**DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY-NEW BRUNSWICK**

**FALL 2021 UNDERGRADAUTE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS**

**101 LOGIC, REASONING & PERSUASION (LRP) – CORE COURSES (Aho)**

**01, 07 (J. Kalef)** The purpose of this course is to teach students to understand and avoid a number of common errors in reasoning. Serious students will complete the course with a significantly stronger ability to avoid being fooled by bad arguments they encounter at the dinner table, in mass and social media, in courses taught by people who have not themselves learned to avoid fallacious reasoning, and elsewhere. They will also learn the habits of careful suspension of judgment, and to carefully question ideologies and even their own apparent memories and beliefs.

**02, 06 (J. Derstine)** An argument is a series of statements, one set of which (the premises) is intended to provide either logically conclusive or strong support for another statement (the conclusion). In this course, we will study of the logical structure of argumentation in ordinary language, with an emphasis on the relation of logic to practical (and controversial) affairs in politics, criminal justice, religion and ethics. We will also examine and learn to spot traditional informal fallacies— e.g., “begging the question”— which although formally valid, are still instances of bad reasoning. Discussions explore the nature of validity, truth, meaning, and evidence in relation to the evaluation of arguments.

**03 (A. Egan)** The course is called “Logic, Reasoning, and Persuasion”, and while we’re going to talk about all of those, what we’re going to focus on most is the *reasoning* part. We’ll talk about logic as a tool to help facilitate better reasoning, and we’ll talk about the role of good reasoning in effective persuasion, and also about the hazards of falling victim to bad reasoning because of persuasive tricks that sometimes appear in various kinds of arguments and media.

Good reasoning is hard. Partly, it’s hard just because good reasoning requires focus and care and keeping track of a lot of moving parts of potentially complicated arguments and evidence. But it’s also hard because they ways our brains are wired make it very easy, and very natural, to go in for a lot of *bad*reasoning. And so good reasoning isn’t just intrinsically difficult, it also requires struggling against a lot of our natural inclinations.

We’ll talk a fair bit in this course about the kinds of cognitive biases and illusions that we’re subject to as users of human brains, and we’ll also talk a fair bit about strategies we can use in order to keep those biases and illusions from leading us into error. We’ll also talk a lot about arguments and evidence – about what makes an argument a powerful one that does a good job of supporting its conclusion, and about what makes something good evidence for some hypothesis, and how to quantify \*how\* strongly some piece of evidence supports a hypothesis.

**05 (B. Hutchens)** This introductory course will present the basic mechanics of critical thinking. It will address some of the obstacles to thinking critically and the ways these obstacles can be surmounted. We will cover the nature of arguments, formal and informal, and the challenge of fallacious arguments. We will spend some time dealing with soundness and unsoundness in informal reasoning, validity and invalidity in formal reasoning, and cogency and non-cogency specifically in inductive reasoning. Considerable emphasis will be placed on deductive reasoning in propositional logic and categorical logic, including the Aristotelian and Boolean systems of inference. We will conclude the semester with an examination of reasoning in science, looking specifically at how we can judge scientific theories and understand inferences to the best explanation.

**103 INTRO TO PHILOSOPHY – CORE COURSES (Aho)**

**01 (M. Glanzberg)** This course is an introduction to philosophy in the western tradition.  It has two central goals.  The first is to give you an understanding of what philosophical problems are, and how they might be solved.  This will be done through consideration of some perennial philosophical problems, drawing on readings from important figures in the history of philosophy, as well as contemporary authors.  The second goal is to develop your analytic and argumentative skills.  Topics to be discussed include the existence of God, the nature of knowledge, the relation of mind to body, free will, and ethics and the nature of right and wrong.  Through this course you will become acquainted with some of the important positions and arguments on a number of central questions in Western philosophy, you will develop skills to effectively communicate philosophical ideas and arguments, and you will learn to present complex ideas effectively.

**02 (J. Piven)** Philosophy is the love of wisdom. Over the eons great minds have contemplated the nature of the soul, the genesis of good and evil, the existence of God, the workings of the universe, and the way we perceive, reality. How does one know good from evil? Are we really social animals? Can one prove or disprove the existence of God? Is there a soul distinct from the body? Does one truly have free will? This course introduces students to some of the great ideas in world philosophy, exploring the metaphysics and ethics of the Greeks, the skepticism of Descartes, the transcendental philosophy of Kant, the atheism of Nietzsche, and the existentialism of Sartre.

**03 (R. Fry)** Philosophy asks us to come to see more clearly both how our lives are and how they could be. We will use a number of different philosophical readings and fictional stories to jump-start our thinking about ourselves and the wider world around us. The media we look at will serve as a starting point for conversations about topics like minds in humans, animals and machines, induction, science and knowledge, as well as personal identity, death and the meaning of life. You will be assessed primarily through written papers. No antecedent familiarity with philosophy is required or expected.

**104 INTRO TO PHILOSOPHY – CORE COURSES (WCR) (4 CREDITS)**

**ALL (S. Stich)** This course has three goals.

1) To acquaint students with some of the important positions and arguments on a number of central questions in Western philosophy. Those questions include:

i) Does God exist?

ii) Can we trust our senses to learn about the world around us?

iii) What is knowledge?

iv) What justification do we have for our predictions about the future?

v) What is a person? What is required for a person to continue to exist in the future? Is life after death possible?

vi) What is a mind? How is the mind related to the brain? Is it possible for a computer to think and to be conscious?

vii) Do we have free will?

viii) What do moral claims mean? Are there correct and incorrect answers to moral questions?

xi) How should a moral person behave? What sorts of things are intrinsically valuable?

2) To improve students’ skills in analyzing and criticizing arguments both verbally and in writing.

3) To improve students’ skills in explaining and defending their own philosophical views, both verbally and in writing.

Core Curriculum

Philosophy 104 has been certified by the faculty as meeting the following SAS Core Curriculum requirements:

i) Writing and Communication, Revision (WCr)

ii) Writing and Communication in a Discipline (WCd)

iii) Philosophical and Theoretical Issues (AHo)

Since the course is a Core Curriculum “writing course,” students will be expected to write and revise several papers, and to read and critique papers written by other students.

Format

In the Fall Term of 2021, the lectures in Philosophy 104 will be remote and synchronous. There will be two 80 minute lectures each week. The discussion sections will be in person. There will be one 50 minute discussion section each week.

**105 CURRENT MORAL & SOCIAL ISSUES (CMSI) – CORE COURSES (Aho)**

**01, 02 (A. Saemi, A. Chorun)** Application of moral theory to selected contemporary issues. Possible topics include abortion, infanticide, euthanasia, punishment, equality, sexism, racism, affirmative action, privacy, obligations to the world's needy, treatment of animals, drug use, and the meaning of life.

**03, 04 (T. McCrossin)** We face today a dizzying array of morally controversial social issues: how may we most reasonably, individually or together, express ourselves, protect ourselves, bring kids into the world, leave it ourselves, punish even to the point of execution, wage war even at the expense of the innocent, enjoy affluence not enjoyed by others, and which may threaten our shared environment, to choose only the most conspicuous ones. Our goal will be to develop a systematic approach to these and related issues in response to the common concern they reflect: how best do we balance individual rights and the common good, not only lawfully, but in a morally-grounded lawful manner? In this spirit, we’ll imagine ourselves as, “Current Social as Moral Issues.”

As such, we’ll actively resist three common pitfalls (i) in addressing current social issues, we may conflate what is or isn’t moral with what is or isn’t legal, hindering us in both arenas; (ii) distinguishing them, still we may neglect the foundation role of the former questions play relative to the latter; (iii) recognizing this, still we may address them in isolation, issue by issue, rather than as coalescing into overlapping discursive arcs; (iv) we tend to neglect the richness of popular culture, as it addresses, intentionally or otherwise, with varying degrees of subtlety, a wide variety of issues. To this effect, in-class work, and so preparation therefor, will proceed at the intersection of manageable selections of watershed or otherwise provocative (v) philosophical perspectives (in the abortion and euthanasia debates, for example, Judith Thomson’s “A Defense of Abortion,” Philippa Foot’s “Euthanasia,” and Ronald Dworkin et al.’s “Physician-assisted Suicide: The Philosophers’ Brief”), (vi) legal rulings (in the abortion and euthanasia debates again, Planned Parenthood v. Casey and Washington v. Glucksberg), and (vii) popular culture (still in the abortion and euthanasia debates, say, Juno and Whose Life is it Anyway?)

We’ll be as participatory as possible, based on the idea that philosophy is best done this way, generally speaking. We’ll accomplish this with a manageable combination of occasional “synchronous” meetings, using Webex, to be scheduled cooperatively, and “asynchronous” discussion-board interaction. In addition, participants should anticipate occasional during-term quizzes, regarding material currently being addressed, an end-of-term writing assignment, and an optional extra-credit writing opportunity.

**107 INTRO TO ETHICS – CORE COURSES (Aho)**

**\***Synchronous section: online meetings and midterm and final [Mondays 1:00 - 2:30 pm]

**01 (J. Kalef)** Philosophy is a very rewarding discipline, but also notoriously difficult. This course is meant to serve as a structured introduction to philosophical ethics. The first module of the course will introduce students to the main ideas and techniques of philosophy. The second module will introduce students to the four major blunders of moral thinking, and also teach a couple of alternatives. After that, students will examine the works of some great moral philosophers.

**02 (D. Hausman)** This is an introductory course that presupposes no prior knowledge of philosophy. It will discuss what constitutes a good human life, the basic principles of right and wrong, and how we can know what moral principles are correct. This course provides a general introduction to the three main approaches to ethics focusing respectively on consequences, principles, and character, and it also discusses how to apply ethical theories to ethical problems such as abortion and inequalities in wealth and income.

The main text for the course will be the 5th edition of The Fundamentals of Ethics, by Russ Shafer-Landau. There will also be assignments of articles that will be available on the Canvas site for the course. The course is currently scheduled to be taught remotely on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1:00-2:20, and students are expected to attend and contribute to discussion via Zoom. Grades will depend on quizzes and three papers.

**03 (L. Lyons)** In this course, we will explore philosophical questions related to pressing moral and social issues. Along the way, you will become familiar with debates and ideas in analytic ethics, broadly construed. You can think of the course as a philosophical deep dive into the controversial topics that we can’t seem to stop talking about.

The course is divided into four units. In the first unit, we will learn about canonical theories and approaches in moral philosophy. This unit will give you a “toolbox’ of concepts and ideas that we will use to think about the applied moral issues we explore in the rest of the course.

In the second unit, we will delve into moral questions connected to ongoing culture wars about gender and sexuality. We begin by thinking about how we should understand the meaning of sex, gender, and sexuality categories. Then, we will discuss and analyze a bundle of moral questions related to gendered speech, gender and sexuality-based discrimination, and the rights of trans and intersex children.

The third unit is about criminal justice ethics. We will first consider how, if at all, we can be morally justified in punishing people and what we can justifiably criminalize, focusing on questions about the criminalization of recreational drugs. Following, we will think about the role race and inequality in criminal justice ethics, considering whether we ought to reform and/or abolish criminal punishment and policing in light of present, non-ideal social circumstances.

The fourth unit is about the ethics of migration. We analyze and debate cosmopolitan or nationalist approaches to migration and global justice, and then home in on questions related to the right the amnesty and the meaning of citizenship. We close by considering the proposals of proponents of the open borders movement, as well as their critics.

The objective of this course is (i) to introduce you to philosophical ways of thinking through pressing moral and social issues and (ii) for you to become comfortable using them in analyzing such issues now and in the future. Some of these skills include reconstructing and evaluating arguments, clearly articulating philosophical ideas, and engaging in respectful and constructive philosophical debates.

**109 INTRODUCTION TO FORMAL REASONING AND DECISION MAKING (QQ or QR)**

**01 (M. Bialek)** Resolving differences of opinion isn't always impossible. Figuring out what you should believe isn't just a matter of checking what's true. Deciding what you should do doesn't have to be left up to your whim. Formal tools have been (and continue to be) developed that enable us to talk very precisely about the strength of arguments and of evidence, the rationality of beliefs we have, and the value of choices we make. This course will introduce students to some of those formal tools—specifically: logic, probability, and decision theory—focusing on their application, but also looking at the limits to their application and their potential for expansion and sophistication. Assessment in the course will based on a mixture of exams, discussion posts, and quizzes.

**02, 03 (Y. Kang)** Fundamentals of logical, probabilistic, and statistical thinking, as well as the basic principles of rational decision-making. Reasoning through data (and rhetoric) encountered on a daily basis using elementary principles of deductive logic and inference.

**04 (S. Felder)** This course meets the following goal: Examine critically philosophical and other theoretical issues concerning the nature of reality, value, knowledge, human experience.

**05 (K. D’Agostino)** Fundamentals of logical, probabilistic, and statistical thinking, as well as the basic principles of rational decision-making. Reasoning through data (and rhetoric) encountered on a daily basis using elementary principles of deductive logic and inference.

**201 INTRO TO LOGIC – CORE COURSES (QR)**

**01 (D. Dykstra)** Introduction to formal logic, covering truth, functional propositional logic, and quantification theory. Emphasis on developing symbolic techniques for representing and evaluating arguments.

**02 (C. Frugé)** In this course, we’ll look at how to formally model good and bad reasoning. By learning what good reasoning is like, we can try to use it. By learning what bad reasoning is like, we can try to avoid it. Our route will be via the basics of propositional and predicate logic.

**03, 04 (E. Kalkus)** Introduction to deductive logic, including propositional and predicate logic. Emphasis on the basic concepts of logic, the proper interpretation of the logical apparatus of English, and techniques of symbolization and deductive proof.

**05, 06 (S. Kang)** The objective of the course is to augment students’ analytical and critical thinking through the study of formal logic. The students will learn philosophical concepts and introductory tools for valid reasoning and proof in modern logic.

**07 (A. Skiles)** This course introduces you to the basics of modern formal logic and its applications to everyday critical reasoning, to philosophy, and to the various theoretical and practical disciplines that draw upon it (e.g. mathematics, computer science, and linguistics). Successful completion of the course satisfied the SAS Core Curriculum requirement 'Cognitive Skills and Processes: Quantitative and Formal Reasoning' [QR].

**215 INTRODUCTION TO METAPHYSICS**

**01 (J. Derstine)** Examination of central issues in metaphysics, such as free will, personal identity, the nature of time, causality, necessity, and possibility.

**225 INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE**

**01 (S. Felder)** Study of scientific methodology using examples from a variety of scientific disciplines. Nature of scientific laws and theories, explanation, confirmation, objectivity, and changes in scientific knowledge.

**248 FOUNDATIONS OF MEDICAL ETHICS & POLICY**

**01 (F. Barchi)** Introduction to the conceptual foundations of medical ethics, emphasizing how particular moral traditions and theories have influenced the development of policies and practices in health care and health research over time and in different setting around the world. Combines lectures with small-group casework to encourage students to "think-through" the moral and often practical challenges that arise in the practice of medicine, and health research.

**255 INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY**

**01 (W. Skolits)** Survey of philosophical writings on the origin and nature of the state. Topics include the individual and the state, the social order, nature and limitation of state authority, political obligation, and liberties of citizens.

**265 INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION**

**01 (B. Leftow)** This course introduces philosophical problems arising from beliefs held in common by Judaism, Christianity and Islam.  Its first half examines questions about attributes all three religions ascribe to God: omniscience, omnipotence, eternity, etc.  Its second half considers arguments for and against the existence of a God with those attributes.

**268 INTRODUCTION TO EXISTENTIALISM**

**01 (Piven)** What is the purpose of our existence? Why are we here on earth? What is the meaning of life? How do we endure death? Existentialism is concerned with the human condition, the purpose of life, authenticity in one’s purpose and being, the attempt to find meaning amidst the absurdity and finitude of existence. Philosophers have asked how can life be meaningful in the face of the grave, and whether life matters. This course explores some of the great works of existentialism, pondering the meaning (or meaninglessness) of existence, the death of God, moral responsibility, and our struggle against fate.

**295 ARETE I: UNDERGRADUATE PHILOSOPHY JOUNRAL (P/NC)**

**01 (T. McCrossin)** Supervised process of editing of the undergraduate philosophy journal, with review of weekly submissions. *Prerequisites*: At least two courses in philosophy or outstanding performance in a philosophy class.

**301 SOCRATES & PLATO**

**01 (Hutchens)** This course will examine the complex interplay between Socratism and Platonism. We will examine the fascinating link between virtue and knowledge the former implies and the theory of Form the latter proposes to resolve traditional metaphysical disputes about the permanence of being and the constancy of flux. We will explore Socratism in the early dialogues, such as Euthyphro and Apology, the transition from Socratism to Platonism in the middle dialogues, such as Republic, and select later dialogues that illustrate the problematic nature of the theory of forms itself.

**307 DESCARTES, LOCKE & 17TH CENTURY**

**01 (R. Fry)** The 17th century represents a sea-change in the history of Western thought. Philosophers like Hobbes and Descartes presented both new and adapted ways of thinking about the human understanding and what lies within its grasp. Philosophers like Cavendish, Leibniz, and Locke offered rebuttals and refinements of those views, expanding the scope of  solutions—and problems—under consideration. In this course we will look at key philosophical texts from the period, examining both the problems  raised and the solutions offered. We will examine these texts singly and in dialogue with one another. This course is reading-intensive and emphasizes philosophical writing, so you will be expected to write regularly and well.

**308 HUME, KANT & 18TH CENTURY**

**01 (T. McCrossin)** In understanding our era, in the various ways we do — as postindustrial or postmodern, as an information age or the Anthropocene, and so on — we’re struggling to understand the human condition, generally speaking, as it’s organized naturally, and as we organize it socially in turn. It’s a struggle that takes a fascinating series of interwoven turns during the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries, which, taken together, we know as the early-modern and modern periods, or the Enlightenment and its immediate aftermath. To understand them better, and the eighteenth century’s contributions in particular, on the part of its philosophers and philosophically minded more specifically still, is to understand better the twentieth- and now twenty-first-century continuation of the struggle. To see this, we need look no further than our own version of a “republic” as an interpretive legacy of John Locke’s, Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s,

and Immanuel Kant’s successive perspectives on what a well-working social contract should look like.

Building on the perspective developed in “Descartes, Locke, and the Seventeenth Century,” and anticipating the one developed in “Nineteenth-Century Philosophy,” our goal will be to develop together a systematic perspective on the “long” eighteenth century’s philosophical traditions, through the lens of a variety of notable debates involving a variety of notable figures and perspectives.

We’ll be as participatory as possible, based on the idea that philosophy is best done this way, generally speaking. We’ll accomplish this with a manageable combination of occasional “synchronous” meetings, using Webex, to be scheduled cooperatively, and “asynchronous” discussion-board exchange. In addition, participants should anticipate occasional during-term quizzes, regarding material currently being addressed, an end-of-term writing assignment, and an optional extra-credit writing opportunity.

**319 PHILOSOPHY OF MATHEMATICS**

**01 (E. Rubenstein)** Introduction to some of the central topics in philosophy of mathematics. Connection between mathematical knowledge and logical knowledge; metaphysics of mathematical objects; connection between mathematics and natural science.

**328 PHILOSOPHY OF PYSCHOLOGY**

**01 (J. Piven)** How do we understand the psyche? Human emotions and desires? Our beliefs, rituals, and political ideologies?  Sexism, racism, and war? Love, literature, poetry, and art? This course explores the human mind and brings philosophy to bear on what we know about ourselves, our existential needs, our biological instincts and potentials, the evolution of our cognitive structures, why we think, desire, feel, love, fear, hate, and, despair. We study the premises and principles of different psychological schools and theories, and then bring philosophical scrutiny to questions of knowledge, morality, politics, metaphysics, and esthetics.

**329 MINDS, MACHINES & PERSONS**

**01 (S. Felder)** Comparison of the nature of the human mind and that of complex machines. Consequences for questions about the personhood of robots.

**02, 03 (D. Sorensen)** In this course, we will study and discuss competing philosophical theories about the nature of the human mind and the possibility of creating machines that are intelligent. We will also consider the ethical implications of creating machines with minds like ours. The course will be broken into three sections. The first section will focus on philosophy of mind, the second on the foundations of cognitive science and artificial intelligence research, and in the third section, we will discuss the philosophical and ethical issues surrounding the possibility of mind uploading, virtual reality, and robot rights. 

Here are some of the questions that we will raise and try to answer:

* What is the nature of the mind? What is the relation between our minds and brains?
* Is it possible to build machines that have minds like ours?
* What is intelligence and how does it relate to moral standing?
* If we build robots that have minds like ours, should they have the same rights as us?
* In the future, will it be possible to “upload” our minds to a cloud server?

**330 ETHICS OF WAR & CONFLICT**

**01 (A. Saemi)** Exploration of moral issues raised by collective violence through critical examination of the traditional theory of just war. Topics may include foundations of the right of self-defense, notion of a just cause for war, preventive war, humanitarian intervention, distinction between legitimate and illegitimate targets of attack, basis of moral liability to attack in war, proportionality in the consequences of war, terrorism, interrogational torture, and relation between the morality of war and the law of war.

**341 ETHICS THROUGH HISTORY**

**01 (R. Fry)** Over the centuries, different human groups have thought about their obligations in different ways. Different thinkers have understood our moral and social obligations to each other through various, extraordinarily different lenses. This course takes up those different perspectives and seeks to understand the underlying moral thinking behind each of them, probing their similarities and their differences. This course examines thinkers in both Western and Eastern traditions, from ancient times through the 19th century. This course is reading-intensive and centers philosophical writing, so you will be expected to write regularly and well.

**365 PHILOSOPHY OF MUSIC**

**01 (M. Bialek)** Concept of musical expression; music as language; music and drama; music and representation; the nature of the musical work.

**368 HINDU PHILOSOPHY**

**01 (E. Bryant)** Upanishads, Patanjali, Bhagavad Gita; theories of matter, energy, states of consciousness; meditation. Yogas of knowledge, action, devotion. Karma. Ethics. Comparison of Hindu and Western cosmology.

**369 BUDDHIST PHILOSOPHY**

**01 (T. Jiang)** Interdependence, impermanence, relativity; suffering; path to liberation; meditation; karma as cosmic justice; death and rebirth. Compassion as central ethical value. Theravada, Mahayana, and Tibetan Buddhism.

**371 PHILOSOPHY OF DEATH & DYING**

**01 (M. Lin)** Theories of death and dying in different metaphysical systems; Plato; Eastern philosophy; existentialism; thanatology. Extinction versus continuity of consciousness. Attitudes toward death and ethical values.

**375 TPCS IN PHILOSOPHY: GERMAN THOUGHT IN THE 20TH CENTURY**

**01 (D. Zechner)** The history of German philosophy and thought in the 20th century is a problematic one. Against the backdrop of Germany’s political decline into atrocity and disaster, the German intellectual tradition became radically fragmented and dislodged. While German Jewish thinkers were persecuted and had to escape into exile, other philosophers remained active in Germany, some even supported the Nazi regime. In the course of the semester, we will study some of the towering proponents of German thought, including vexing figures like Martin Heidegger and tragic ones like Walter Benjamin, as students will become familiarized with some of their most impactful works. The course’s guiding concepts––history, language, technology––will allow us to cover a broad spectrum of questions while at the same time analyzing specific issues with precision and acuity, from the “language crisis” inherited from the 19th century through post-humanist concerns raised with regard to the so-called “Question Concerning Technology.” While the course’s main goal is to convey a broad understanding of German thought and its recent history, it will also acquaint students with a variety of fields of inquiry including hermeneutics, philology, historical materialism, logical positivism, and cybernetics, as well as introduce important methods of textual analysis and close reading.

*Taught in English*.

**402 ARISTOTLE**

**01 (R. Bolton)** Topics in Aristotle's logic, physics, metaphysics, and philosophy of language.

**404 SPINOZA**

**01 (M. Lin)** This course is an introduction to the major figures and ideas of early modern philosophy. The early modern period is shaped in large part by two major changes to European society. One is the scientific revolution. The other is the century of war and conflict between various Christian churches that proliferated in the wake of the Protestant Reformation. With respect to the metaphysical and epistemological questions that arose in connection with the scientific revolution, some of our questions will be: (1) What is the nature of the physical world? (2) What is the place of the mind the physical world? (3) What are the respective roles of reason and sense experience in our ability to know about the world? (4) How can we have knowledge by induction? With respect to issues of politics, society, and religion as they were shaped by the religious and political developments and conflicts of the period, our questions will be: (1) What are the limits of religious toleration? (2) What is the basis of the legitimacy of the state? (3) What is the best form of government? (4) what is justice?

**406 19TH CENTURY PHILOSOPHY**

**01 (T. McCrossin)** In understanding our era in the various ways we do — as postindustrial or postmodern, as an information age or the Anthropocene, and so on — we’re struggling to understand the human condition, generally speaking, as it’s organized naturally, and as we organize it socially in turn. It’s a struggle that takes a fascinating series of interwoven turns during the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries, which, taken together, we know as the early-modern and modern periods, or the Enlightenment and its immediate aftermath. To understand them better, and the nineteenth century’s contributions in particular, on the part of its philosophers and philosophically minded more specifically still, is to understand better the twentieth- and now twenty-first-century continuation of the struggle. To see this, we need look no further than the moral and political optimism we associate with Martin Luther King Jr., in his memorable reminder that “the arc of the moral universe is long, but bends toward justice,” for example, which he owes to Theodore Parker, nineteenth-century theologian and member of the formative philosophical tradition known as American Transcendentalism, reaction as it is to an equally formative tradition earlier in the century known as German Idealism.

Building on the perspectives developed in “Descartes, Locke, and the Seventeenth Century” and “Hume, Kant, and the Eighteenth Century,” our proceedings will be devoted to developing together a systematic perspective on the nineteenth century’s philosophical traditions. We will do so together in the sense that our proceedings will be as participatory as possible, based on the idea that philosophy is best done as conversationally as possible. In order to facilitate this, our syllabus will be organized, in large measure, around overt and covert debates between a variety of figures, some of them conventionally “major,” then and now, others less so now, but nonetheless important then. In addition to anticipating being actively involved in a semester-long conversation, participants should anticipate completing substantial mid-term and end-of-term writing projects.

**407 INTERMEDIATE LOGIC**

**01 (A. Skiles)** This course provides a deeper exploration of modern formal logic for those who have already taken 'Introduction to Logic' (730:201). We will survey some of the main results in the metatheory of classical first-order logic, such its soundness and completeness. We will also study several philosophically interesting formal systems that differ from classical first-order logic, either by extending it (e.g. modal logic) or deviating from it (e.g. paraconsistent logic). Along the way, we will also develop some of the mathematical background and proof construction skills required for more advanced work in logic and mathematics.

**413 SOCIAL EPISTEMOLOGY**

**01 (A. Egan):** One respect in which epistemology is social is that a lot of our knowledge is the result of social processes. So too are a lot of our opinions that fall short of being knowledge, either because they’re false or because they’re inadequately justified (or because they fail to satisfy whatever that elusive extra condition is). Most obviously, we get a lot– really, really a lot – of our beliefs (and therefore a lot of our knowledge) from *testimony*. Very, very many of our beliefs are formed on the basis of reading things, hearing things, asking people questions about things, doing google searches for things, etc. Some of those beliefs – hopefully a large proportion of them - count as knowledge. One question we’ll look at is: how do people gain knowledge from testimony? How does rational belief formation on the basis of testimony work?

Another respect in which epistemology is social is that a lot of the infrastructure that supports our knowledge is social: Scientific research, for example, is a collective, social endeavor. We’ll also look at questions here, about what kinds of social arrangements make for effective production and dissemination of knowledge.

This will lead us to some questions about *epistemic injustice* – different kinds of social arrangements might advantage and disadvantage particular people or groups in distinctively epistemic ways. A person or group might, for example, have their testimonial credibility unjustly discounted, or unjustly inflated.

Finally, we’ll look at questions around the nature and origin of political polarization, echo chambers, and the fragmentation of epistemic communities, in which different groups within a society diverge radically in their beliefs in both politically and epistemically troublemaking ways.

**420 PHILOSOPHY OF LANGUAGE**

**01 (J. King)** Philosophical study of language and linguistics. Pragmatics, theories of learnability, meaning and reference, formal semantics, truth, indexicality.

**426 PHILOSOPHY OF PHYSICS**

**01 (B. Loewer)** The focus of the course will be on the relations between some issues in the foundations of physics and metaphysics. Among these are the nature of time and time’s arrows, the nature of probability and its role in statistical mechanics and quantum theory and the metaphysics of laws and cosmology. The readings will include From Eternity to Here by Sean Carroll and Time and Chance by David Albert. Course work will consist of a presentation from one of the readings and a term paper

**445 TOPICS IN SOCIAL & POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY**

**01 (D. Hausman)** This semester Philosophy 445 will be devoted to Philosophy of Economics. There are three important areas in which philosophy and economics overlap: economic methodology, normative (welfare) economics, and theories of rationality. This semester the focus will be on economic methodology or applied philosophy of science: questions such as: is economics a science in the same sense that physics and chemistry are sciences? Why is it less successful? What are economic models? What can they teach us about the world? There will also be some brief discussion of economic rationality and what economics can teach us about how to make people’s lives better.

The main texts will be Philosophy of Economics: A Contemporary Introduction by Julian Reiss and the typescript of the unpublished second edition of The Inexact and Separate Science of Economics by Daniel Hausman. Grading will depend on quizzes and two essays.

**450 TOPICS IN MORAL PHILOSOPHY**

**01 (F. Kamm)** This an advanced undergraduate course. It will focus on two main topics: in normative ethical theory: (1) Rules of Rescue and (2) the Trolley Problem. In connection with the first topic, we will read several chapters of a forthcoming book by Prof. Theron Pummer who will attend the classes via skype/zoom to discuss his views on when and in what way we are required to aid others. In connection with the second topic, we consider whether, when, and in what way we may help some when this requires us to harm others. We will read several classic articles and then consider new work on the trolley problem. This includes papers by J. Thomson, F. Kamm, F. Woollard, P. Graham, and others (several of whom will attend the class via skype/zoom to discuss their work.) Prerequisite: at least 2 previous courses in philosophy.

**475 ADVANCED TOPICS: MIGRATION ETHICS**

**01 (D. Darby)** War, famine, poverty, political persecution, discrimination, climate catastrophe, and economic opportunity are among the many factors that explain human migration. This course will examine whether nations have an obligation to open their borders to migrants. Some philosophers defend the right to migrate. Some defend the right to exclude. Others argue for a compromise position defending exclusion rights with limits. Debates about immigration abound in contemporary U.S. political discourse. Attending to philosophical arguments on this topic will prepare students to take sides. We will also consider the history of America’s racist immigration policy to test arguments defending exclusion rights. We will ask whether, under any circumstances, the nation’s interest in designing national identity can justify selective immigration policies.