

**COURSE DESCRIPTIONS
PHILOSOPHY
FALL 2017**

PHIL 261: Philosophy and Film
GE: C1 (Arts), E (Lifelong Learning)
TuTh 9:30-10:45am LA5-246,
Professor: TBA

W 5:00-7:45pm LA4-120
Professor: Lawrence Nolan

This course explores the big questions of Philosophy through film, photography, and other imagery.

PHIL 306: Philosophies of China and Japan
GE: GI (Global Issues), C2b (Philosophy)
MW 3:30-4:45pm LA5-246
Professor: TBA

Historical and critical survey of the philosophical thought of China and Japan.

PHIL 351: Political Philosophy
GE: WI Capstone, C2b (Philosophy)
MW 11:00am-12:15pm LA5-246
Professor: Nellie Wieland

Historical and contemporary analysis of fundamental political concepts. For this semester we will concentrate on the concepts of respect, liberty, and authority.

PHIL 352: Philosophy of Law
GE: WI Capstone, C2b (Philosophy), D2 (Social Sciences & Citizenship)
M 5:30-8:15 LA5-246
Professor: Amanda Trefethen

This course will introduce students to the study of philosophical topics related to law and its adjudication. Some of the questions we will address include: What is law? Why, when, and how are we constrained by the law? Is there an essential relationship between law and morality? Can there be a "right answer" in legal disputes? And what does it mean to have "liberty"? Toward this end, we will analyze the theoretical debates between legal positivism and natural law, as well as engage in a discussion of more specific legal and normative topics such as tort law, free speech rights, privacy rights, paternalism, and the duty to rescue. Our readings will be drawn primarily from the historical development of

the philosophy of law, including works by such philosophers as Thomas Aquinas, J.S. Mill, John Austin, H.L.A. Hart, Lon Fuller, John Rawls, Judith Thomson, Margaret Radin, and Ronald Dworkin.

PHIL 381: Philosophy of Science
GE: Capstone, C2b (Philosophy)

TuTh 12:30-1:45pm UTC-101
Professor: Cory Wright

PHIL381 is an introduction to core issues in contemporary philosophy of science. These include scientific reasoning, models and modeling, the distinction between science and pseudoscience, the problems of induction and confirmation theory, scientific laws, and conceptions of scientific explanation. A range of philosophical positions will be considered, including naturalism, empiricism, and scientific realism, as well as classic and contemporary readings from Comte, Popper, Hempel, Feyerabend, Salmon, Wimsatt, and Laudan. The course will focus on a range of subdisciplines rather than any particular one. Students need not have a background in science; but are strongly encouraged to bring to the discussion material from sciences that they're familiar with if they do. Having completed the course, students will have an appreciation for the central issues in philosophy of science, will be better prepared to critically assess reasoning in scientific texts, and will have developed both their skills in writing and analysis and their abilities to articulate and evaluate arguments.

PHIL 422/522: Aristotle

TuTh 2:00-3:15pm LA1-304
Professor: Max Rosenkrantz

We will read selectively in the Aristotelian corpus, treating the following topics: (1) Nature, (2) Substance, (3) Knowledge and (4) Tragedy. No texts will be required for purchase. Aristotle is not easy but he is cheap.

PHIL 451: Race, Ethnicity, and Gender in American Law
GE: Human Diversity, Capstone, Human Diversity

Tu 7:00-9:45pm LA5-246
Professor: Amanda Trefethen

This course will examine the nature of basic constitutional notions, such as liberty, justice, due process, and equality, against the backdrop of an American legal history too frequently blighted by systematic and pervasive human inequality. In short, this course will examine the social construction of race, ethnicity, and gender and consider when and to what extent this construction has served as a legal sanction for perpetuating an exclusive, rather than inclusive, interpretation of "justice." In the process we will ask (and find surprising answers to) such questions as: Does Race Exist? What is

Justice? Can the Sexes be Equal?

TOPICS: We will begin by considering the nature of "justice," with special attention to issues of race, ethnicity, and gender. We will then consider how the law historically has identified and distinguished these groups, how these distinctions have been justified and implemented by the law, and how the law has developed to reject different treatment. We will read both philosophical texts and extensive court decisions. We will read philosophical texts by Catherine MacKinnon, John Stuart Mill, Naomi Zack, Thomas Nagel, Susan Okin, Martha Minow, John Rawls, Alexis de Tocqueville, Richard Wasserstrom, and others. To comply with the University HD requirements, we will consider court decisions which address African-Americans, Asian-Americans, Latinos, Native Americans, and women.

TEXT: Ethical Issues in the Courts: A Companion to Philosophical Ethics (Julie Van Camp, Wadsworth Publishing, 2000) We also will use a course supplement, available at the University Bookstore in late August, e-reserve materials, and public domain readings.

PHIL 489: Pre-Law Internship

Day/time: TBA

Professor: Nellie Wieland

Internship with private organizations and governmental agencies with law-related focus. Work done under the joint supervision of the program sponsor and CSULB Philosophy Pre-Law Advisor.

PHIL 493/593: Special Topics: Metaphysics

MW 2:00-3:15 LA5-246

Professor: TBA

Course Topic: The Metaphysics of Moral Responsibility: It seems obvious that we are at least sometimes responsible for our actions. But there are genuine challenges to this idea. For example, many people take recent discoveries in neuroscience to show that our actions are not caused by our deliberations and decisions, but instead by unconscious brain events. Derk Pereboom argues that all of our mental states, including our deliberations and decisions, are ultimately the result of forces beyond our control. Gideon Rosen argues that no one ever wills an action with full understanding of the relevant moral facts. Perhaps, as Galen Strawson suggests, the sort of agency we think we have is simply inconceivable. Each of these considerations is alleged to support the conclusion that no one is ever responsible for their actions.

We'll spend much of the semester exploring and critically assessing these recent challenges to responsible agency, as well as responses by Carolina Sartorio, Al Mele, Susan Wolff, and others. Along the way, we'll address some fundamental questions about responsibility itself. Is being responsible for an immoral act to deserve punishment for that action? Is it instead, as Nomy Arpaly, Angela Smith, and others argue, for one to be attributable with the immoral ends that prompted the action? Or is it, as Karin Boxer, Michael McKenna, and other 'Strawsonians' claim, to be the target of natural blaming responses that are requisite for good human relationships? Finally, how ought we treat each other if it turns out that no one is responsible for their actions?

Should we nevertheless blame each other as if we are responsible, as Manuel Vargas claims? Or should we forego blaming altogether? This will be a highly interactive seminar prizing above all else the development of your intellectual self-sufficiency and ability to engage critically with a difficult contemporary debate.

PHIL 610: Proseminar

M 7:00-9:45pm LA1-304

Professor: Jason Raibley

Seminar Topic: Reasons for Action: Moral, Prudential, and Otherwise

A classic question in moral theory is, “Why be moral?,” or “Why ought one to do what one morally ought to do?”

It is controversial even how to interpret this question. But some of the Ancients seem to hold that one ought to be just (i.e., moral), because being just is constitutive of eudaimonia or true happiness. Hobbes, by contrast, holds that it is prudentially rational to be moral. Hume explains all reasons for action in terms of the agent’s desires, though we must imagine that these desires are informed and refined in special ways. Kant holds that it is all-things-considered rational to be moral; on one version of his view, moral reasons may be reduced to epistemic reasons, especially reasons to avoid believing contradictions. Sidgwick holds that moral and prudential norms are both basic sources of reasons and are on equal footing; this gives rise to irresolvable conflicts between the two. Prichard rejects the question as based on a mistake.

This seminar will explore the nature of epistemic, prudential, moral, all-things-considered, etiquettical, political, and legal norms. It will also explore the relationship between these systems of reasons or norms. We will read selections from the classic writers above, as well as works by contemporary philosophers who adapt and refine these views. Contemporary authors will include Philippa Foot, David Gauthier, Kurt Baier, Gilbert Harman, Thomas Nagel, Bernard Williams, Stephen Darwall, Julia Annas, Christine Korsgaard, T.M. Scanlon, Richard Kraut, David Copp, Mark Schroeder, and Dale Dorsey.

By the end of this course, students who do the required work will learn to state and explain the answers proposed by these writers to important philosophical questions; to state and explain the objections facing each of these answers; and to express thoughtful, well-reasoned opinions about such matters. Special emphasis will be placed on how to extract arguments from philosophical texts and how methodically to evaluate such arguments for cogency, formal validity, and soundness. Students will learn the basics of philosophical research (including proper acquisition, use, and citation of sources), philosophical essay composition, the oral presentation of research, and related skills.

Course requirements: two take-home essay exams, one oral presentation, one final research paper.

PHIL 690: Graduate Seminar

W 7:00-9:45pm LA1-304

Professor: Charles Wallis

Seminar Topic: Contemporary Empirical Studies of Human Inference and Decision Making: Implications for Theories of Rationality

This course revolves around three questions. How ought humans reason and make decisions? How do humans reason and make decisions? What happens if human reasoning differs from normative prescriptions in a non-trivial and systematic manner? The course will review current research in cognitive science on native human inference and decision-making abilities. After reviewing the empirical literature on native human inference and decision-making abilities the course will consider various theories regarding the relationship between modal human reasoning and decision-making performance and normative theories of formal logic, probability theory, and decision theory.