

Department of Philosophy

Fall 2024

PHI 1000, 001-031, DL1 and HON Knowledge, Reality, Self

Please see Master Schedule for specific times.

Philosophical responses to the questions of how we can know, what is real, and what is the nature of human existence that explore the dialogue between Catholic, Christian, secular and skeptical perspectives on these questions.

PHI 2010-001 Logic & Critical Thinking

Instructor: **prof. Daniel Allen**

M W F 10:40-11:30 a.m.

The study of logic and critical thinking. Topics include: argument identification and analysis; formal and informal logic; fallacies; inductive argument; the role of argumentative structures in various philosophical traditions.

PHI 2020-001 Symbolic Logic

Instructor: **prof. Daniel Allen**

M W F 12:50-1:40 pm

This course introduces students to symbolic logic, including sentential and predicate logic. We will translate statements in English into symbolic notation, and construct formal derivations – developing skills that will help you evaluate the validity of reasoning in any discipline. The course does not presuppose prior experience with philosophy, or any advanced knowledge of mathematics.

PHI 2115-001, 002 Ethics for Healthcare Prof

Instructor: **Dr. Stephen J. Bujno**

T R 8:30 - 9:45 am & 11:30 am – 12:45 pm

This course serves both as an introduction to philosophical ethics and its application to clinical case studies. Though primarily intended for future medical professionals, students in other disciplines will find the course thought-provoking. While developing skills in logic and critical thought, the student should expect to consider various applications for the ethics of care and wellness. Those will include medical consent and privacy, maternal/fetal care and end of life/futility, testing and research, mental health and disability, access and allocation, along with emergent bioethical topics. Fundamental questions of life will also be addressed, such as what it means to be ethical and what constitutes personhood. An underlying ethos of the course is to align professional medical care with respect and dignity for the patient as a person.

PHI 2115-003 Ethics for Healthcare Prof

Instructor: **Dr. Peter Koch**

T R 1:00-2:15 pm

This course explores contemporary ethical issues in medicine and health care through case analysis, academic research, and class discussion. Students will develop the philosophical tools and sensitivities needed to assess and resolve complex ethical

situations, with a particular focus on those situations that are commonly encountered by clinicians and researchers throughout their careers. While this course is primarily designed for future clinicians, other interested students are welcome to participate as well.

PHI 2115-004 Ethics for Healthcare Prof

Instructor: **Dr. Stephen Napier**

T R 2:30 – 3:45 pm

The purpose of this course is to help students become more effective in dealing with ethical questions in professional nursing, medical practice, and research. The animating center of the course is the theme of loving the human person(s). Imagine a wheel with the axle representing the theme of loving patients. Each of the issues we will be discussing, whether it is abortion, euthanasia, research on human subjects etc., represent the perimeter of the wheel. Each “spoke” is a way of seeing how to love patients better – we will be examining different aspects of the same axle. With each issue, we ask the more general question what does loving the human person look like for the terminally ill person, or a research subject or etc. The entire course will be traveling along the perimeter of the wheel with love for the human person as its center. We will look and see exactly what respecting human lives looks like in different circumstances and conditions. Arguments on both sides of each issue will be examined carefully and due weight given to a variety of informed opinions.

PHI 2117-H01 HON: The Good Doctor

Instructor: **Dr. Sarah-Vaughan Brakman**

T R 4:00-5:15 p.m.

Medicine is an art as well as a science. The science is learned through study but the art must be learned through practice. What are fundamental components of the art? What are the habits of reasoning that lead to good diagnoses? What are the virtues of the good doctor and what does it take to become one? This course will focus on the culture of medicine, becoming acculturated as a doctor, and analysis of what dispositional attitudes are necessary for the moral practice of medicine. The course will draw on resources from philosophy of medicine and moral theory, as well as sociological data and theory, along with first person medical narratives to explore the themes of the course.

PHI 2121-001 Environmental Ethics

Instructor: **Dr. Ting Cho Lau**

MWF 9:35-10:25 am

This course will explore ethical questions which concern the physical and biological environment, including analysis of competing priorities among environmental, economic and political values. We will examine the theoretical underpinnings of our ethical choices as well as specific issues and dilemmas related to the environment, its preservation, provision, and threats to its continued sustainability.

PHI 2121-002 Environmental EthicsInstructor: **Dr. James M. Murdoch, Jr.**

MWF 11:45 am-12:35 pm

This course will explore ethical questions which concern the physical and biological environment, including analysis of competing priorities among environmental, economic and political values. We will examine the theoretical underpinnings of our ethical choices as well as specific issues and dilemmas related to the environment, its preservation, provision, and threats to its continued sustainability.

PHI 2180-001 & 002 Computer EthicsInstructor: **Dr. Tibor Solymosi**

MWF 10:40 –11:30 am & 11:45 am - 12:35 pm

Advances in digital computing have led to paradigmatic shifts in knowledge production, industry, and global politics. Today, computing infrastructures connect all aspects of society. Their effects demand ethical scrutiny, but the fast pace of innovation tends to confound this pursuit. The aim of PHI2180 is to orient students to the study of computer ethics, a well-established and continually evolving academic field. We draw richly from the discipline of philosophy, indicating where theoretical inquiry clarifies the moral complexities of today's leading applications. Our materials are not strictly limited to philosophy, however: we also read texts and engage with new media from such fields as critical data studies, information theory, and computer science.

"Ethical Issues in Computer Science" emphasizes the durability and reliability of philosophical reasoning as a guide for technological decision making. Our premise is that a substantial foundation in ethical theory outlasts cycles of tech development. By the end of the course, students will be prepared to evaluate the ethics of new innovations for years to come.

PHI 2190-001 FreedomInstructor: **Dr. Delia Popa**

T R 2:30 -3:45 pm

What does it mean to be free? Should freedom be understood as a capacity to see and go beyond one's limits or rather as resulting from an effort of self-limitation? If the exercise of our freedom is reflective of our humanity, our goal in this course will be to examine the antagonism at the heart of human freedom, which requires efforts of self-limitation and self-critique to affirm and develop itself fully. We will focus on the social dimension of human freedom, noticing that, before being able to claim freedom as an individual right, we learn to be free from the others and with the others. Therefore, the freedom of others is a crucial condition for the effective exercise of our own freedom. How does our freedom relate to social responsibility? If the possibility of my freedom stems from the freedom of the other, how can we explain the fact of the social alienation impacting our freedom? How can we understand the possibility of human freedom in relationship to social oppression and marginalization? What is the relationship between human freedom and processes of dehumanization today? How can we reconnect freedom and solidarity?

We will start by examining Modern views on the reciprocity of human freedom in Kant, Fichte, and Hegel. We will next tackle the problem of human alienation with Marx, preparing us to explore political theories of human liberation in Benjamin, Arendt, Marcuse, and Davis, as well as existentialist and phenomenological perspectives on freedom in Levinas, Sartre and de Beauvoir. Fanon's critical theory of colonialism will help us go deeper into the contemporary debate about human freedom. We will end the course with a reflection on the pedagogies of the oppressed, searching for tools to cultivate a relationship to freedom that is not exclusive of political emancipation and human solidarity.

PHI 2420-001 Philosophy of Women

Instructor: **Dr. Martina Ferrari**

M W 1:55-3:10 p.m.

This course introduces some key concepts, ideas, and frameworks commonly used in feminist philosophy. The course begins with the difficult question of the place of women in the history of philosophy, and the invitation to readers of philosophy to adopt the particular disposition of "reading like a woman." The second part of this course ventures where the history of philosophy has not dared: searching for an answer to Beauvoir's question, "What is a Woman?" Here, we read Simone de Beauvoir, Iris Marion Young, and Judith Butler. In the third part, this continued examination of the question shows how differences in race, class, and sexual orientation defy efforts to assert a single story of women, thereby revealing the dilemma at the heart of Beauvoir's question. In this context, we learn about intersectionality and intersectional feminism via the works for Brittney Cooper, Kimberlee Crenshaw, and Angela Davis. The fourth unit tackles the questions, what is gender? And what is sexual orientation? We read essays by María Lugones, Talia Mae Bettcher, Leanne Simpson, Michael Kimmel, and Robin Dembroff. After engaging the discipline-shaping work of Kristie Dotson and Nancy Tuana on epistemic oppression, we conclude the course by considering the difference between carceral and abolitionist feminism. Amia Srinivasan's work will help us make sense of this distinction. Throughout the term, we will grapple with broad philosophical questions such as: What does it mean to do philosophy as a woman and/or feminist? What can philosophy do for feminism and vice versa? What is the relation between feminist theory and praxis? Ideally, students will come out of this course with a strong background in feminist philosophy and a nuanced understanding of what it has to offer.

PHI 2470-001 Irish Thought and Literature

Instructor: **Dr. William Desmond**

M W 3:20 - 4:35 pm

Ireland is well known for its poets and writers but what of its thinkers? In the past Ireland has also been called "the island of saints and scholars" but again what of its thinkers? Thomas Duddy's recent book *A History of Irish Thought* (2002) offers us helpful resources to address this question. This course will explore some of the main thinkers in the Irish tradition. It will consider whether there is a distinctive style (or perhaps styles) of Irish

thought, whether there is a plurality of traditions that yet exhibit distinctive marks. The relation of reason (science) and religion is a major concern in Irish tradition(s). So also is the importance of poetry for the Irish mind. Thinkers to be considered will include Scotus Eriugena, John Toland, George Berkeley, Edmund Burke. We will also look at the explorations of thought in some writers of literature, figures such as Jonathan Swift, James Joyce, William Butler Yeats, Samuel Beckett, Patrick Kavanagh and Seamus Heaney. Some time will also be given to a poet considered to be the major modernist writing in the Irish language: Séan Ó Ríordáin. The course will conclude with a consideration of some recent Irish thinkers in the 20th century, including Iris Murdoch, William Desmond, and Richard Kearney. Themes to be explored in selected texts include:

- a. (e)migrant thought: the reality of leaving home, and going into exile, either voluntarily and enforced, has been a recurrent reality and theme in Irish writing. What do migration and emigration say about thinking about exile? What is the meaning of exile as religiously chosen, as opposed to being forced on one by economic and political oppression and necessity.
- b. intimate/local knowing and universal reason: in Irish history the English as colonizers were thought to be more representative of a universal reason while the local Irish were more particular, somehow at the edges of this universal. We will explore this condition more deeply.
- c. exile and home: the condition of “being between” – between one’s first home and the need to build a second home away from home. What is it to remember the first home, and make a new home in the New World (as the US was once called). How does this affect the children of those who have settled in the New World. How look on the world of one’s ancestors.
- d. broken tradition(s): losing a language and finding a voice – the Irish lost their first tongue, the Irish language, and yet in a short time gave rise to some of the great modern writers in English. We will explore this double, plurivocal condition of languages beyond just one dominant univocal language.
- e. the sacred and thought; Irish poetry and reflection; laughter/comedy and Irish thought. Irish history shows politics and identity to be deeply intertwined with religious commitments. How does comedy emerge for those who are in the subordinated, or subjugated position in relation to political masters who come from another tradition?

PHI 2940-001 Indian & Tibetan Buddhist Phil

Instructor: **Dr. Davey Tomlinson**

T R 2:30 - 3:45 pm

This course will introduce students to major trends in Buddhist philosophy, with a focus on the foundational Indian tradition and its interpretation in Tibet. We will consider arguments against the existence of the self, arguments against the existence of external objects, and arguments against the very concept of existence. We will explore different views about the relationship between language and reality, the usefulness of logic on the path to enlightenment, debates about the nature of meditative cultivation, and other

important topics in metaphysics, philosophy of mind, and philosophy of religion. All this we will do reading primary texts in translation, as well as some of the latest philosophical engagements with these texts.

PHI 2990-001 & 002 TOP: Yoga and Philosophy Instructor: **Prof. Amy Nobles Dolan**
T R 8:30 - 9:45 am & 10:00 - 11:15 am

This course will introduce yoga's ten fundamental tenets for living a good life. We will read a broad selection of literature on the topics of non-violence, truthfulness, non-stealing, moderation, non-possessiveness, purity, contentment, self-discipline, self-study and surrender to a higher power. In each class we will practice about 30 minutes of yoga, as a yoga mat is a powerful laboratory on which we can begin to explore these concepts. Students will be challenged to apply our theoretical discussions and reading to incidental and significant moments in their own lives in 6 written reflections.

PHI 2990-H01 TOP: Technology, Humanity, Divinity Instructor: **Dr. Alan Pichanick**
M W 4:45 – 6:00 pm

We have now arrived at a critical moment in the history of scientific knowing and technological innovation. It is now possible, as a result of the progress we have made in uncovering the working mechanisms of the natural and physical world, that human nature itself will become an object not only of scientific inquiry, but of technological innovation as well. What does it mean for human beings to not only investigate human nature, but also to change it? Is it permissible for us to do so? What are the possible consequences and how do we make sure they are good? What kind of ethical and religious principles should we use to justify our decisions about our human future? These questions demand not a technical discussion, but a philosophical and theological one.

We will discuss these questions by first exploring science as a way of knowing and its relation (but not equivalence) to technological innovation. We then will examine in particular our pursuits of biotechnology, artificial intelligence, and digital media as instruments of human bettering or enhancement, by considering them under three aspects: the attitude assumed; the means employed; and ends intended. This will lead to a discussion of personhood, love, ethics, and relationship to divinity in a futuristic (but not merely science-fiction) "post-human" world in which human beings may be enhanced in various ways to become "transhuman" (or more than human). Satisfies Core Theology Requirement.

PHI 3000-001 SEM: Philosophy of Art

Instructor: **Dr. Lisa Dolling**

T R 10:00-11:15 am

Among the many questions addressed are the following:

What is a work of art? Are there specific criteria that one should use to identify a work of art? If so, are they the same regardless of time period, culture, medium, or individual sensibility?

Does a work of art always have a meaning attached to it? Must the meaning of a work be the same as the artist's intention? Does art in general have a goal?

What is the role of "beauty" in a work of art? Must beauty always be present? Is there a standard of beauty that is the same for everyone? Are there objective standards of "taste?"

What about originality and authenticity? Should these concepts play a role in the "value" of a work of art?

How does art relate to the ethical and/or political spheres? Is censorship of works of art ever warranted or justified?

Students will have an opportunity to reflect on the role of art in their own lives by applying the theories examined to works with which they are most familiar, along with others to which they will be introduced. This will include everything from painting, sculpture, and architecture, to music, poetry and performance.

Readings for the course will include selections from Plato, Aristotle, Hume, Kant, Hegel, Nietzsche, Dewey, Benjamin, and Heidegger,—along with more "contemporary" philosophers such as Danto, Goodman, Mothersill, Carroll, and Korsmeyer.

PHI 3000-002 Narcissism

Instructor: **Dr. Delia Popa**

T R 1:00 -2:15 pm

How can we think philosophically about the problem of narcissism in a culture that seems to be driven by it? How and when did narcissism become a social disease, related to a specific cultural discontent of our time? Is all narcissism necessarily pathological? If narcissism can be defined very generally as a fundamental self-love, what sort of narcissism does one need to be able to love other people and what is the narcissism that makes this love of others impossible? Is narcissism incompatible with masochism? In order to answer these questions, we will revisit classic psychoanalytic theories of narcissism in Sigmund Freud and Lou Andreas Salomé, examining various aspects of narcissism, and analyzing its contribution to every process of subject formation. We will also question its relationship to the broader problem of loss, reflected in psychoanalytic elaborations on mourning and melancholia. We will end by considering a type of narcissism that exceeds the sphere of the ego, reflected in our relationship to nature and in our religious commitments, in moments where selfhood opens itself to forms of otherness that are at the same time grounding and all-encompassing.

PHI 3020-001 History of Ancient PhilosophyInstructor: **Dr. Justin Humphreys**

M W 1:55 - 3:10 pm

This course introduces students to major themes in ancient western philosophy, including the distinction between art and nature, the problem of the infinite, and the relationship between being and change. The course will have a special focus on the concepts of nature, cause, and order. Our goal will be to understand the theories of the major thinkers in the ancient Greek tradition, including the pre-Socratics, Plato, and Aristotle. We will be especially interested in asking why they held their views and how they argued for them. However, since interpreting ancient philosophical texts requires philosophical thinking, this course also presents an opportunity to reflect on the nature of philosophy itself.

PHI 3030-001 History of Medieval PhilosophyInstructor: **Dr. Julie Klein**

T R 11:30 am - 12:45 pm

Philosophy 3030 surveys medieval philosophy in the Christian, Islamic, and Jewish traditions. We shall consider each tradition on its own terms and also study the ways texts and issues cross traditions. All of the texts we shall study exhibit the encounter of monotheism and revelation with the corpus of Greek and Roman philosophy and science. We will pay special attention to relationship of philosophical speculation and revealed teachings by studying three major themes: the interpretation of texts, the nature of the human soul and its perfection, and arguments for the existence of God.

PHI 3050-001 Kant & 19th Century PhilosophyInstructor: **Dr. Farshid Baghai**

TR 1:00-2:15 pm

This course investigates how human reason is simultaneously a source of power and a source of plight. We begin with Immanuel Kant's account of how the power to ask why questions—a power that is essential to the functioning of reason—can entangle reason in questions that it can neither dismiss nor answer. We then take up a few documents of the American, French, and Haitian revolutions as well as writings of Olympe de Gouges, Mary Wollstonecraft, and Frances Power Cobbe to examine how reason is used simultaneously against and for the interests and/or rights of women, black people, and non-human animals. We also explore the following: Georg Hegel's interpretation of how reason acquires and sustains its power in negating itself; Mary Shelly's cautionary tale depicting how, even in its most powerful moments, reason cannot simply command outcomes and has to face the unintended consequences of its decisions; Karl Marx's account of how the rationalization of economy in capitalism increases material wealth while systematically producing poverty and impoverishing human social relations by shaping them after the model of economic exchange; Søren Kierkegaard's illustration of how the abstract power of reason in the public sphere inclines to devoid us of passion and character, and renders our time the age of advertisement and immediate publicity; and Friedrich Nietzsche's description of how our pursuit of ideals through rational self-denial tends to lead the human psyche and human culture into a deep crisis regarding the value and meaning of life.

PHI 3720-001 Marx & MarxismInstructor: **Dr. Surti Singh**

M W 3:30 – 4:35 pm

This course is an introduction to the social and political philosophy of Karl Marx and the development of Marxist theory. In the first part of the course, we will focus on the early Marx, and examine topics such as his philosophical anthropology, materialist theory of history, and notion of alienation. In the second part of the course, we will turn to Marx's analysis of the capitalist mode of production and examine topics such as the labour theory of value, commodity fetishism, exploitation, and class struggle. In the third part of the course, we will examine 20th and 21st century developments of Marxist theory, which may include an emphasis on social reproduction theory, feminism and Marxism, revolutionary theory, primitive accumulation, and racial capitalism. This course has been designated as a PJ attributed course, which means that it includes significant engagement with peace and/or social justice issues.

PHI 4125-001 BioethicsInstructor: **Dr. Stephen Napier**

T R 4:00 - 5:15 pm

Some issues in bioethics are just plain weird: a headless frog, with functional organs, was cloned in 1997. Other issues implicate our deepest values of life, health, happiness etc. This course will survey bioethical issues that invite reflection on those values we cherish most, such as life, health, and fulfillment. We divide the course into two rubrics: those procedures or actions that aim to extend or enhance human life, and those that aim to end human life. We will be examining different aspects of the same axle. With each issue, we ask the more general question what does loving the human person look like for the terminally ill person, or a research subject or etc. The entire course will be traveling along the perimeter of the wheel with love for the human person as its center. We will look and see exactly what respecting human lives looks like in different circumstances and conditions. Arguments on both sides of each issue will be examined carefully and due weight given to a variety of informed opinions.

PHI 4200-001 Philosophy of LanguageInstructor: **Dr. Georg Theiner**

T R 2:30 – 3:45 pm

In this course, we reflect on language to shed light on the question of what it means to be human. In the first part, we examine how human language and gesture co-evolved with distinctly collaborative forms of cognition, sociality, and normativity. We then consider the profoundly transformative effects which the development of reading and writing had on human rationality and social organization. In the second part, we retrace the history of an enormously influential idea in the Western tradition: the search for a “perfect language” in which the word corresponds to being – a language once spoken in the Garden of Eden, before the catastrophes of the Fall and Babel, but perhaps recoverable to regain access to hidden knowledge and power. This elusive quest has informed a great many human endeavors, such as the construction of artificial languages and universal grammars, Cabalist symbolism, Enlightenment encyclopedias, the search for an Indo-European proto-language, the birth of analytic philosophy, and, most recently, the design of large-language models through GenAI. In the final part, we challenge the instrumentalist view of language

as a mere tool for communicating ready-made thoughts, and explore the constitutive role of speech, gesture, dialogue, and art to enact meaning and fundamentally shape human experience.

PHI 5000-001 SEM: Augustine, Buddha and the Tao

Instructor: **Dr. James Wetzel**

M W 4:45 - 6:00 pm

This seminar is an experiment in comparative spirituality. Start with a contest of views, an apparent divide between wisdoms that get associated over time, rightly or wrongly, with a choice of direction: west or east. Assume for now that this crossroads is at least negotiable.

Travel west: notice how twisted your will has become; you take the damage of that into your heart. Resolute self-denial may seem like a way out, or a way back, but it only makes matters worse. You will have to learn how to trust all over again, from the roots up. Read the Gospels; read Augustine. Learn how to pray.

Travel east: begin to see how undisciplined your mind has become. You populate your world with imaginary beings, forget what true relatedness is, and give yourself over to the horde of demons that you call "desire." From the depth of your confusion you look for deliverance from a savior, but there is no one to do the work of enlightenment but you, and you are more empty than you can ever imagine. Relax. You will discover that this is a good thing. Respect your teachers, but never divinize them. Read about the legend of the Buddha; read The Heart Sutra. Learn how to meditate.

It may be that the contrast between redemption and enlightenment is not as sharp as the above travelogue makes it out to be. The aim of the seminar is not in any case to insist on a crossroads in the spiritual life, but to test the appearance of one. What would it mean to opt for the faithfulness of Christ over the mindfulness of the Buddha, or the reverse? Is such a choice even intelligible in the "belief" marketplace of a technocratic culture? I honestly don't know the answer to these questions. But we will try together to learn something from the juxtaposition of Augustine's confessional teachings on sex, death, and time with the austere sketch of emptiness in The Heart Sutra.

PHI 5000-002 Democracy & Neoliberalism

Instructor: **Dr. Farshid Baghai**

T R 11:30 am - 12:45 pm

This seminar investigates the relation between democracy and neoliberalism in contemporary western societies. We examine how neoliberalism – as a variant of capitalist political economy and as a normative order of rationality – establishes itself, erodes the skin-deep liberal-democratic norms of post-WWII capitalism, and facilitates the rise of an antidemocratic and neofascist politics. The seminar begins with studying the economists Friedrich Hayek and Milton Friedman, whose writings have been among major intellectual sources of neoliberalism. We also study the geographer David Harvey for his account of the history of neoliberalism and his analysis of a distinctively neoliberal model of capital accumulation. We then turn to the works of the political philosopher Wendy Brown and the sociologist Melinda Cooper to analyze the rise of neoliberalism as a normative order of

rationality and lay out the relation between neoliberalism and the new social conservatism. The seminar ends with a discussion of the need for a politics of interdependence, which organizes economies, states, communities, and families around a vision of universal care.

