Courses marked with * contribute to satisfying General Education Requirements

*PHIL 1000: Introduction to Philosophy
Credit will not be given for both this course and PHIL 1001.

Section 1: MWF 10:30-11:20    Wells

This course provides an introduction to philosophy through the lens of the concept of “enlightenment.” What we call “the Enlightenment” was a period of intellectual and philosophical development in 17th and 18th century Europe. However, more broadly speaking but in the spirit of that movement, we can describe enlightenment as a series of commitments: Commitment to the idea that humans are by nature rational things, to the idea of truth and that such truth is discoverable through objective and rational inquiry, to the idea that individual liberty and individuality are paramount, and to the idea that the use of our reason is the engine for human progress. Our course traces these commitments through a survey in the history of Western philosophy. It does so in (roughly) three sections. First, we sketch an argument in defense of the concept and the project of enlightenment. Next, we consider some challenges to the foundations of this enlightenment project: Is what we call progress really progress? Are we really transparently rational selves? Are we really free? What if all of this is simply a story we tell to justify control and conformity? Finally, we take up the critical tools of enlightenment to examine our own context, specifically with an eye toward gender, race, disability, and oppression. Throughout this course, we will keep three connected questions in mind: What is a self? What is the relationship between this self and rationality? How do the answers to these first two questions inform how we ought to act, as individuals and as communities?

Section 2: MWF 11:30-12:20    Wells

This course provides an introduction to philosophy through the lens of the concept of “enlightenment.” What we call “the Enlightenment” was a period of intellectual and philosophical development in 17th and 18th century Europe. However, more broadly speaking but in the spirit of that movement, we can describe enlightenment as a series of commitments: Commitment to the idea that humans are by nature rational things, to the idea of truth and that such truth is discoverable through objective and rational inquiry, to the idea that individual liberty and individuality are paramount, and to the idea that the use of our reason is the engine for human progress. Our course traces these commitments through a survey in the history of Western philosophy. It does so in (roughly) three sections. First, we sketch an argument in defense of the concept and the project of enlightenment. Next, we consider some challenges to the foundations of this enlightenment project: Is what we call progress really progress? Are we really transparently rational selves? Are we really free? What if all of this is simply a story we tell to justify control and conformity? Finally, we take up the critical tools of enlightenment to examine our own context, specifically with an eye toward gender, race, disability, and oppression. Throughout this course, we will keep three connected questions in mind: What is a self? What is the relationship between this self and rationality? How do the answers to these first two questions inform how we ought to act, as individuals and as communities?
Section 3: TTh 12:00-1:20  Parsons

This course introduces students to the study of philosophy. We examine some influential works of philosophy with a view to understanding the role of philosophers in society and the methodology employed in philosophical thinking. Students will gain an appreciation for the history, scope, and influence of philosophy as well as acquire the skills needed for critical reflection on their own lives and the world around them.

Section 4: TTh 1:30-2:50  Blakley

This course is an introduction to the academic discipline and activity of philosophy through popular culture. Philosophy is the well-reasoned, critical, and reflective inquiry into and attempt to address the fundamental, conceptual questions of the human condition. What is knowledge? What is real? Are there any objective moral truths or is morality a matter of personal preference or cultural norms? What is beauty? What is the relationship between mind and body? Do human beings have free will? What is justice? What justifies a political authority? These questions and others make up the basic subject matter of philosophy.

In this course, we will discuss how these philosophical issues and others like them are raised in popular culture and examine some arguments over them developed by influential thinkers, both past and present. Our aim in doing so is not merely to learn what influential philosophers have argued about these issues, but to develop our own abilities to address them via critical, reflective, and logical reasoning.

Section 5: TTh 3:00-4:20  Blakley

This course is an introduction to the academic discipline and activity of philosophy through popular culture. Philosophy is the well-reasoned, critical, and reflective inquiry into and attempt to address the fundamental, conceptual questions of the human condition. What is knowledge? What is real? Are there any objective moral truths or is morality a matter of personal preference or cultural norms? What is beauty? What is the relationship between mind and body? Do human beings have free will? What is justice? What justifies a political authority? These questions and others make up the basic subject matter of philosophy.

In this course, we will discuss how these philosophical issues and others like them are raised in popular culture and examine some arguments over them developed by influential thinkers, both past and present. Our aim in doing so is not merely to learn what influential philosophers have argued about these issues, but to develop our own abilities to address them via critical, reflective, and logical reasoning.

*PHIL 1001: HONORS: Introduction to Philosophy  TTh 1:30-2:50  Cogburn

Same as PHIL 1000, with a special honors emphasis for qualified students. Credit will not be given for both this course and PHIL 1000.

During the Meiji era of Japan, traditional forms of Buddhism were inconsistently attacked as being both not traditionally Japanese and as being not “modern” enough. In part in response to these pressures thinkers like D.T. Suzuki and Kitaro Nishida worked intensely to enter more traditional forms of Japanese Buddhisms into dialogue with Western philosophical traditions. Because their “New
Buddhism” came out of an intercultural dialogue, is thus not entirely accidental that Suzuki’s writings (along with those of his student Alan Watts’) became canonical for a generation of Westerners seeking liberation in the 1960s. Contemporary “Western Buddhism” as a religious and philosophical tradition in its own right (as articulated in, for example, Robert Wright’s recent *Why Buddhism is True*) stands on the shoulders of Suzuki and Watts.

We will not try to assess the good, the bad, and the ugly that resulted from the 1960s Western appropriations of Eastern religion and thought. Rather, we will start by critically examining two of the most influential texts by Suzuki and Watts and then fast-forward to look at some ways Japanese “New Buddhism” has gone on to influencing contemporary philosophy of mind.

D.T. Suzuki, *An Introduction to Zen Buddhism*
Alan Watts, *The Way of Zen*
Francisco Varela, et. al., *The Embodied Mind*
Evan Thompson, *Waking, Dreaming, Being: Self and Consciousness in Neuroscience, Meditation, and Philosophy*

The class should be a lot of fun.

**PHIL 1021: Introduction to Logic**
MWF 12:30-1:20    Roland

This course is an introduction to logic, formal and informal. We will begin with the most basic kind of formal logic, propositional logic. Learning propositional logic involves learning a simple formal language. We will learn such a language, translate statements of English into that language, and learn some techniques for discerning logical properties of statements and arguments translatable into that language. On the informal side we will learn how to identify and avoid some ways of reasoning that can be quite attractive, but which are nonetheless defective. Finally, time permitting, we will briefly consider legal and scientific reasoning.

**PHIL 2020: Ethics**
An honors course, PHIL 2050, is also available.

**Section 1: TTh 9:00-10:20**    Blakley

This course uses popular culture to introduce students to philosophical ethics. Over the semester we will read Christopher Falzon’s book, *Ethics Goes to the Movies: An Introduction to Moral Philosophy* (2018) and consider how ethical issues and ideas are raised in popular TV shows like *Rick and Morty* and *South Park*, among others. Our aim in doing so is not merely to learn what influential philosophers have argued about questions like the ones above, but also to develop our own abilities to think more critically, reflectively, and logically about morality.

**Section 2: TTh 10:30-11:50**    Blakley

This course uses popular culture to introduce students to philosophical ethics. Over the semester we will read Christopher Falzon’s book, *Ethics Goes to the Movies: An Introduction to Moral Philosophy* (2018) and consider how ethical issues and ideas are raised in popular TV shows like *Rick and Morty* and *South Park*, among others. Our aim in doing so is not merely to learn what influential philosophers have
argued about questions like the ones above, but also to develop our own abilities to think more critically, reflectively, and logically about morality.

Section 3: TTh 3:00-4:20          Sarkar

This course will be divided into three parts; each part will focus on a cluster of questions surrounding a central issue. **Part One:** Peter Singer’s, *The Most Good You Can Do* will serve as a good introduction to ethics. This book raises questions, among others, about how we should live and while living give altruistically (far more than what we normally do); what constitutes effective altruism; who should be the benefactors when we give; and, finally, how far should we be concerned about the prospects of human extinction? **Part Two:** Rosen’s *Dignity* will take us through a brief history of the concept of dignity which plays a cardinal role in Immanuel Kant’s moral philosophy. Now, what is significant, says Rosen, is the right to be treated with dignity, or proper respect. When a satirical German magazine depicted a politician, Franz-Josef Strauss, as a copulating pig, Germany’s supreme court held that the magazine violated Strauss’s dignity. By contrast, when *Hustler* magazine portrayed Jerry Falwell having sex with his mother, the United States Supreme Court (1988) held unanimously in favor of the magazine under the First Amendment. Surely, both courts cannot be right. So, then, *what* is it to treat someone with respect? **Part Three:** We shall ask how our general view of human nature and justice leads to particular views about the limits of individual freedom, the legitimate authority of the State, and the right form of the market or economic system; and, ask how these views determine what we uphold as utopia. We shall try and answer these questions whilst reading G. A. Cohen’s *Why Not Socialism?* and its counterpoint, Jason Brennan’s *Why Not Capitalism?*

**Required Textbooks:**


Section 4: MWF 3:30-4:20           Wells

In this course we examine major positions in the history of ethical theory, as well as their applications and challenges to them. In the most basic sense, this course asks: What is right? How ought we act? How ought we live? In considering these primary questions, we will ask further: How ought we treat, and what do we owe, each other? Where do our obligations and responsibilities come from, i.e., what are their foundations? Our aim will be not only to understand these questions in theory, but to grapple with how they challenge us to live our lives, give us meaning, and determine what we value. Our task is to consider who we are and who we want to (or, perhaps, who we *ought to*) become. In pursuing this task, we will consider virtue ethics, stoic ethics, Kantian ethics, utilitarianism, and care ethics. We will also consider critiques of morality. In the final portion of the course we will examine the concept of oppression and its relation to ethics.
PHIL 2021: Environmental Ethics MWF 2:30-3:20 Wells

This course considers a number of questions and themes in the field of environmental ethics. First, we will examine what, if any, obligations humans have toward the environment, toward non-human life, and/or toward other humans with regard to how we treat, interact with, or use the environment. Questions we will consider in doing so include: What kind of value does nature have, and on what basis does it have that value? Should we view nature as more than a resource toward human well-being, i.e., view it as something able to make ethical demands upon us? If we do have obligations toward “nature,” what does that mean? Toward individual living things in nature? Toward ecosystems? Relatedly, what is “nature” in the first place? Next, we will consider the ethics of global climate change. Here we ask: Why might climate change be an especially difficult moral problem? Does a problem like climate change entail that we have obligations to future generations? Does such a claim even make sense? Can we be said to have an obligation, as an individual, to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions? From here we will consider the concept of environmental justice, beginning where questions in environmental ethics intersect with issues of racial justice. We conclude the semester by thinking about animal ethics using a recently published work arguing that we ought to frame our responsibilities to non-human animals through the lens of citizenship theory.

PHIL 2025: Bioethics M 6:00-8:50 Rolfsen

This course will primarily cover Medical Bioethics and begins with a review of the history of Medical Bioethics in the United States including discussion of several landmark cases. After reviewing the history that helped form our approach to bioethics, we will present a basic framework for analyzing ethical problems with a major focus on Beauchamp and Childress “Four Principles approach” (see suggested textbook) and then briefly covering alternate approaches. The remainder of the course will involve analysis of various current medical bioethical topics. This is a combination lecture and discussion based course and all students are strongly encouraged to participate in the discussion.

*PHIL 2035 History of Modern Philosophy TTh 10:30-11:50 Protevi

An honors course, PHIL 2036, is also available.

Introduction to philosophy through a study of some of the main writings of modern philosophy (1492-1804). This semester’s theme will be “Freedom: Metaphysical and Political.” Readings from Montaigne, Descartes, Hobbes, Locke, Spinoza, Rousseau, Kant, Condorcet, Wollstonecraft, and Cugoana.

2036 HONORS: Tutorial in Modern Philosophy (1) To be taken concurrently with PHIL 2035. 1 hr. of tutorial instruction per week for honors students.

PHIL 3003: French Existentialism TTh 12:00-1:20 Raffoul

The course is an exploration of French existentialism. After an introduction on the sources of French existentialism in German thought (Nietzsche, Heidegger and Arendt), we will study Sartre, Camus, Merleau-Ponty, Henry, Levinas, Nancy and Derrida. Themes addressed will include: existence and thought; transcendence and metaphysics; the question of being; freedom and responsibility; the question of the body and perception; existence and feeling; community and being-with; ethics and the other; hospitality and forgiveness.
PHIL 4924: Aristotle  TTh 4:30-5:50  Parsons

Prereq.: PHIL 2033 or equivalent.

This course is devoted to the study of Aristotle's work and thought. Students will gain in-depth acquaintance with Aristotle's contribution to the history of philosophy, including his psychological, ethical and political theories, as well as his metaphysics and ontology. Time permitting, we will also examine some differences between Aristotle and his predecessor, Plato. Aristotle, for example, rejected Platonic forms and differed importantly from Plato on the account of the human soul.

PHIL 4946: Philosophy of Law  TTh 1:30-2:50  Donelson

Law surrounds us and structures our lives. Few things are more familiar or ubiquitous. Nevertheless, law raises many philosophical questions. What are the essential features of law? How do we come to know law’s nature? How is law made, if it is made at all? Do we have any general reason to follow law? Tackling these age-old, difficult questions is the project of this class. By the end, we will come to a better, more defensible understanding of that familiar, ubiquitous thing we call “law.”

PHIL 4950: Advanced Epistemology  TTh 12:00-1:20  Cogburn

Sometimes we have pretty vivid dreams. With extremely powerful telescopes we are able to see stars that don’t currently exist. Amputees feel pain in limbs that do not exist. Colorblind humans and non-human animals see colors differently from the rest. Environmental factors, chemicals, religious experiences, athletic endeavors, near death experiences, and psychiatric disorders all in their own ways reliably produce hallucinations. And we have a little bit of insight into what’s going on in the brain when these kinds of things happen. For these and other reasons, most cognitive scientists currently assume that the world we normally perceive is already a kind of hallucination caused by the brain.

But not everyone. So-called “naïve realists” about perception still defend the claim that we largely perceive the world as it is. Pretty interesting! If naïve realists are correct then much of what most philosophers of mind, and perhaps a plurality of people working on the brain, take to be scientific commonsense is false. We’ll try to make sense of this claim by studying the following recent texts:

- Brian Rogers, *Perception: A Very Short Introduction*
- Keith Allen, *A Naïve Realist Theory of Colour*
- Joshua Gert, *Primitive Colors*

While Allen tries to show that the scientific data about perception do not entail the consensus view, Gert uses facts about color perception to interrogate the connection between the scientific and manifest images of the world.
PHIL 4951: Philosophy of Science  MWF 2:30-3:20  Roland

Prereq.: consent of instructor.

This course will be a general survey of philosophy of science. We’ll begin with logical empiricist views of science, which dominated philosophy of science for the better part of the twentieth century. We’ll then take up the question of in what circumstances a generalization is confirmed by its instances. Next we’ll consider Thomas Kuhn’s *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, a major work in twentieth century philosophy of science whose influence continues to be felt today. After Kuhn, we’ll turn to more topical issues: naturalism, scientific realism, scientific explanation, returning to logical empiricism and tracing the significance and development of these issues against a backdrop of its successes and (ultimate) failure. Our text will be Peter Godfrey-Smith’s *Theory and Reality*. There will be substantial additional readings from philosophers such as David Hume, John Locke, Herbert Feigl, Carl Hempel, Philip Kitcher, Richard Boyd, Bas van Fraassen, Nelson Goodman, Thomas Kuhn, W. V. Quine, and Rudolf Carnap. Work for the course will consist of three short (3-5 pages) writing assignments and a term paper in two drafts.

PHIL 4972: Kant’s Moral Philosophy  MW 3:00-4:20  Sarkar

This course will be centered on Kant’s *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* (1785). Consequently, we shall also study Part II (“doctrine of virtue”) in his *The Metaphysics of Morals* (1797). Any translation of these two books will do. (I myself shall use the translations published by Cambridge University Press.)

PHIL 7905: Seminar in History of Philosophy: Critical Theory  MW 4:30-5:50  Goldgaber

In this seminar we will be looking at 'Critical Theory' as a distinctive tradition within the history of European philosophy. We will trace the foundations of critical theory to the three "masters of suspicion," Nietzsche, Marx, and Freud before turning to the Frankfurt School (Adorno, Horkheimer, Marcuse) and, concluding with its various inheritors today.

In this course, I will place particular emphasis on the epistemological questions formulated by Raymond Guess in his seminal *The Idea of A Critical Theory* (1981). What distinguishes critical theory from traditional forms of philosophical critique? What does it mean for a belief to be *ideologically* false (rather than simply false)? Does 'ideology' commit us to belief in "false consciousness"? These questions are exceedingly pertinent, I argue, for contemporary issues in social epistemology.

Course outside the Philosophy department

FRE 7410.2/CPLT 7120.1: French Deconstruction: The Thought of Jean-Luc Nancy  W 1:30-4:20  Raffoul

French deconstruction, in particular the work of Jacques Derrida and Jean-Luc Nancy, has had a major impact on the Humanities in the Anglo-American world. It has had a transformative effect on many fields, including literary theory, comparative literature, political theory and historiography, theories of
meaning, cultural studies and literary criticism, gender theory and environmental studies. We will explore French deconstruction in the work of Jean-Luc Nancy, focusing on three axes: first, his radically atheological understanding of being and existence; second, his understanding of deconstruction; third, his rethinking of community and our being-with and its impact on questions of globalization and democracy. We will also investigate his relations to Derrida: the senses of deconstruction and “differance”; subjectivity and “touch”; being and existence; the critique of humanism and the question of animality; ethics and responsibility; law, forgiveness and hospitality; community and being-with; the world and globalization. Texts will include (for Jacques Derrida): “Differance,” Paper Machine, Force of Law, On Touching—Jean-Luc Nancy. From Jean-Luc Nancy, we will read The Experience of Freedom, The Disavowed Community, The Possibility of a World, What’s These Worlds Coming Too? Being Singular Plural, Who comes after the Subject?, Justice, Legality and World, The Creation of the World or Globalization, The Truth of Democracy, and Identity.

FREN 7410.1: Foucault, Biopower, and Neoliberalism TTh 1:30–2:50 Protevi

The course will be a sustained interrogation of Michel Foucault’s concept of biopower and its relation to contemporary discussion of that term and the contested term of “neoliberalism.” Among the topics covered will be race and mass incarceration, disability, and decolonial struggles. Discussion will be in English. I will order the French versions of books and allow Francophone students to write their papers in French and to converse with me in French during office hours. Instructor and students will agree on the number and length of writing assignments that will determine 75% of the final grade, with the remaining 25% coming from seminar presentations. Note on readings. We will all read the Foucault works listed below, but we’ll divide up the secondary literature to class members for presentations; the people not doing presentations that day can skim the readings. Discipline and Punish; History of Sexuality, volume 1; “Society Must be Defended”; Birth of Biopolitics; "Governmentality"; "Omnes et Singulatim”. A tentative list of secondary literature readings is available at the following G-Doc location: https://docs.google.com/document/d/11jdn33sk09Eog86S1geeaX2R8VyHgm28sEQqzn0BdBk/edit?usp=sharing