101: Logic Reason and Persuasion, 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 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.

101: Logic Reason and Persuasion, van Elswyk
We are bombarded with arguments. Even when we're not reading the news or studying for class, we're presented with arguments through commercials, music, television, and more. But what makes a good argument? What kinds of arguments are there? What is the rational response to an argument? I will cover these questions and more while equipping you to reason well about arguments encountered in the wild.

101: Logic Reason and Persuasion, Willard-Kyle
What makes some arguments good and some arguments bad? This is the central question of our course.

We'll answer this question by adopting two distinct (but mutually reinforcing) strategies. First, we'll learn some rules for constructing good arguments. Which rules? The rules of classical logic! We'll find that a relatively small and simple set of rules can model a surprisingly large amount of good argumentation. But as useful as the rules are, we don’t want to end our inquiry there. So second, we’ll think about what arguments are good for. Do arguments aim to prove? To confirm? To persuade? Given that we now know some useful rules for good reasoning, what are good strategies for employing them? Does all good reasoning essentially involve argumentation, or can we reason by distinguishing or imagining?

We’ll also practice evaluating real arguments and building our own. This practice will teach us to become both more rigorous and more charitable in our argument evaluation, both more careful and more creative in our argument construction.

103: Introduction to Philosophy, Hauser
Are there rational grounds for believing in the existence of God? Is the existence of a morally perfect, perfectly knowledgeable, and all-powerful God compatible with the existence of widespread suffering and injustice? Is the existence of free will compatible with the facts of modern science? If so, what is the nature of our freedom? Should we even care about whether or not we’re free? What is the nature of the mind? Can the rich and vivid reality of our thoughts and experiences really be explained by facts about the physical components of our brains? What is the difference between knowledge and mere true belief? Can we trust our senses? How can we know that the future will be like the past? Are there objective facts about what is right and wrong, or is morality merely conventional? What does it even mean to say that an act is ‘right’ or ‘wrong’? How should we decide how to live?
This course invites students to consider some of the biggest questions in philosophy and introduces them to some of the most important and influential answers given by philosophers over the ages. Along the way, students will have the opportunity to reflect on and critically examine their own views on these matters. At the same time, this course introduces students to the craft of philosophy and, more generally, effective argumentation. We'll talk about how to pose philosophical questions, how to make distinctions and formulate nuanced positions, and how to argue for or against a position. In doing so, the course aims to sharpen students’ critical thinking and writing skills, enabling them to think and communicate with greater clarity, precision, and overall effectiveness.

105: Current Moral and Social Issues, J. Burgis
This course begins by demonstrating that there is such a thing as objective morality and analyzing some prominent ethical theories. Then we will critically examine six contemporary issues, such as abortion and capital punishment, in terms of these theories. While we may not arrive at a definitive conclusion regarding what the right answer is, we will evaluate the arguments presented on both sides – are they good arguments, and do they prove what their authors say they do?

105: Current Moral and Social Issues, McCrossin
We face in our time a dizzying array of morally controversial social issues. How free are we really, we wonder, individually or collectively, to express ourselves, to arm ourselves, to choose the time and manner of our own procreation, of our own deaths, to punish even to the extent of killing the guilty, to wage war even at the expense of the innocent, to protect the environment even at the expense of commerce, to select only a few of the array’s most conspicuously dizzying.

We naturally take comfort in the inclusion of at least some corresponding rights in such landmark and living documents as the Declaration of Independence, the Bill of Rights, and more recently and internationally the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. While we may well “hold these truths to be self-evident,” however, they prove nevertheless to be persistently controversial in their everyday exercise, in part because it is thought equally self-evident that “in order to secure these rights, governments are instituted” among us, and because in the case of ours, while “deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed,” it claims nevertheless the broad “power to ... provide for the common defense and the general welfare,” the exercise of which has at times come at the apparent expense of the rights of some, perhaps many individuals. The general worry, then, seems to be this: what rights may we exercise in the conduct of our personal lives, having agreed, implicitly or explicitly, to live in society with others who may disdain such exercise, for their own sake or the sake of the common good?

We appear to have made at least some moral progress in this respect, since the seventies, with respect to at least some of the issues that dizzy us, developing significant portions of the above landmarks in ways that temper controversy with growing, if not yet ultimate consensus. We will take as our task to investigate, and hopefully confirm this appearance. In the process, we will have occasion to investigate a more specific one, which is that our progress is due, at least in part, to new insight into an old distinction—between the virtue of justice, on the one hand, basically what we owe one another in non-interference and positive service, and such virtues as compassion, decency, and the like, which devote us to the good of others irrespective of such obligation. We want to live in a world, in other words, remade not only in accordance with the
virtue of justice, urgent as this may be in the first place, but more broadly virtuous still. We will hope, in striving for consensus of our own, to contribute to new progress.

Our proceedings will be as participatory as possible, based on the idea that philosophy is best done as conversationally as possible.

105: Current Moral and Social Issues, Imparato
In this course we will be examining the reasonableness of human actions in terms of confronting various contemporary problems; ones that manifest not only in properly navigating our personal lives but also in appropriately shaping public policy. Beginning with a brief but thorough overview of major ethical theories, we will move on to considering some of the chief moral issues that confront us today, such as abortion, drug use, and same-sex marriage. The ultimate goal is for you to develop the analytical tools whereby you can make wise and considered decisions regarding these perplexing ethical questions.

107: Introduction to Ethics, Kang
This course aims at helping students to think about the moral dimensions of human existence by exposing them to (1) theoretical and (2) practical issues in ethics. Some of the questions we will ask are: how can and should we be righteous and virtuous in conducting our lives as an individual moral agent or as a collective social entity?; what kinds of ethical theories are there to help us to make moral decisions?; what if there are conflicting moral prescriptions from different theories? (to what extent, then, can moral inquiries on value conflicts be a function of rational deliberation?); how are we to resolve differences of moral opinions?; what is the distinctive nature of moral judgment?; why should I be moral in the first place?; to what degree does religion play a role in moral decisions?; and how is ethics related to the diverse areas such as law, economic justice, or other social issues such as abortion? There is no prerequisite to this course, except a curious and rigorous mind. This is a 'fully' online course, but we shall do all the activities expected of any regular class, including group discussions. This course is certified as a SAS Core Curriculum course (AHo: Philosophical or Theoretical Issues).

109: Introduction to Formal Reasoning, Fleisher
In this course, we will study the basics of the formal systems that philosophers (as well as psychologists, economists, and computer scientists) use to model proper inference and rational decision making. No prerequisites or prior knowledge will be necessary. We will explore the basics of propositional symbolic logic in order to understand the nature of valid inference. We will then study the basics of probability theory in order to model inductive inference, and build on this framework to understand the basics of rational choice theory. Finally, we will explore some psychological results that show how human reasoning and decision-making often systematically fail to live up to these rational requirements. Students will be assessed with homework problem sets, and with a mid-term and final exam.

109: Introduction to Formal Reasoning, Flores
In this online course, students will explore what standards arguments must meet to be convincing and will learn the formal and conceptual tools necessary to evaluate when everyday arguments and pieces of reasoning meet these standards. Topics covered in the course will include the fundamentals of deductive and inductive logic, rational decision making, and how to produce argumentatively clear writing.
201: Introduction to Logic, Rubio
There are many ways in which arguments can be good. Deductive logic studies one particularly important one: when the premises and conclusion of an argument are so related that if the premises are true, the conclusion must be true. We study this good property of arguments by a kind of abstraction: giving very precise meanings to a few key words while abstracting away from everything else. The course takes up this strategy by exploring two systems of logic: propositional logic, which treats the sentence as the basic unit of meaning, and predicate logic, which generalizes propositional logic to include simple subject-predicate structure. Topics covered include: truth tables, truth trees for both propositional and predicate logic, the relation between semantics and syntax, and basic model-theoretic concepts.

201: Introduction to Logic, Kalkus
This course is an introduction to symbolic logic. Logic is the study of correct reasoning and symbolic logic studies reasoning using formal languages. We will begin with propositional logic. Propositional logic will enable us to represent various connective terms that will allow us to evaluate inferences. We will focus on determining the validity of arguments and the processes involved in derivations. Then, we will turn to predicate logic. Predicate logic subsumes propositional logic, but affords us additional tools to both represent terms such as 'something' and 'everything' and evaluate these more complex inferences.

201: Introduction to Formal Reasoning, Laity-D’Agostino
This course is an introduction to formal logic through language and arguments. The course covers propositional and predicate logic, proofs, and key logical concepts. Learning to symbolize sentences of English into a formal system is a valuable tool to understanding the structure and expressive subtlety of language. The study of formal deductive logic offers students tools to recognize good reasoning and to better understand and evaluate arguments, foundational skills in the not only in the study of philosophy, but also in other subjects including law.

201: Introduction to Formal Reasoning, Bialek
This course will introduce students to two logical systems: Propositional Logic and First Order Logic. For each we discuss the syntax (what it means to construct a well formed sentence in the logic), the semantics (how one decides whether or not a sentence in the logic is true), a proof theory (how, if you know or assume some true things, you can figure out what else must be true), and how to translate between the logics and natural English.

215: Introduction to Metaphysics, Piven
What is reality? What is identity? What is the nature of being? Do we have free will, or are we programmed to think and act by our genes, environment, or even, other forces? Metaphysics is the branch of philosophy that delves into crucial questions about the nature of reality, existence, and being. In this class we will explore engaging and perplexing topics like human nature, the existence of God, what reality may be and how we perceive it, the purpose of our existence (if any), whether we choose our own identities, and indeed, whether we are truly free to make rational choices in the world.
249: Bioethics, Goodrich
This course is an introduction to philosophical Bioethics. Bioethics is the study of moral, social, and political issues which arise as a result of advancements in medicine and emerging biotechnologies as well as our status as biological creatures. Our foray into the topic will cover four families of issues:

*The Morality of Ending Life.* Is abortion morally permissible? Is euthanasia or physician-assisted suicide morally permissible? If yes to either – when and why?

*The Morality of Beginning Life.* Is it morally permissible to clone human beings or other animals? Is it morally permissible to manipulate the human genome? When is it morally permissible to use other assisted reproductive technologies?

*The Morality of Medical Practice.* What must doctors and nurses keep confidential about one's medical history and status? What forms of consent are necessary in order for doctors to act permissibly in prescribing medicine or performing surgery? And in general, what duties do healthcare professionals have to their patients versus the public at large.

*The Morality of Healthcare Policy.* If there are more people who need lungs than lungs to give them, what do we do? How do we allocate scarce medical resources? Should our healthcare system focus on maximizing equal access to healthcare or on maximizing the quality of healthcare to whomever can access it?

While we will be discussing answers to all of these questions, we will be focusing primarily on arguments for or against answers to these questions. The primary aim of this course is therefore to equip ourselves with the conceptual tools necessary to reason about difficult bioethical issues – issues that many of us may one day face.

No course materials will need to be purchased for this course – all reading will be posted on Sakai. Grades will be determined by a combination of online quizzes, contributions to discussion forums, and a final essay.

308: Hume, Kant, and the 18th Century, McCrossin

*Of all that we know, it seems the most useful, but least advanced is what we know of human nature.* — Rousseau (*Discourse on the Origin and Foundations of Inequality*)

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 conversation that begins to take a significant turn during the seventeenth century, becoming fully fledged during the eighteenth, a period we know as the Enlightenment. As “children of the Enlightenment,” we’re the legacy of this rich and complex period. The overlapping philosophical traditions that define it, then, may fascinate us from purely philosophical or historical points of view, but should in any case fascinate us from the point of view of our intellectual history, our cultural heritage. To understand modern philosophy, that is, is to understand ourselves.

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 Locke and his predecessors, Descartes and Hobbes, and his successor, Clarke, in debate with Collins; Leibniz and his predecessor, Bayle, and his successor, Pope; Rousseau and his predecessors, Hobbes, Locke,
and Pope, and his contemporary Voltaire; Kant and his predecessor, Hume, his contemporary, Bentham, and his successor, Hegel; and so on.

330: Ethics of War and Conflict, Derstine
What makes one person a terrorist, and another a freedom fighter? Why shouldn’t a rescue mission pose as the Red Cross in order to save an innocent person’s life? Is it ever morally permissible to kill civilians in wartime? Are soldiers ever justified in disobeying orders? Was the US invasion of Iraq in 2002 truly a case of “imminent threat”? In this class, we explore questions such as these, as well as a broader range of issues regarding ethics and conflict in our times, and the recent past. We will use the locus classicus of the Just War tradition as a foundational text (see below) that will form the backdrop to a contemporary study of current issues on the frontline of philosophy of war (e.g., drone attacks, “low yield” nuclear weapons, home-grown terrorism, among others).