

## Fall 2018 Electives- Description List

**Course:** The Challenge of Justice (PHIL 116002)

**Professor:** SNYDER, JOSHUA R

**Time:** T/TH 1:30-2:45 or MW 3-4:15

**Description:** This course satisfied the introductory requirement for students taking the minor in Faith, Peace, and Justice Studies. Other students interested in examining the problems of building a just society are welcome. This course introduces the student to the principal understandings of justice that have developed in Western philosophical and theological traditions. Care is taken to relate the theories to concrete, practical, and political problems, and to develop good reasons for choosing one way of justice rather than another. The relationship of justice to the complementary notion of peace will also be examined. Special attention is paid to the contribution of Catholic theology in the contemporary public conversation about justice and peace. Problems discussed may include human rights, hunger and poverty, and ecological justice.

**Level:** Undergrad Elective

**Prereqs:** none

**Coreqs:** none

**Course:** Telling Truths III: The Narratives that Shape Our (PHIL221501)

**Professor:** Hirsch, Kathleen

**Time:** Wednesday 3:00-4:45

**Description:** As we encounter injustice, conflicting visions of the good, and different moral scales of behavior, rights and responsibilities, it is essential that we become aware of our own foundational narratives. What wisdom stories shape the way you think about yourself in relation to others? What narratives do you carry into encounters with conditions, attitudes and beliefs that are different from yours? In this course, students will have a rare opportunity to bring their weekly experience of service into a time of reflection, and into relation to some of the core narratives of the great spiritual traditions. We will read modern mystics, parables, and creative theologians, including: Anne Lamott, Etty Hillesum, Kendrick Lamar, and Parker Palmer. The conversation will continue as we write in and read from our journals, sharing stories and questions. Several short writing assignments will occur through the course of the term; a final, longer piece of substantive spiritual reflection will give students the chance to synthesize the fruits of observation, reading and reflection. The aim of the course is to expand students' familiarity with the great narratives of grace and forgiveness, suffering and hope, as they engage in service, and to provide a setting in which they can become intentional about adopting narratives that will shape their lives.

**Level:** Undergrad Elective

**Prereqs:** none

**Coreqs:** none

**Course:** Values in Social Services and Health Care (PHIL223301)

**Professor:** Manzo, David

**Time:** Tuesday 4:30-6:50

**Description:** Through readings, lectures, discussions, field placements, and written work, we will attempt the following: to communicate an understanding of the social services and health care delivery systems and introduce you to experts who work in these fields; explore ethical problems of allocations of limited resources; discuss topics that include violence prevention, gangs, homelessness, mental illness, innovating nursing initiatives, economy inequality,

community wealth ventures, and the law; and consider possibilities for positive changes in the social service and health care system.

**Level:** Undergrad Elective

**Prereqs:** none

**Coreqs:** none

**Course:** Logic

**Professor:** Miles Rind, David Ellis, Tyler Viale

**Time:** MWF 11-11:50, MWF 3-3:50, and MWF 9-9:50

**Description:** This course will consider the principles of correct reasoning together with their application to concrete cases.

**Level:** Undergrad Elective

**Prereqs:** none

**Coreqs:** none

**Course:** Philosophy and Theology of Community I (PHIL229101)

**Professor:** Sweeney, Meghan

**Time:** Tuesday 4:30-6:50

**Description:** This seminar explores the nature of community, with particular focus on community in the American context. Some of the central historical, cultural, political and religious forces that have shaped both American community and the American understanding of community are examined. These questions are initially approached from an historical perspective with an assessment of philosophical ideas which were dominant in the political thinking of the American founders. The seminar then considers the historical development of those ideas in light of the way they are concretized in political practice, arriving at an assessment of contemporary American thinking on community.

**Level:** Undergrad Elective

**Prereqs:** Limited to members of PULSE council

**Coreqs:** none

**Course:** Society and Culture I (PHIL229501)

**Professor:** McMenamin, David

**Time:** Tuesday 1:30-4:15

**Description:** This course will aim at an understanding of contemporary American society by exploring the underlying cultural traditions and practices from which that society arises. We will attempt to lay a foundation for understanding contemporary ways in which the American people choose to structure the way they live together. Our study centers on questions about how our culture and its social structures are the concrete expression of what we value, of the things we consider meaningful and important within American culture.

**Level:** Undergrad Elective

**Prereqs:** Limited to students who have completed PL088/PL089.

**Coreqs:** none

**Course:** Political Thought/Greeks (PHIL333201)

**Professor:** Madigan, Arthur

**Time:** MWF 11-11:50

**Description:** Are there such things as common goods? Are there natural rights? What makes governments legitimate? What makes some forms of government better than others? What is the relationship between politics and morality? This course will consider these and similar

questions in the light of Plato's Republic, Aristotle's Politics, and other texts from classical Greece.

**Level:** Undergrad Elective

**Prereqs:** none

**Coreqs:** none

**Course:** Feminisms & Phil of Differ (PHIL400101)

**Professor:** McGill, Cherie

**Time:** MW 1:30-2:45

**Description:** What does it mean to call oneself (or someone else) a feminist?? In attempting an answer to this question, we will consider efforts to reveal, unravel, and remedy the conceptual, psychological, and economic dimensions of the oppression of women. We will discuss a variety of feminisms -liberal, existential, radical - and their differing approaches to such feminist issues as marriage and domestic violence, reproduction and pregnancy, work and sexual harassment, and the science of gender and gender difference. We will examine the relationship of sexism to racism, heterosexism, and class exploitation, and investigate the role of the concept of difference in creating and maintaining structural inequalities. Faculty: Cherie McGill

**Level:** Undergrad Elective

**Prereqs:** none

**Coreqs:** none

**Course:** The Problem of Suffering (PHIL410001)

**Professor:** Bloechl, Jeffrey

**Time:** TT 4:30-5:45

**Description:** This course will examine the experience of suffering and its resistance to interpretation. We will begin with a reading of the book of Job, in order to generate some guiding questions. We will move next to clinical experience of physical and mental suffering, and then explore the consequences for the sufferer's relation to self, world and others. The final portion of the course will examine philosophical and religious practices meant to give meaning to suffering. Professor Jeffrey Bloechl

**Level:** Undergrad Elective

**Prereqs:** none

**Coreqs:** none

**Course:** True Fiction: Phil to Lit (PHIL438001)

**Professor:** Newmark, Kevin

**Time:** MW 3-4:15

**Description:** Beginning with Plato's allegory of the cave, this course will examine the question of truth and the way it has been addressed in several key texts, at several key moments, in the history of philosophy and of literature. What is the relation between the philosophical concept of truth and the literary modes of fiction in which that concept is often articulated? Readings will include Plato, Descartes, Kant, Kleist, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Kafka and Heidegger, among others.

**Level:** Undergrad Elective

**Prereqs:** none

**Coreqs:** none

**Course:** Greek Philosophy (PHIL440501)

**Professor:** Gurtler, Gary

**Time:** MWF 10-10:50

**Description:** This course is organized around the central philosophical questions asked and answered, in various ways, by philosophers in the ancient Greek-speaking world. We will consider the pre-Socratics, Plato, Aristotle, and, more briefly, some Hellenistic authors such as Plutarch, Epictetus, and Plotinus. Topics include theories of material bodies and of change; whether anything immaterial or immutable exists, and if so whether it is single or multiple and its relation to this changing world; the human soul; and the question of the criterion of truth, and the process by which humans may come to know; the question of the criterion of ethics.

**Level:** Undergrad Elective

**Prereqs:** Philosophy of the Person I & II or Perspectives I & II

**Coreqs:** none

**Course:** Modern Philosophy (PHIL440601)

**Professor:** Solere, Jean-Luc

**Time:** TT 1:30-2:45

**Description:** The course presents in a synthetic but not superficial manner the major philosophies, from Descartes to Kant, which have punctuated the emergence of the modern mind, the development of scientific knowledge and transformations of Western societies, during a period in which conquering rationality asserted its autonomy and gave rise to the idea of Enlightenment, but at the same time reflected on its own limits. This comprehensive survey will cover metaphysics, epistemology, ethics and political thought. We will analyze representative sources, paying attention to their argumentative structures, and highlighting the logic in the unfolding of problems and answers. Syllabus on <http://www2.bc.edu/~solere/pl406.html>

**Level:** Undergrad Elective

**Prereqs:** none

**Coreqs:** none

**Course:** Classical and Contemporary Asian Philosophy (PHIL443001)

**Professor:** Johnson, David

**Time:** MWF 9-9:50

**Description:** This course will begin with a survey of some of the central texts in the classical Confucian and Buddhist canons. We will then look at the ways in which modern thinkers in Japan (especially figures associated with the Kyoto School such as Nishida Kitaro, Watsuji Tetsuro, and Yuasa Yasuo) and the United States (especially New Confucians such as Tu Wei-Ming and Robert Neville) have appropriated and transformed this intellectual heritage by articulating classical metaphysical and ontological positions in novel ways and by developing creative responses to questions about the nature of the self and of ethical life.

**Level:** Undergrad Elective

**Prereqs:** none

**Coreqs:** none

**Course:** Moral Concepts (PHIL444401)

**Professor:** Garcia, Jorge

**Time:** MW 4:30-5:45

**Description:** Approaching its topics through consideration of language, this course examines some recent debates about what it is for something to be good, virtuous, correct, right, or obligatory, or what ought to be, or what must be done. Principal texts: Normativity, by J.J. Thomson; additional chapters & articles to be assigned. Assignments: 3 blue-book examinations

**Level:** Undergrad Elective

**Prereqs:** none

**Coreqs:** none

**Course:** The Greeks and Their Gods (PHIL444501)

**Professor:** DeChiara-Quenzer, Deborah

**Time:** MWF 2-2:50

**Description:** How did the Greeks view their gods? In this course, we will use Greek literature and philosophy to answer that question. We will read some of the more traditional mythological accounts in Greek literature presented in Hesiod's Theogony, Homer's Iliad and Odyssey, Euripides, Bacchae, and Aeschylus Eumenides. We will then turn to the distinctive philosophical accounts of the gods given by Plato in works such as Republic II, the Myth of the Charioteer in the Phaedrus, the Demiurge in the Timaeus, and by Aristotle on their nature and contemplation in Metaphysics XII and Nicomachean Ethics X.

**Level:** Undergrad Elective

**Prereqs:** none

**Coreqs:** none

**Course:** After World War I: Spirit Recov/Fascism/Personalis (PHIL444701)

**Professor:** Bernauer, James

**Time:** TT 3-4:15

**Description:** We shall investigate the birth and development of fascism as political cultures.

**Level:** Undergrad Elective

**Prereqs:** none

**Coreqs:** none

**Course:** Buddhist Ethics in Theory and Practice (PHIL447201)

**Professor:** Makransky, John

**Time:** Tuesday 3-5:25

**Description:** We first study classical Buddhist ethical principles and practices in ancient India, Southeast Asia and Tibet. We then discuss some leading contemporary Buddhist writings on ethical analyses of issues in social justice, ecology, global economics, war and peace. Daily mindfulness practice, based on class instruction, is required. Requirements: Weekly writing of 3 pages, active class participation, and final paper.

**Level:** Undergrad Elective

**Prereqs:** For undergrads, at least two prior courses in philosophy or theology and a B+ or higher average in prior humanities (non-science) courses.

**Coreqs:** none

**Course:** Classical Chinese Philosophy (PHIL447601)

**Professor:** Jiang, You

**Time:** TT 10:30-11:45

**Description:** This course is an introduction to Classical Chinese Philosophy and designed to introduce students to the major philosophical schools of classical China, including the Confucian, Mohist, Daoist, and Buddhist schools. Through lectures, discussions, and reading of select primary and secondary sources, we will explore the formulations and subsequent transformations of key beliefs, doctrines, practices, and institutions that characterized specific cultural, educational, spiritual and philosophical traditions. Satisfies Core requirement for:

Cultural Diversity

**Level:** Undergrad Elective

**Prereqs:** none

**Coreqs:** none