

PHL – Philosophy

PHL 101 Introduction to Philosophy Through Film (3 hrs.) This course utilizes films and media to help explore the major areas of philosophy relating to who and what we are and how we should live our lives. More specifically, it explores questions relating to the belief in God; knowledge of the world; the relationship between minds, bodies, and persons; freedom and responsibility; and ethics and morality. Offered each semester

PHL/REL 102 World Religions (3 hrs.) One of the most pressing problems of the 21st century is religious pluralism: We live in a world, in a nation, and in an academic community that is religiously diverse. How will we relate to persons who are different from one another and from us in terms of religious orientation? Will we choose to relate in ways that are healthy or ways that are harmful? For unless we know what persons of faith believe and value and do, we cannot relate in positive ways to them. This course will strive to understand a number of the varied religious traditions of the world in a way that is fair, open-minded, objective, and kind. "Agreeing" with the various religions we will be studying is not required; however, "understanding" them is. Typically offered every semester.

PHL 120 History of Philosophy (3 hrs.) This course explores the history of western philosophy with an emphasis on the ancient, medieval and modern philosophical eras. Pursued chronologically, most attention is given to central figures such as Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Aquinas, Descartes, Locke, Hume and Kant though a broader range will be investigated with an emphasis on their views relating to ethics, political theory, and metaphysics/epistemology (relating to the nature of reality and how we come to know such). The course also focuses on applying historical philosophical thought to our contemporary world.

PHL 212 Introduction to Ethics (3 hrs.) An introductory survey that begins with a brief introduction of ethical theory before moving on to explore specific applied ethical issues such as the following: abortion, euthanasia, sexual morality, human cloning, animal rights, war and terrorism, and distributive justice. The focus of the course is developing critical ethical reasoning that enables deeper normative insights in to how we should live our lives. Offered each spring.

PHL 218 Introduction to Logic (3 hrs.) Drawing from a broad spectrum of controversial issues, this course is a systematic introduction to techniques for constructing, analyzing, and evaluating arguments using ordinary language instead of formal systems of inference. Offered every other spring.

PHL 242 Biomedical Ethics (3 hrs.) The course begins with a brief introduction to ethical theories and to major moral principles used in analyzing problems in biomedical ethics. Theories and principles are then applied to a sampling of biomedical cases such as the following: severely impaired newborns and their parents' right to refuse treatment for them; the justification for genetic manipulation and screening; physician-assisted suicide; doctor-patient confidentiality and informed consent; the use of fetal-cell tissues; living wills and their relationship to personal identity. The readings include analyses by physicians, jurists, and philosophers of the ethical and philosophical questions raised by the cases and issues considered.

PHL 244 Business Ethics (3 hrs.) A study of moral problems arising in business and industry: consumer rights, property rights and employee rights; the obligations of employees, owners and managers, governmental regulation and economic justice.

PHL 246 Environmental Ethics (3 hrs.) An examination of ethical issues arising from our use of natural resources, animate and inanimate, and different ethical perspectives regarding our relationship to the rest of the natural world (both now and in context of future generations). Most of the course is devoted to examining contemporary environmental issues (pollution, global warming, preservation of species, etc.) using traditional ethical theories, biocentric and ecocentric ethics, deep ecology, and concepts from economics and policy analysis. Offered every other spring semester.

PHL 302 The Meaning of Life (3 hrs.) What is the meaning of life? Most of us have asked this question of ourselves and perhaps of other people we respected. For, in addition to understanding the world in which we live, we want to make sense of how to make our own lives as meaningful as possible to know not only why we're living, but that we're living our lives with intention, purpose, and commitment. Through interesting and pertinent books, writing selections, films, and a community service/experiential learning project, this course will address this profound, abstract, and personal question. Prerequisite: One PHL or REL course, or permission of the instructors.

PHL 320 Philosophy & Literature (3 hrs.) This course examines philosophy, and particularly existentialist philosophy, through literature. We will focus on existentialist themes involving life's meaning, authenticity, freedom/responsibility, and identity as exemplified by the works of Dostoevsky, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Ortega, Heidegger, Sartre, de Beauvoir, and Camus. We will pursue these topics both through primary and secondary philosophical essays, and also through the literary works of such writers as Camus, Kundera, Barth, Crumey, and Hesse. Prerequisites: Any one of the following PHL 101, 212, 221, 222, 242, 244, 246; ENG 204, 205, 206, 238, 239, 248, 249; CLA 215; FRE 280; GER 204; LAT 204.

PHL 324 Genetic Manipulation (3 hrs.) This seminar provides an interdisciplinary examination of practices and policies relating to actual or imagined genetic manipulation of human beings and other life forms. We will discuss the history and practice of eugenics, the attempt to create "better" offspring, and its relationship to potential genetic technology. In part drawing from a Rawlsian framework we will discuss issues such as human cloning, genetic screening, and genetic manipulations of humans in light of principles such as justice, fairness, discrimination and other values such as the sanctity of life. We will also consider broader genetic manipulation of plants and animals and resulting ethical controversies from broadly scientific, ecological, philosophical and religious perspectives. Prerequisite: Any ONE of the following: Bio 114/115, BIO 328 BIO 124/125, BIO 100 General Biology I, PHL 101, 212, 221, 222, 242, 244, 246, or REL 101, 102.

PHL 333 Asian Philosophy and Religion (3 hrs.) The purpose of this course is to provide a detailed overview of the key thinkers and issues of the four major traditions of Eastern Philosophy: Indian, Chinese, Japanese, and Islamic. A variety of primary and secondary source readings are used to elucidate issues in metaphysics (including philosophy of religion), epistemology, ethics, political philosophy, and aesthetics. Prerequisite: Any ASN, PHL or REL course.

PHL/REL 342 Philosophy, Religion, and Science (3 hrs.) The common perception today is that, for centuries, science and religion have stood in conflict with each other—e.g. as demonstrated by conflicting perspectives between Charles Darwin and the Bible concerning the theory of evolution. Philosophy itself was foundational to scientific inquiry, though its approach differs from both science and religion and can also be seen by some as adversarial to each. This course explores three themes--cosmology and creation, evolution and providence, and genetics and human nature—from the vantage points of philosophy, religion, and science with the goal of presenting a fresh conversation between these fields which does not reduce to adversarial positions. Prerequisite: One course in philosophy or religious studies or one course in the natural sciences, or permission of the instructor.

PHL 398 Independent Study (1-4 hrs.) This course permits advanced study of topics not covered in regularly offered courses on a research-tutorial basis. The topic is defined by the student in conference with the instructor. Prerequisite: two previous courses in philosophy, a major or minor in philosophy, and permission of instructor.

PHL 410 Major Areas of Philosophy (3 hrs.) An intensive study of a major area of philosophy such as philosophy of religion, Eastern philosophy, ethics, metaphysics, epistemology, or philosophy of mind. May be repeated for credit with change of topic. Prerequisite varies depending on course.

PHL 420 Major Philosophers (3 hrs.) An intensive study of the thought of a single major philosopher such as Plato, Aristotle, Hume, or Kant. May be repeated for credit with change of topic. Prerequisite varies depending on course.

PHL 430 Philosophical Problems (3 hrs.) An intensive study of a relatively specific philosophical problem such as evolution vs. Intelligent Designer Theory, genetic manipulation (relating to human cloning/ eugenics), the mind-body problem, animal rights, philosophy of death and dying. May be repeated for credit with change of topic. Prerequisite varies depending on course.