Philosophy 1204: Knowledge and Reality

Philosophy is concerned with certain problems and consists in the attempt to provide an answer to these problems. There is no way to understand these problems and what is at stake other than by seeing where they come from and why they present themselves at that time in the way that they do. At any given time philosophy must be understood, at least in part, within historical context. The course is divided in three units. KNOWLEDGE OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD: We shall begin with the problem of our knowledge of the world around us. This problem presents itself in its completely general form for the first time in Descartes. We shall try to understand the special philosophical character of this problem. THE MIND AND THE SELF: We shall continue with a study of Locke and his criterion of personal identity, the continuity of memory. MIND AND RATIONALITY: We shall explore the idea that rationality is a constitutive feature of the mind. We shall read and discuss two recent contributions that Davidson has made to the particular problem of what distinguishes rational creatures from brutes.

Instructor: A. Falcon
Lecture: 12:30p-1:45p MAJWM 334 M W

Philosophy 1204: Knowledge and Reality

Examines the questions: What is the nature of reality? How do I know what is real and what is misleading appearance, error, or illusion? What is knowledge? How do I find out who I am and how I relate to the world around me?

Instructor: W. Goodwin
Lecture: 12:20p-1:10p TORG 2150 M W
Recitation: 10:10a-11.00a RAND 210 F

Instructor: W. Goodwin
Lecture: 12:20p-1:10p TORG 2150 M W
Recitation: 9:05a-9:55a RAND 212 F

Instructor: W. Goodwin
Lecture: 12:20p-1:10p TORG 2150 M W
Recitation: 8:00a-8:50a MAJWM 334 F

Instructor: W. Goodwin
Lecture: 12:20p-1:10p TORG 2150 M W
Recitation: 11:15a-12:05p SQUIR 236 F

Instructor: W. Goodwin
Lecture: 12:20p-1:10p TORG 2150 M W
Recitation: 12:20p-1:10p MCB 134 F

Instructor: W. Goodwin
Lecture: 12:20p-1:10p TORG 2150 M W
Recitation: 1:25p-2:15p MAJWM 434 F

Instructor: W. Goodwin
Lecture: 12:20p-1:10p TORG 2150 M W
Recitation: 11:15a-12:05p MAJWM 434 F

Instructor: W. Goodwin
Lecture: 12:20p-1:10p TORG 2150 M W
Recitation: 10:10a-11.00a WAL 234 F

Instructor: W. Goodwin
Lecture: 12:20p-1:10p TORG 2150 M W
Recitation: 9:05a-9:55a RAND 210 F

Instructor: W. Goodwin
Lecture: 12:20p-1:10p TORG 2150 M W
Recitation: 12:20p-1:10p RAND 220 F

Instructor: W. Goodwin
CRN: 13935
Lecture: 12:20p-1:10p TORG 2150 M W
Recitation: 2:30p-3:20p MAJWM 334 F

Instructor: W. Goodwin
CRN: 13949
Lecture: 12:20p-1:10p TORG 2150 M W
Recitation: 1:25p-2:15p PAB 105 F

Philosophy 1204: Knowledge and Reality

Examines the questions: What is the nature of reality? How do I know what is real and what is misleading appearance, error, or illusion? What is knowledge? How do I find out who I am and how I relate to the world around me?

Instructor: M. Rea
CRN: 13940
Lecture: 3:30p-4:45p MCB 304 T Th

Instructor: M. Rea
CRN: 13950
Lecture: 9:30a-10:45a MCB 230 T Th

Instructor: E. Lewis
CRN: 13936
Lecture: 3:30p-4:45p MCB 202 T Th

Instructor: E. Lewis
CRN: 16183 T Th
Lecture: 12:30p-1:45p MCB 321

Philosophy 1304: Morality and Justice

This course is a comprehensive introduction to moral philosophy. We will combine a survey of some classic works (by Plato, Aristotle, Kant and Mill) with an examination of prominent treatments of issues in ethical theory and applied ethics by leading contemporary philosophers. Some questions we'll explore: What should our ultimate goal in life be? Is living morally most conducive to true happiness? What in general makes something right or wrong? Is it always possible for a good enough end to justify bad means, or do considerations of justice sometimes stand in the way of this? Does morality depend on the commands of God? Are there really objective facts about right or wrong, perhaps transcending differences across cultures and times, or is morality ultimately subjective and/or "relative"? Does anyone ever really act from unselfish motives? Some more particular problems: Is it morally okay to use embryonic stem cells for research or tissue therapy? If so, is it right to deliberately create embryos just for the purpose of harvesting stem cells, as in the case of therapeutic cloning? Can abortion ever be morally justified, and if so, how? In what cases might euthanasia be morally permissible? Is capital punishment morally justifiable in principle? In practice? How far does our duty to aid distant strangers extend? Do non-human animals have moral rights? Is it morally acceptable, for example, to cause harm to them in biomedical research or to factory farm them, or are such practices in violation of their rights?

Instructor: W.  FitzPatrick
CRN: 13951
Lecture: 1:25p-2:15p TORG 2150 MW
Recitation: 11:15a-12:05p SHULT 109 F

Instructor: W.  FitzPatrick
CRN: 13952
Lecture: 1:25p-2:15p TORG 2150 MW
Recitation: 10:10a-11.00a PAM 3010 F

Instructor: W.  FitzPatrick
CRN: 13953
Lecture: 1:25p-2:15p TORG 2150 MW
Recitation: 9:05a-9:55a SQUIR 234 F

Instructor: W.  FitzPatrick
CRN: 13954
Lecture: 1:25p-2:15p TORG 2150 MW
Recitation: 12:20p-1:10p SQUIR 236 F

(Additional sections on reverse)
This is a first course in moral philosophy. We will begin with a short introduction to logic and logical fallacies. Then we will discuss classic theories about ethics (metaethics) such as subjectivism, relativism, divine command, and objectivism, and classic theories in (normative) ethics such as deontology, consequentialism, natural law and natural rights theories, virtue ethics, as well as the more current feminist care ethics. These deal with such questions as: Can we have objective facts in ethics as we do in science, for example? Should our moral decisions be based on the consequences, or on duty, or on caring? Is there a relation between all of this and the happiness of the individual? These theories will then be applied to some contemporary issues such as: Is abortion morally permissible? Are we ever justified in waging war? Do non-human animals have rights? By the end of the semester you will be asked to analyze in a critical fashion your own moral beliefs by writing a Personal Code of Ethics paper.
Philosophy 2304: Global Ethics
In this course we will examine global issues of ethics and justice, such as: environmental problems, development, poverty, famine, war, technology and the oppression of women.
Instructor: J. York  CRN: 13972
Lecture: 8:00a-9:15a  MAJWM 334  T Th

Philosophy 2606: Reason and Revolution
Philosophy 2606 focuses on so-called scientific revolutions. This semester, we will examine literature about the nature of scientific revolutions, starting with Thomas Kuhn, The Structure of Scientific Revolutions, and some studies of episodes that usually count as scientific revolutions, including the Copernican and the Darwinian revolutions. We will learn about difficulties encountered in resolving fundamental disagreements in science and consider the ways in which conflicts between scientific theories have been resolved. In the process we will examine the nature of progress in science, the character of scientific theories, some of the ways evidence is brought to bear in theory choice, and the extent to which the evidence in favor of new, revolutionary theories is decisive.
Instructor: R. Mayorga  CRN: 13984
Lecture: 11:00a-12:15p  RAND 129 (new location)  T Th

Philosophy 3016: Political Theory
Analysis of the fundamental ideas in the history of political theory. Late 17th century to the present.
Instructor: G. Davis  CRN: 13979*
Lecture: 9:30a-10:45a  PAT 215 (new location)  T Th
(Cross listed with: PSCI 3016 – CRN 14254*)
Instructor: G. Davis  CRN: 13980*
Lecture: 2:00p-3:15p  NOR 205  T Th
(Cross listed with: PSCI 3016 – CRN 14255*)
Instructor: G. Davis  CRN: 13981*
Lecture: 11:00a-12:15p  RAND 221 (new location)  T Th
(Cross listed with: PSCI 3016 – CRN 14256*)
*Students will be dropped for not attending first and/or second class.

Philosophy 3314: Ethical Theory
We will explore and discuss central topics in ethical theory through a combination of philosophical texts and other relevant literature, including classic works of fiction. Some questions we’ll address: What is the purpose of morality? What is the nature of evil? Is morality all just relative, or are there some moral truths that apply across cultures and times? Does life have meaning, and how should this be understood? How, if at all, does God figure into questions about morality or meaning in life? What is the nature of human autonomy and what are its ethical implications? What are the insights and limitations of utilitarian, deontological and virtue-theoretic approaches to ethical theory? In examining these different theoretical approaches to ethics, and their various appeals to utility, rights or duties, and character, we will also look at some particular applications, such as sexual ethics, our duties to other animals, and our duties to the environment.
Instructor: W. Fitzpatrick  CRN: 15936
Lecture: 11:00a-12:15p  GYM 126 (new location)  T Th

Philosophy 3414: Aesthetics
The nature and value of art.
Instructor: L. Perini  CRN: 15774
Lecture: 3:30p-4:45p  RAND 318  T Th

Philosophy 4016: Special Topics in Philosophy
Philosophy and Literature in Classical Greece
This course will examine the nature of philosophy and literature as these two forms of human expression manifested themselves in the classical age of Greece. We will be reading literary works in various genres (esp. epic, dramatic, and didactic poetry) as well as philosophical works by Plato and Aristotle. We will focus our attention on the famous “battle between poetry and philosophy” for cultural supremacy that was underway at this time. Our ultimate aim will be to try to understand the views of champions and challengers on each side of this cultural clash and then come to some assessment of the respective merits and deficiencies of literature and philosophy as rival forms of human communication.
Instructor: M. Gifford  CRN: 15775
Lecture: 5:00p-6:15p  MAJWM 434  T Th

Philosophy 4214: Metaphysics
We will examine three main approaches to metaphysics in 20th Century philosophy: (1) Metaphysics through the analysis of language. We will read the English philosopher Bertrand Russell’s 1918 lectures on “The Philosophy of Logical Atomism.” This approach tends to be dismissive of traditional metaphysical issues, and leads to some surprising conclusions. (2) Metaphysics through reflection on human experience. We will study extensive selections from the French philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre’s Being and Nothingness (1943). This approach is immersed in traditional metaphysical issues. (3) Metaphysics through the historical-analytic approach of Bernard Williams (1929-2003). Williams defends the notion of “truth” against a number of recent attacks. Students will write weekly reaction papers, and submit three substantial papers along with drafts and revisions. (This is a writing-intensive course.) Available for graduate credit.
Instructor: J. Klage  CRN: 15903
Lecture: 4:00p-5:15p  MCB 219  M W