi. The emphasis is on ethics, moral psychology, and political philosophy. It is recommended that students complete PHIL 100, but there are no formal prerequisites for this course.

Instructor: Xiao

PHIL 215 Nineteenth-Century Philosophy

Credit: .5 unit

At the end of the eighteenth century, Immanuel Kant initiated a philosophical revolution that has not ceased to both orient and divide philosophers in the Western tradition. In this course, we will revisit the first sparks of that revolu-

tion as they caught fire in the tinder of nineteenth century Europe. We will consider Fichte's outline of the vocation of humanity, Schelling's development of a philosophy of nature, Schopenhauer's mysticism and moral theory, and Nietzsche's criticisms. At a time in which the philosophy of religion was a vital and convulsive field, we will consider works from Herder, Schleiermacher, and Kierkegaard. We will then see this religious convulsion tied to political aspirations by the "Young Hegelians" (including Marx). We will end with work in logic, metaphysics, and philosophy of language by Brentano, Meinong, and Frege that has been enormously influential for English-language philosophy since the turn of the twentieth century. Prerequisite: at least one previous class in philosophy, political theory, or social theory. Offered every other year.

PHIL 220 Pragmatism

Credit: .5 unit

Pragmatism is the only major philosophical tradition on the world stage originating in the United States. And it is the only tradition of philosophy since Kant that is respected and taken seriously in both the Anglo-American philosophical tradition and the continental philosophical tradition. Many movements claim their origins in the American pragmatism—these include verificationism, Husserlian phenomenology, Quinean naturalism, and some trends in postmodernism, cybernetics, vagueness logic, semiotics, the dominant trend in American educational philosophy, Italian fascism, American experimental psychology, and Gandhi's philosophy of nonviolence. We will examine that tradition by reading the major works of Peirce, James, and Dewey, and their critics. Will be offered in 2010-11.

Instructor: Richeimer

PHIL 225 Existentialism

Credit: .5 unit

Existentialism is one of the most influential philosophical movements in modern culture. Unlike other recent philosophies, its impact extends far beyond the cloistered walls of academia into literature (Beckett, Kafka, Ionesco), art (Giacometti, Bacon, Dadism), theology (Tillich, Rahner, Buber), and psychology. Existentialism is at once an expression of humanity's continual struggle with the perennial problems of philosophy (knowledge, truth, meaning, value) and a particularly modern response to the social and spiritual conditions of our times (alienation, anomie, meaninglessness). In this course we will study existentialism in its complete form as a cultural and philosophical movement. After uncovering the historical context from which this movement emerged, we will view the "existential" paintings of de Chirico and Munch; read the fiction of Kafka, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, and Beckett; and closely study the thought of Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Heidegger, and Sartre. Among the topics we shall examine are alienation, authenticity, self-knowledge, belief in God, the nature of value, and the meaning of life. No prerequisite, but PHIL 100 or RLST 101 is desirable. Offered every year.

Instructor: De Pascuale

PHIL 230 Philosophy of Art

Credit: .5 unit

This course is a seminar/workshop in which we will attempt to philosophically scrutinize the delightful, complicated, and varied world of art. The philosophy of art is not art history, art appreciation, or art criticism. It is, instead, that branch of phi-

losophy in which we critically examine the assumptions made by artists, historians, and critics of art. In Philosophy of Art, we try to define art, establish general criteria for distinguishing what is important or unique in art works, understand creativity, and ascertain the role of art in human life and society. The aim of this course is to enable us to see and hear more clearly the kinds of objects that art presents for our contemplation and experience, so that we may come to know more and feel more. The first half of the course will be spent reading and discussing the theories of Bell, Tolstoy, Aristotle, Collingwood, Langer, Hanslick, and others. The second half of the course will largely be spent viewing, hearing, feeling, reading, and otherwise experiencing art works and philosophically questioning that experience. We shall discuss the nature of art, the ontology of objects of art, and the problems of the interpretation and criticism of art. No prerequisite. Offered every year.

Instructor: De Pascuale

PHIL 235 Philosophy of Law

Credit: .5 unit

This course is a survey of philosophical issues relating to law. We begin with the nature of law: Does statutory law derive its power from a more fundamental and objective natural law, or merely from its acceptance within a political community? Is international law really law? Do we have a moral obligation to obey the law? Then we consider a variety of philosophical issues within law: liberty, authority, equality, rights, privacy, freedom of expression, and torture. Finally, we look at general principles of philosophy that underlie the legal system: punishment and responsibility, promises and contracts, and property and ownership. The readings are drawn from a mixture of philosophy articles and court cases. This course fulfills the philosophy of law requirement for the Law and Society Concentration. Offered every other year.

PHIL 240 Philosophy of Religion

Credit: .5 unit

This course presents an inquiry into the nature of claims associated with religious traditions and the validity, if any, of such claims in the contemporary context. Topics to be studied include modern critiques of religious claims, proofs, and practices as irrational and/or related to oppression; the classical "proofs" of the existence of God; the relation between religion and science, including questions about the nature of religious language and how religious claims might be verified; the religious (and secular) understanding of suffering, death, and evil; the possibility of justifying religious claims on the basis of religious experiences; and the question of how religious claims might be understood as valid, given the differing claims of different religions. No prerequisite.

Instructor: De Pascuale

PHIL 245 Philosophy of Natural Science

Credit: .5 unit

One of the greatest human achievements is scientific knowledge. But what is scientific knowledge? Is it different from other kinds of knowledge? Should we take scientific claims as literally true or as useful fictions? What status should we accord scientific work? We will examine the answers to these questions offered by the Logical Positivists, the Popperians, Kuhn, Quine, Lakatos, and Boyd. On the way, we will consider the issues surrounding induction, explanation, theoretical entities, laws,

observation, reductionism, and so on. No formal background in the natural sciences is assumed. Prerequisite: PHIL 100 or permission of instructor. Will be offered in 2009-10.

Instructor: Richeimer

PHIL 255 Philosophy of Language

Credit: .5 unit

Language plays a central role in our life. But how does language work? For instance, how does communication take place in our everyday life? How should we interpret literary or religious texts? What is the relationship between language, thought, and the world? How do we “do things with words”? We examine these issues through the writings of Frege, Russell, Wittgenstein, Quine, Davidson, Austin, Grice, Lewis, and Brandom. Prerequisite: PHIL 120 or permission of instructor.

Instructor: Xiao

PHIL 260 Philosophy of Mind

Credit: .5 unit

Mentality is not like much else in the universe. Mentality (or mind) is quite peculiar. The human brain (unlike other physical things) has the power to think. We have thoughts. Yet what are thoughts? Thoughts don't seem to be physical. For instance, unlike physical objects, thoughts don't have any weight. One does not gain weight by having new thoughts or lose weight by forgetting them. Unlike physical objects, thoughts have no shape. The thought of a circle is not circular. Yet thoughts have power. When we explain human behavior, we do so by saying that the person has certain thoughts; i.e., they have certain beliefs and certain desires. Those beliefs and desires (those thoughts) caused the person to act the way he did. The view that there are thoughts, that thoughts are in minds, that thoughts cause behavior, is the ordinary everyday view of the world. It is called folk psychology (i.e., the psychology of ordinary folk). Folk psychology seems obviously true. But is it true? And if it is true, can we describe it in a clear way? Does contemporary research in psychology support or undermine folk psychology? We will see that what seems so obvious is in fact quite controversial. Many psychologists and philosophers think something is wrong with folk psychology. We will examine some of those debates. Will be offered in 2009-10.

PHIL 262 Philosophy of Perception

Credit: .5 unit

We all depend on perception to live our lives. It is so much part of our lives that it is taken for granted and seems not worth noticing. Yet perception is not well understood. When one examines the differences in perception among humans, what one takes for granted becomes problematic. When one includes animal perception and robotic perception, perception becomes mysterious. We will examine various ways of understanding perception: biological, computational, ecological, cultural, and rational. In so doing, we hope to gain some insight into a process that makes up much of our lives and provides the basis for much what we know. Prerequisite: sophomore status or higher.

Instructor: Richeimer

PHIL 263 Mind, Perception, and Film

Credit: .5 unit

This is not a course on film history, film theory or aesthetics. Nor is this a course using film to illustrate philosophical ideas. Rather this course treats film as a phenomenon in its own right. Film has its own properties. Those properties are in some ways similar and in some ways dissimilar from human experience. For instance, film has its own temporal and spatial structure. That temporal-spatial structure is seemingly quite different from the temporal-spatial structure of how we ordinarily experience the world. Yet humans can easily understand film and be moved by film. Film is both of this world and other worldly. We will explore a broad range of questions on the nature of film and what the magic of film teaches us about whom we are.

Instructor: Richeimer

PHIL 270 Political Philosophy

Credit: .5 unit

This course is a survey of the history of political philosophy from Plato through the twentieth century. We will consider questions such as the nature of justice, the justification for punishment and political authority, the nature of rights and of property, the relation of individuals to the state and to each other within the state, and the conception of political participation and citizenship. Through secondary readings, emphasis will be placed on different ways of approaching the history of political philosophy, e.g., analytic, feminist, Marxist, psychoanalytic, Straussian, and postmodernist. Offered every other year.

PHIL 275 Moral Psychology

Credit: .5 unit

This course examines concepts and issues at the intersection between moral philosophy and psychology. We discuss philosophical ideas regarding the nature of action, agency, practical reasoning, moral heuristics, and moral emotions, as well as recent developments in experimental philosophy and neuroethics. We examine these issues through the writings of Murdoch, Frankfurt, McDowell, Velleman, Nagel, Williams, Sunstein, Stocker, Greene, Haidt, and Appiah. Prerequisites: PHIL 110 or permission of instructor.

Instructor: Xiao

PHIL 300 Nietzsche's Philosophy

Credit: .5 unit

Nietzsche is a disturbing presence in the modern world. In a series of beautifully written books that are at once profound, elusive, enigmatic, and shocking, Nietzsche does nothing less than challenge our most precious and fundamental beliefs: the idea of truth, the existence of God, the objectivity of moral values, and the intrinsic value of the human being. As a critic of both the Western metaphysical tradition and the Judeo-Christian religion, Nietzsche may well be the most controversial thinker in the entire history of philosophy. In this seminar we will submit some of Nietzsche's most important books to a close, critical reading in an effort to come to terms, so far as this is possible, with his mature thought. We will examine his most famous yet perplexing views—the death of God, will to power, the Übermensch, nihilism, perspectivism, the eternal recurrence—as they are developed in *Untimely Meditations*, *Twilight of Idols*, *Genealogy of Morals*, *Beyond Good and Evil*, and selections from *Will to Power*. There are no

prerequisites for this course, although PHIL 100 or PHIL 225 would be helpful.

PHIL 305 Kierkegaard on Being Human

Credit: .5 unit

Often regarded as the originator of existential inquiry, Soren Kierkegaard (1813-1855) wrote a captivating poetic and philosophical literature concerning human existence. Taking the human hunger for meaning as his point of departure, Kierkegaard examined the rational and emotional depths of human life in its aesthetic, moral, and religious modes of expression. In this course we will read a large part of what Kierkegaard called “my authorship” in order to understand his way of doing philosophy and to examine his portrayal of the spiritual landscape. Kierkegaard’s probings into the value dimensions of life—for example, happiness, pleasure, boredom, despair, choice, duty, commitment, anxiety, guilt, remorse, hope, faith, love—encourage his readers to think about their own lives and their relations with others. In examining Kierkegaard’s ideas, therefore, the student should expect to be challenged personally as well as intellectually. Prerequisites: PHIL 100, PHIL 225, or permission of instructor. Will be offered in 2010-2011

Instructor: De Pascuale

PHIL 310 Heidegger’s Ontology

Credit: .5 unit

Martin Heidegger (1889-1976) is widely regarded as one of the most important philosophers of the twentieth century. His influence has been extraordinarily wide and deep, affecting such diverse fields as psychoanalysis, literary theory, theology, and architecture. Although the body of work he produced is remarkably diverse, Heidegger claims that in all of his writings he is occupied with a single task, that of thinking through “the question of the meaning of being.” In this seminar we will submit to close reading selected works from Heidegger’s early writings, from the period between 1922 and 1940. Among the works that may be read and discussed are *Being and Time*, *What is Metaphysics*, *The Concept of Time*, and *Basic Problems of Phenomenology*. Among the topics to be discussed are: the cognitivity of emotions, the basic structure of human existence, and the relationship among the awareness of death, being, and time. Some time will also be spent studying the reception of Heidegger’s thought by Anglo-Saxon analytic philosophy. Prerequisite: one unit of philosophy.

Instructor: De Pascuale

PHIL 335 Wittgenstein

Credit: .5 unit

Ludwig Wittgenstein is one of the most original, important, and influential philosophers of the twentieth century. Nevertheless, his work is controversial and often misunderstood. His ideas about language, mind, logic, and philosophy itself provide a deep challenge to many widely accepted views in philosophy, psychology, cognitive science, linguistics, religion, and other fields. In this class we will closely examine Wittgenstein’s work by engaging in close reading and discussion of primary texts, supplemented, on occasion, by secondary literature. We will look at the continuities and discontinuities between Wittgenstein’s early and later writings, with an emphasis on his later works. Questions we will specifically address include: What is language? What is the nature of

mind? How is meaning tied to use? Is meaning “private”? Can a person have private experiences which she can think about but never express or talk about to others? If Wittgenstein is correct, what are the implications for the scientific study of cognition, consciousness, and language? What good is philosophy itself? Should we offer philosophical theories? Can we help doing so? Prerequisites: PHIL 120 or PHIL 255 or permission of the instructor.

PHIL 340 Sartre and Merleau-Ponty

Credit: .5 unit

The two most important philosophers in post-World War II France were Jean-Paul Sartre and Maurice Merleau-Ponty. They initiated a debate that was and still is immensely influential both in and out of academia. Sartre worked out the implications of a consciousness-centered methodological individualism. The result was a new analysis of human freedom that equated freedom with “consciousness-raising.” This had a tremendous influence on the political left, feminist thought, existentialism, postmodernism, and many forms of psychotherapy. Merleau-Ponty challenged Sartre’s mind’s-eye view with a brain-body’s eye view of human behavior. Such a view replaced consciousness as guiding human behavior with an account of how any embodied functional system can self-adapt to its environment. Merleau-Ponty’s account was not limited to human behavior, but was generalizable to a range of self-maintaining systems. Merleau-Ponty explored this primarily in terms of the psychology of perception, in neuroscience, and in an analysis of film as a psychological phenomenon. Prerequisite: PHIL 100 or permission of instructor.

PHIL 345 Kant

Credit: .5 unit

Kant attempted to put metaphysics on a scientific basis by attending to the conditions under which human beings can experience the world. His “Copernican Revolution” placed self-consciousness at the center of philosophical inquiry into knowledge and introduced a radically new form of argument: the transcendental deduction, in which a claim is proved by showing that it is necessary for the possibility of any human experience at all. This course is a sustained reading of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, which discusses the status of space and time, free will and the validity of our causal knowledge, the role of imagination in knowledge, the immortality of the soul, the existence of God, and the rational foundations of moral claims.

PHIL 353 Aristotle

Credit: .5 unit

We will study Aristotle’s treatises in metaphysics, physics, psychology, and ethics; life forms the common thread. In those treatises, we pursue understanding of motion, growth, and living; of knowing, of living well, and of friendship; and again of growth, in the aspects of aging and dying. Aristotle’s concept of mind surrounds those inquiries. They raise his concept of God. We shall map both the intersections and the diverging paths. For topographic relief, we shall explore nearby areas: One is Spinoza’s *Ethics*, particularly his use of Aristotle, and also his own development of the themes, mind and God; the other, Kant’s critique of traditional metaphysics, comprising key extracts from the *Critique of Pure Reason*, including his treatment of God, freedom, and immortality.

Important in their own right, those related inquiries also bring the question, why Aristotle developed no sustained analysis of belief and religion.

Instructor: Nightingale

PHIL 400 Ethics Seminar

Credit: .5 unit

This seminar examines important topics in normative ethics as well as meta-ethics; twentieth-century philosophers are emphasized. We discuss contemporary normative ethical theories such as Neo-Kantianism (Korsgaard), agent-based virtue ethics (Michael Slote), utilitarianism (Smart and Singer), and moral skepticism (Williams). We also discuss meta-ethical issues such as moral realism, relativism, the sources of normativity, the concept of virtue, and the possibility of moral knowledge. Prerequisites: PHIL 110 or PHIL 275 or permission of the instructor.

Instructor: Xiao

PHIL 405 Epistemology Seminar

Credit: .5 unit

This is an advanced course on the central debates in epistemology: internalism versus externalism, foundationalism versus coherentism, naturalism versus antinaturalism. We examine these issues through the writings of Quine, Rorty, Putnam, Stroud, Dretske, Wittgenstein, and others. Prerequisites: PHIL 100, junior standing, and permission of instructor. Will be offered in 2010-2011.

Instructor: Richeimer

PHIL 410 Metaphysics Seminar

Credit: .5 unit

The content of this course varies but includes such topics as the nature and scope of reality, causality, space, time, existence, free will, necessity, and the relations of logic and language to the world. Traditional topics such as the problems of substance and of universals may be discussed. Much of the reading will be from contemporary sources. This course is for junior or senior philosophy majors; others may be admitted with permission of the instructor.

PHIL 493 Individual Study

Credit: .5 unit

Prerequisite: permission of instructor and department chair.

PHIL 497 Senior Honors

Credit: .25 unit

Prerequisite: permission of instructor and department chair.

PHIL 498 Senior Honors

Credit: .25 unit

Prerequisite: permission of instructor and department chair.

SOME RECENTLY OFFERED SPECIAL TOPICS

Roman and Hellenistic Philosophy