

Fall 2021 Electives- Description List

Course: The Challenge of Justice (PHIL 116001)

Professor: Stephen Pope, Joshua Synder

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 (PHIL 221501)

Professor: Kathleen Hirsch

Time: W 3:00-4:15

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: David Manzo

Time: TH 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, economic 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 (PHIL226401)

Professor: Nicholas Westerberg, Michael Pope, Tyler Viale

Time: MWF 10:00-10:50, MWF 11:00-11:50, or MWF 3:00-3:50

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 in Literature: The Lord of the Rings (PHIL226601)

Professor: Peter Kreeft

Time: TTH 9:00-10:15

Description: Exploring the Philosophy ideas found in The Lord of the Rings trilogy and The Brothers Karamazov.

Level: Undergrad Elective

Prereqs: none

Coreqs: none

Course: Philosophy as a Way of Life (PHIL228801)

Professor: David Storey

Time: MWF 10:00-10:50

Description: The word philosophy means "the love of wisdom," and one way to define wisdom is the knowledge of how to live well. According to French scholar Pierre Hadot, for the ancient Greeks philosophy was not merely an academic exercise, but an inherently practical discipline designed to help people flourish. The ancients laid down different pathways to the good life, and devised "spiritual exercises," reflective practices to foster our intellectual and moral development. They sought to answer ethical and existential questions we all face: What is happiness, and how should we best pursue it? What qualities constitute good character, and how can we acquire them? How should we manage difficult emotions like fear, anger, and

anxiety? How can we come to terms with our mortality? What does a meaningful life require? In this course, you will not just study philosophy, you will do it. In addition to examining and evaluating philosophical texts, you will experiment with various contemplative practices to get a sense for what it might be like to live like a philosopher. In other words, the course is an opportunity to study philosophy to figure out what kind of life you want to live. Traditions and thinkers studied include: Plato, Aristotle, Epicurus, Stoicism, Buddhism, Confucianism, and Existentialism. Note: this course will ask you to step outside of your comfort zone, and it assumes an interest and a willingness on your part to engage in regular and serious introspection and to experiment.

Level: Undergrad Elective

Prereqs: none

Coreqs: none

Course: Philosophy and Theology of Community I (PHIL229101)

Professor: Meghan Sweeney

Time: 4:30-6:20

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: none

Coreqs: none

Course: The City of Dreadful Night (PHIL231001)

Professor: Brian Braman

Time: 6:00-8:45

Description: Film noir is pervaded by a longing for older urban forms that enabled one to "feel at home on the earth and under the sky." This longing, however, is combined with a fear that new urban forms are at root the source of our alienation from ourselves and others. In other words, "the loss of public space, the homogenization of everyday life, the intensification of surveillance, and the eradication of older neighborhoods by urban renewal and redevelopment projects" create an environment in which the protagonists in film noir are cursed by an inability to dwell comfortably, that is to live authentically on the earth and under the sky. The purpose of this course will be to show how the urban environment, as depicted in film noir, reinforces the modern experience of alienation and despair where "men are they who haunt these fatal glooms, And fill their living mouths with dust of death, And make their habitations in the tombs."

Level: Undergrad Elective

Prereqs: none

Coreqs: none

Course: Towards Deep Subjectivity: Architecture, Ethics (PHIL324001)

Professor: Brian Braman

Time: 3:00-4:15

Description: In *Genius Loci: A Phenomenology of Architecture* Christian Norberg-Schultz argues that if human beings are to dwell authentically under the sky and on the earth, the architecture's role is to provide an "existential foothold," which grounds people's relationship to their environment. "Man dwells when he can orientate himself with his environment and experiences it as meaningful" and thus ethical; to have an existential foothold allows one to "be" at home. To dwell means that human beings achieve an individual and communal identity--a personhood in a given place. The purpose of this course will be to explore the relationship between subjectivity, architecture, ethics, and the notion of personhood as authentic dwelling on the earth and under the sky.

Level: Undergrad Elective

Prereqs: none

Coreqs: none

Course: Political Thought/Greeks

Professor: Timothy Muldoon

Time: MWF 10:00-10:50

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: Being Good and Doing Wrong

Professor: Jorge Garcia

Time: Asynchronous

Description: TBD

Level: Undergrad Elective

Prereqs: none

Coreqs: none

Course: Feminism & Philosophy of Difference (PHIL400101)

Professor: Cherie McGill

Time:

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.

Level: Undergrad Elective

Prereqs: none

Coreqs: none

Course: How to Begin Thinking: Aftermaths 20th-Century

Professor: Kevin Newmark

Time: TTH 3:00-4:15

Description: "Thinking," the French philosopher Emmanuel Levinas once suggested, "probably begins through traumatizations." This course will study a series of disruptive and transformative events that have indelibly marked the twentieth century. What is the task of thinking for a European tradition displaced internally by the Holocaust and externally by the end of colonial expansions into other continents? Authors will include Levinas, Derrida, Nancy, Saussure, Barthes, Duras (in English translation from French); Borges and Dorfman (in English and English translation from Spanish); Calvino (in English translation from Italian); and Descartes (in English translation from Latin). A German component (in English translation) will consider Husserl and Heidegger as a counterpoint to the European tradition of Romance languages, literatures, and cultures.

Level: Undergrad Elective

Prereqs: none

Coreqs: none

Course: Modern Philosophy (PHIL440601)

Professor: Ann Davenport

Time: TTH 1:30-2:45

Description: This course will explore early-modern philosophers who grappled with metaphysics, epistemology, and ethics in the context of the scientific revolution. How critical to their innovative ideas was the task of harmonizing science and religion on a new basis? We will read and debate Montaigne, Descartes, Hobbes, Pascal, More, Cudworth, Bayle, and Locke. Did they succeed in making a home for us in the new infinite universe? Or did they leave us orphaned and disenchanting?

Level: Undergrad Elective

Prereqs: none

Coreqs: none

Course: Friendship (PHIL441901)

Professor: Gary Gurtler

Time: TTH 10:30-11:45

Description: The renewed interest among philosophers about friendship indicates a break from the suspicion of the last several centuries. The lack of interest can be traced to an

understanding of human nature where each individual is a self-contained unit. Ethical reflection emphasized equality so much that friendship appeared hard to justify, as based on preferring one individual over another. This has not always been the case, since Greek and Medieval thinkers regarded friendship rather highly as indicating what is best in human nature and essential to happiness. We will try to understand why different cultural perspectives evaluate friendship in different ways.

Level: Undergrad Elective

Prereqs: none

Coreqs: none

Course: German Romanticism and Idealism (PHIL444201)

Professor: Vanessa Rumble

Time: TTH 12:00-1:15

Description: Kant's transcendental idealism has been charged with divorcing the subject of understanding from the subject of moral experience. We shall examine the basis of this claim as well as the attempts by Romantic writers and German Idealists to provide a fresh account of the integrity of human experience. We begin examining Kant's attempt, in *The Critique of Judgment*, to bridge the moral and natural realms through aesthetics. We then trace the progressive emancipation of the imagination in the later development of German Idealism and Romanticism.

Level: Undergrad Elective

Prereqs: none

Coreqs: none

Course: What is Democracy? (PHIL444301)

Professor: Micah Lott

Time: TTH 1:30-2:45

Description: Etymologically, "democracy" means rule by the people, or people power. But what does it mean for the people to rule, or to have power? And what is so valuable about the people ruling, if anything? This course examines these questions, with a focus on contemporary political philosophy. We will look at issues like: deliberation, participation, political voice, and the relationship between capitalism and democracy. Throughout, we will consider democracy's connection to the social ideal of a "society of equals."

Level: Undergrad Elective

Prereqs: none

Coreqs: none