

2011-2012 SPRING ELECTIVES - PHILOSOPHY DEPARTMENT

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PL 160 01/02
TH 160 01/02

Challenge of Justice

Matthew Mullane

T TH 1 30* / M W 3*

Level 1 – Undergraduate Elective

Description:

This course introduces the student to the principal understandings of justice that have developed in the 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. Select problems may include human rights, poverty and development in Third World, environmental and ecological justice, just war and just peace issues.

PL 216 01

Boston: An Urban Analysis

David Manzo

TH 3-5:30

Level – Undergraduate

Description:

“Intuition alone is never enough to explain what you see. One must not only learn to trust intuition but also to pursue its leads: to follow hints from peripheral vision but always to dig beyond first impressions; to see through a scene and its many processes, but also to see through it in time to understand how it came to be, and to guess more skillfully at what I might become.”

– Grady Clay, *How to Read the American City*

“In our American cities, we need all kinds of diversity.”

- Jane Jacobs, *Death and Life of American Cities*

This course is intended for PULSE students who are willing to investigate, analyze, and understand the history, problems, and prospects of Boston neighborhoods. The above quotes by Grady Clay and Jane Jacobs frame our method of investigation. Assignments will require that you spend time observing, researching, and writing about the neighborhood in which your PULSE placement is located.

With the exception of the third session, class meetings in the first half of the semester will meet on campus. (Class # 3 will meet in the Prudential Center).

For the second half of the semester, as snow banks give way to slush and sun and blossoms, we will meet in the South End of Boston for a firsthand study of a most intriguing and changing inner-city neighborhood.

PL 262 01

**Telling Truths II: Depth Writing
as Service**

Kathleen Hirsch

W 3-4:50

Level – Undergraduate

Description:

This PULSE elective will enable students to produce a magazine length work that engages a serious social concern. Class will be run as a writing workshop. Early on in the semester, students will identify an issue they wish to pursue in depth. Class time will be spent sharing students' first-hand experiences in gathering insights into at-risk populations, and discussing how to focus these in published work. We will offer one another feedback on drafts, and will discuss the special ethical, research, and editing challenges such work entails. We will also examine outstanding published models of such work. *(Students may expand on an issue that has affected them personally, or one which they have observed in their service work while at Boston College. Enrollment in Telling Truths I is not required.)*

Requirements: This is a PULSE elective. In addition to class attendance, students will be expected to maintain on-going involvement with a specific social service agency or similar organization, as a "site" from which to gather the materials for their writing. This can be done either through the PULSE office, 4-Boston, or, with teacher approval, by independent arrangement.

Readings: Works by contemporary nonfiction writers, as well as excerpts from current anthologies of creative non-fiction.

PL 264 03

Logic

Matthew Robinson

T TH 12*

Level – Undergraduate

Description:

This course provides an introduction to the basic principles and techniques of modern Logic. Its aim is to teach a rigorous method of using reason to evaluate truth claims. The intellectual training acquired by regularly attending class and completing homework assignments generally helps improve students' success in analyzing everyday arguments, and is particularly valuable to those who plan to specialize in Philosophy, Law or other analytical disciplines. The course will cover basic syllogistic logic, propositional logic and proofs, basic modal logic, and basic quantificational logic.

Requirements:

1) quarterly tests (4 per semester), 2) homework assignments every class, and 3) one cumulative final exam.

Reading:

Gensler, Introduction to Logic (Routledge, 2nd edition)

PL 264 01
PL 264 02

Logic

Mark Thomas

MWF 2
MWF 3

Level – Undergraduate

Description:

This course is an introduction to logic, the art of evaluating arguments and reasoning correctly. The course has two main parts. (1) In the first part, we will concentrate on informal logic. Here we will discuss the properties of arguments and their components. In particular, we will discuss what distinguishes a good argument from a bad argument. (2) In the second part, we will study formal logic. Here we will learn how to translate arguments into formal language and manipulate that language.

Along the way, we will have some discussion of how we know logic, the relationship of logic to reality, and the limitations of logical reasoning.

Required Texts

- (1) Patrick J. Hurley. *A Concise Introduction to Logic*. 11th Edition (Boston: Wadsworth/Cengage, 2012). (N.B. The 10th edition of this text may also be used for this course.)
- (2) Selections posted on Blackboard Vista (cms.bc.edu).

Course Requirements

- (1) (15%) Attendance and Participation, including one-on-one meeting with the instructor after midterm exam to discuss course progress.
- (2) (10%) Homework Exercises
- (3) (25%) Weekly Quizzes
- (4) (25%) Midterm Exam
- (5) (25%) Final Exam

PL 404 01

Rhetoric: Beauty, Truth, and Power

Marina McCoy

MWF 1

Level – Undergraduate/Graduate

Description:

In this course, we will begin with the sophists, orators, and playwrights of ancient Greece and study their approaches to speech and persuasion. We will then read Plato's criticisms of rhetoric, as well as examine his own distinct use of rhetoric as an author of the dialogue form. Finally, we will examine more formal classical theories of rhetoric, beginning with Aristotle's *Rhetoric* and moving on to Cicero's *De Oratore* and Augustine's *On Christian Doctrine*. In the course of our discussions, we will also ask questions such as: To what extent is the practice of rhetoric concerned with truth, beauty, and/or power? Is rhetoric separable from inquiry into what is true, or inevitably a part of philosophical discovery itself? Is beautiful speech something that beguiles the audience, or something that better illuminates what is real, or potentially both? Is a rhetorician's manipulation of his or her audience's emotions justifiable or not? What is the relationship between philosophy, as love of wisdom, and rhetoric? Classical authors' claims as to what "works" to persuade your audience will also be examined, and students will be encouraged to relate the ideals of these texts to contemporary examples of public speaking, political debate, advertising, and the like.

Requirements: Three short papers, one longer paper (as the final project), and active class participation.

Reading:

Greek Orators-I (Antiphon and Lysias) (Aris and Philips)
Alcidamas, *The Works and Fragments* (Bristol Press)
Gorgias, "On Non-Being" and "Encomium to Helen" (handouts)
Isocrates, *Isocrates I* (Loeb edition)
Plato, *Gorgias*, trans. Zeyl (Hackett Press)
Aristophanes, *Knights* (Penguin edition)
Plato, *Phaedrus* (Focus Library edition)
Aristotle, *Rhetoric* (McGraw Hill edition)
Cicero, *De Oratore* --handouts
Augustine, *On Christian Teaching* (Penguin edition)

PL 407 01

Medieval Philosophy

Jean-Luc Solère

T TH 12*

Level – Undergraduate

Description:

Far from being monolithic and repetitive, the Middle Ages were a creative period during which multiple solutions were tried to make sense of the world and of human life. The legacy of Antiquity, the philosophic and 'scientific' knowledge of the time, and religious views were combined in original syntheses. The aim of the course is to provide a precise picture of this diversity, through a study of the main problems that a wide range of authors (Christian thinkers from St. Augustine to Ockham, but also Islamic and Jewish philosophers) faced.

Medieval philosophy was an important step in the development of human thought. Discovering it will be essential to your philosophical education. This course will especially highlight the essential concepts that were formed in the Middle Ages and that have been transmitted to modern philosophy, in metaphysics, theory of knowledge and consciousness, ethics, etc.

Also, analysis of texts, debates and writing assignments will help you to develop rigorous argumentation and expression skills.

Requirements: Four papers, each counting for 25% of the final grade. Class participation: bonus added to the average resulting from the papers (4 pts maximum).

Source book: D. Kolak & G. Thomson, *The Longman Standard History of Medieval Philosophy*, 2008, ISBN 0-321-23514-2; Armand Maurer, *Medieval Philosophy. An Introduction*, 2nd edition, 1982, ISBN 0-88844-704-3.

A syllabus can be consulted on <https://www2.bc.edu/jeanluc-solere/pl407.html>

PL 408 01

19th&20th Century Philosophy

Andrea Staiti

T TH 10:30*

Level – Undergraduate

Description:

Prerequisite: Some background in Kant, although not mandatory, is strongly recommended

This class will be devoted to some of the most important issues in philosophy in the past two centuries. In particular, we will study the development of Kantian transcendental philosophy in German Idealism, Neokantianism and Husserlian Phenomenology.

PL 414 01

Race and Philosophy

Jorge Garcia

T TH 12*

Level 1 – Undergraduate Elective

Description:

This course employs methods of recent Anglophone philosophy to examine such topics as the bases and justification of racial solidarity; racial identity; racial (dis)loyalty; and the nature, preconditions, loci, subjects, and targets of racism.

Requirements:

Three in-class examinations

Readings:

Works by recent writers, including Randall Kennedy, Tommie Shelby, Ronald Sandstrom, and others

PL 442 01

Romanticism and Idealism

Vanessa Rumble T TH 12*

Level 1 – Undergraduate Elective

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.

Requirements: four 5-page essays, final exam

Readings: Rousseau, *Reveries of the Solitary Walker*; Kant, *The Critique of Judgment*; Schiller, *On the Aesthetic Education of Man*; Goethe, *Faust*; E.T.A. Hoffman, *Tales of E.T.A. Hoffman*; Heinrich von Kleist, *The Marquise of O and Other Essays*

PL 453 01

Gandhi, Satyagraha & Society

Pramod Thaker

T TH 9*

Level – Undergraduate

Satisfies Cultural Diversity Core Requirement

Description:

Gandhi is well known as a freedom fighter for India's independence. But his deep concern regarding the impact of 'modern civilization' on the social fabric and fundamental philosophical reasons underlying his use of nonviolent methods are perhaps not as well known. Moreover, his analysis of importance of social justice was not provincial—limited to what is sometimes called “the third world”—but was universal. In this course, we will examine Gandhian thought through his own writings, and explicate their relevance to the contemporary society. We will examine certain selections from the classical as well as contemporary philosophical literature. This will help us to understand fully Gandhi's integrated vision of the citizen not only as a reflective but also as an active individual.

Requirements:

Two papers, and a final written examination.

Readings:

1. *An Autobiography: My Experiments with Truth*
Gandhi, Mohandas K. [With a Forward by Sissela Bok]
Boston: Beacon Press, 1993
2. *Mahatma Gandhi: Selected Political Writings*
Edited by Dennis Dalton
Hackett Publishing Company, Inc.
Indianapolis, Indiana, 1996
3. *Satyagraha in South Africa*
Gandhi, Mohandas K
Navajivan Publishers, Ahmedabad, India

PL/TH 473 01

Jews and Christians

**James Bernauer, S.J.
Ruth Langer**

TH 3-5:30

Level – Undergraduate/Graduate

Description:

This course is an exercise in interreligious learning, sponsored by the Boston College's Center for Jewish-Christian Learning.

Interreligious dialogue requires interreligious understanding. This course will build a foundation for genuine dialogue between Jews and Christians by posing fundamental theological and philosophical questions in a comparative context. Students will gain an understanding of the other tradition while also deepening their understanding of their own, discussing such matters as the human experience of God, the purpose of human existence, the nature of religious community, and the ways that the communities respond to challenges, both contemporary and ancient.

**PL 509
TH 506**

Tibetan Buddhist Philosophy and Practice

John Makransky

TH 4:30-6:50

Level – 3

Description:

Philosophical ideas and meditative and ritual practices of the Tantric Buddhism of Tibet (Vajrayana). Includes early Buddhist and Mahayana philosophical foundations of Tantric Buddhism, connections between philosophy and sacred story, nature of mind and the transformative potential of the human being, visionary practices, meditation theory, inner yogas, unities of wisdom and means, and the feminine divine in cultural context. We explore Tibetan philosophy and praxis through writings of modern Buddhist studies scholars and Tibetan lamas.

Requirements:

Weekly writing, midterm, final papers.

PL 516 01

Epistemology

Daniel McKaughan

T 4:30-6:20

Level 3 – Undergraduate/Graduate

Description:

An exploration of core issues in contemporary theory of knowledge emphasizing questions about the justification and rationality of belief. Topics to be considered include: the analysis of knowledge, skepticism and the sources of knowledge, theories of justification, rationality, and evidence. Our treatment of the reliability of perception, common sense realism, fallibilism, varieties of ampliative inference (such as inference to the best explanation, induction, and the use of probabilistic reasoning in decision theory), naturalized epistemology, recent trends in social epistemology, and the scope and limits of science will attend to intersections between epistemology, philosophy of science, and philosophy of mind.

Reading:

- Michael Huemer, ed. 2003. *Epistemology: Contemporary Readings* (London: Routledge).
- Richard Feldman. 2003. *Epistemology* (Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall).
- Course Packet.

PL 534 01

Environmental Ethics

Holly Vandewall

MWF 2

Level – Undergraduate/Graduate

Description:

This course will examine major themes in and approaches to environmental philosophy with a particular focus on the idea of nature as it developed in the United States and how current approaches (such as deep ecology and ecofeminism) challenge existing normative attitudes toward the domain of non-human beings. The course will consider some classic texts in the history of American nature writing by Thoreau, John Muir, and Rachael Carson before turning to topics-based discussions on such issues as environmental justice and animal rights.

PL 538 01

Journey to Self Discovery

Brian Braman

M 4:30-6:50

Level – Undergraduate

Description:

As historical beings, our lives constitute a story that unfolds in time. Our lives narrate a journey from sin to salvation, despair to faith, sickness to health, death to life, darkness to light and ignorance to knowledge. this is a journey to selfhood. We are sojourners struggling to understand more deeply who we are as this self and what is my place in the world.

This seminar will explore the four fundamental capstone issues of spirituality, citizenship, relationships and work in terms of this notion of our life as narrative, a journey to self-hood.

PL 541 01

**Philosophy of Health Science:
East and West**

Pramod Thaker

T TH 12*

Level – Undergraduate/Graduate

Satisfies Cultural Diversity Core Requirement

Description:

This course will explore the philosophical assumptions of health care practice and show the influence of philosophical perspective on the practice of medicine. We will examine certain key events in the history and philosophy of medicine—from the Hippocratic regimen to the contemporary medical practice—to understand the close-knit relationship between philosophy and medicine. As a counterpoint, ancient Indian medical tradition of Āyurveda will be studied. We will examine how the physicians and philosophers of such diverse schools approach philosophical and ethical problems inherent in medical practice. In the concluding sessions, we will discuss some of the specific ethical problems that are encountered by the clinicians in their practice today. These case studies will be undertaken not with an aim of resolving the difficult ethical dilemma once for all, but to demonstrate the necessity of first recognizing and then explicating the philosophical subtext of any ethical decision-making process.

Requirements:

Two papers and a final written examination.

Reading:

1. A course-pack of selected literature to be purchased from the BC Bookstore.
2. The 'text-handout' material given in the class.
3. Selected books on the reserve list in the library.

PL/UN 553 01

**Capstone: Poets, Philosophers,
and Mapmakers**

Paul McNellis, S.J.

TH 2:30 – 4:50

Level – Undergraduate

Description:

Prerequisite: Philosophy and Theology core already fulfilled. Instructor permission required. Capstone classes may not be taken Pass/Fail, and you may take only one Capstone course before graduation.

We go through life with mental maps of reality, in various degrees implicit or explicit. A Liberal Arts education presupposes such a map of the intelligible world. Is it accurate? What does your "map" of reality look like? How has it changed since freshman year? The goal of the seminar is to help you see what kind of map you implicitly have now and to begin to ask what you want the map to look like ten years after graduation. How do you develop an "open" rather than "closed" map?

Paul McNellis, S.J.

PL 583 01

**Philosophy of Biology
(Darwin, Genes, and Embryology)**

Daniel McKaughan

TH 4:30-6:20

Level 3 – Undergraduate/Graduate

Description:

An introduction to core and cutting edge issues in three central areas of the history and philosophy of biology: (1) evolutionary theory, (2) genetics and molecular biology, and (3) embryology and developmental systems theory. Do the biological sciences yield clear factual answers to questions of enormous moral, social, and religious significance; to questions about who we are, how we came to be, and how we relate to the rest of the natural world? Do some of the detailed physical-chemical explanations emerging in neuroscience have deeply revisionary implications for aspects of ourselves traditionally regarded as core features of personality, character, or our ordinary understanding of what it is to be a person? How do we distinguish between uncontroversial scientific claims, open empirical questions, philosophical inferences that go well beyond the evidence, and claims which no amount of empirical investigation could establish? As part of our attempt to understand some of the central philosophical issues raised by the biological sciences, we will examine the historical development of the life sciences in the wake of Charles Darwin's *Origin of Species* (1859), including the integration of evolution and theories of inheritance in the early 20th century, the main strands of research leading to the elucidation of the structure of DNA in 1953, subsequent elaboration of theories of regulatory genetics, and some questions that remain unresolved concerning the relations of evolution, development, and genetics. Much of our classroom discussion will be oriented around *Contemporary Debates in Philosophy of Biology*. Supplementary readings will be used to flesh out requisite scientific and historical background and to focus discussion of the arguments. Topics to be considered include origins of life, reductionism, determinism, teleology and mechanism, conceptual issues in evolutionary theory (natural selection, fitness, adaptation, species-concepts, units of selection, theoretical structure, evolutionary psychology, and recent developments), naturalism, and associated social-philosophical issues such as the creation-evolution controversies, concepts of race and gender, and attempts to relate biology to ethics.

Reading:

- Darwin, Charles. 1859/2001. *On the Origin of Species: A Facsimile of the First Edition* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press).
- Ayala, Francisco and Arp, Robert, eds. 2009. *Contemporary Debates in Philosophy of Biology* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell).
- Sterelny, Kim and Griffiths, Paul. 1999. *Sex and Death: An Introduction to Philosophy of Biology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press).

PL 584 01

C.S. Lewis

Peter J. Kreeft

T TH 3*

Level – Undergraduate/Graduate

Description:

Lewis wrote poetry, literary criticism, science fiction, fantasy, philosophy, theology, religion, literary history, epics, children's stories, historical novels, short stories, psychology, and politics. He was a rationalist and a romanticist, a classicist and an existentialist, a conservative and a radical, a pagan and a Christian. No writer of our century had more strings to his bow, and no one excels him at once in clarity, in moral force, and in imagination: the true, the good, and the beautiful. We will consider a sampling of Lewis' fiction and non-fiction.

Let me begin on a personal note: I have learned more from C.S. Lewis than from any other writer. In reading everything I could get my hands on (some 30-40 published titles) I came to appreciate both his value as an author and the value of a course that studies a single such commodious mind in depth (a thing 'survey' courses miss).

But why Lewis? Why do so many, like me, find him valuable and fascinating? (1) Because of his unique variety: a master of essays, poetry, theology, autobiography, science fiction, fantasy, philosophy, practical psychology, children's stories, literary criticism, literary history, religious psychology, apologetics, historical novel, debate, educational philosophy, and many other unclassifiable things; (2) because of his unique blend of "the true, the good and the beautiful," "rationalism, religion, and romanticism" (all three labels subtly misleading), clarity, faith and imagination, the ability to move the intellect, will and emotions--no one excels him in all three departments at once; (3) because for so many people he makes New Testament Christianity intellectually respectable, daily livable and above all imaginatively attractive and interesting; (4) and most of all for an almost indefinable quality about everything he wrote: a combination of wonder, joy, surprise, the shock of recognition, the sharp, bracing challenge of waking up, and the demand for simple, uncompromising honesty with a delightful yet uncomfortable absence of vagueness and abstraction.

We will read a sampling from his many works, emphasizing the fiction, the philosophy, and the religion. Opportunity to branch out into his literary criticism and other areas will be offered on an individual basis.

Requirements: mid-semester and final; optional extra-credit essays or papers.

Reading: *Surprised by Joy, Till We Have Faces, Perelandra, Mere Christianity, The Problem of Pain, Miracles, The Abolition of Man, The Screwtape Letters, The Great Divorce, A Grief Observed, The Four Loves, and various short essays.*

PL 599 01

Kant's Moral Philosophy

Ronald Tacelli, S.J.

M W 3*

Level 3 – Undergraduate/Graduate Elective

Prerequisite: Some understanding of Kant's epistemology

Description:

We will do close readings of *The Critique of Practical Reason*, *The Grounding of the Metaphysics of Morals*, and selected essays.

PL 607 01

Spinoza's Ethics

Jean-Luc Solere

W 2-4

Level – Graduate

Description:

We will carry out a continuous and close textual study of Spinoza's masterpiece, the *Ethics*, one of the most ambitious attempts to dissolve the fears and the passions of ignorance. This will also give us the opportunity to confront his system with the other great philosophies of the 17th century, the class being especially designed for providing graduate students with a strong and in-depth presentation of early modern thought.

Requirements:

One intermediary & one final paper. Class participation.

Readings:

The Essential Spinoza. Ethics and Related Writings, ed. by M. L. Morgan, with the transl. of Samuel Shirley, Indianapolis, Hackett, 2006 (ISBN 978-0-87220-803-2).

PL 611 01

Global Justice and Human Rights

David Rasmussen

T TH 1:30*

Level 3 – Graduate/Undergraduate Elective

Description: Twenty percent of the world's population live on a dollar a day and forty-five percent live on two dollars a day. How do we think about justice; not from a domestic or even Western perspective, but from the point of view of the world as such? Is it possible to think of global justice in relationship to the explosion of human rights discourse and law from World War II on? As students of philosophy we will consider the arguments for and against global justice. As philosophical interpreters we will examine the emerging narrative on human rights as it takes place in institutional developments and international law. We will examine the modern history of the idea of global justice from its formulation in social contract theory in Hobbes and Locke, through Kant's idea of cosmopolitan justice; to its contemporary reconstruction in John Rawls, Charles Beitz, David Held, Jürgen Habermas, Thomas Pogge and others. In the context of examining the status of global justice we will consider the problem of world poverty, the rights of minorities, violence and how human rights can be defended in a global context.

Topics: Justice from Hobbes to Kant. Beyond the Idea of National Sovereignty. The Cosmopolitan Idea. World Poverty and Human Rights. A Reconstructive Approach to Justice and Human Rights. Justice, Feminism and the Rights of Minorities. Non-Western vs. Western Perspectives. Religion, Justice and Rights. War, Terrorism and Modernity.

Class Requirements:

There will be an oral mid-term and a take home final. Also, students are asked to write a ten-page paper on some aspect of the course topic. You must choose your topic by the time of the midterm. You may choose from any of the issues in human rights global justice. Attendance is mandatory and class participation is required. In accord with the size of the class, class presentations are a possibility.

Required Tests: Beitz, Charles. *Political Theory and International Relations*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 1979
Rawls, John. *The Law of Peoples*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. 1999
Kant, Immanuel. *Perpetual Peace and Other Essays*. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company. 1983
Pogge, Thomas. *World Poverty and Human Rights*. Cambridge: Polity Press. 2002.
Hayden, Patrick. *The Philosophy of Human Rights*. St. Paul: Paragon House. 2001
Donnelly, Jack. *International Human Rights*. (Third Edition) Boulder: Westview Press. 2007.

PL 630 01

Contemporary French Philosophy

Jeffrey Bloechl

M 4:30-6:20

Level – Undergraduate/Graduate

Description:

Prerequisite: Basic familiarity with history of philosophy, especially modern

Survey of some main currents, central themes and persistent questions in French philosophy since the end of World War II. Reflection will be divided into three areas: 1. dialectical and phenomenological approaches to intersubjectivity (Kojève, Sartre, Merleau-Ponty, Levinas), 2. philosophies of force and difference (Foucault, Lacan, Derrida), and 3. the return of interest in religion (Derrida, Levinas, Kristeva).

PL 642 01

Group Identity and Philosophy

Jorge Garcia

TH 4:30-6:45

Level – Undergraduate/Graduate

Description:

It is not commonplace to regard someone's race, ethnicity, gender, sex, sexual orientation, socioeconomic class, etc., as collective identities. This course inquires into this by examining philosophers' wrestling with such questions as Why are these classified as identities? Should they be? Is an identity more than a label, a word? How do such collective identities relate to someone's individual identity, to what she identifies with, to how people identify her? Are our identities plural? To what extent is such identity voluntary? Does identity entail norms? How are identities important? Should we sometimes 'disidentify'?

Requirements:

Two take-home examinations and one in-class oral presentation

Reading:

Works by such recent writers as Kwame Appiah, Amartya Sen, Charles Taylor, Jose Medina, Benard Williams, Linda Alcoff

PL 650 01

Philosophy of Being II

Oliva Blanchette

M W 11*

Level – Undergraduate/Graduate

Description:

Reconstruction in the metaphysics of becoming and time requires a distinction of matter and form in things that come to be and a distinction of essence and be as act of being in finite being as finite. Reconstruction in the metaphysics of being as universe requires communication and interaction among the many and diverse beings encountered in experience, leading to the question of a necessary being at the summit to account for all that we know is insofar as it is. In this course we shall explore how such distinctions are arrived at reflectively from the way we experience being in the world and how we go from affirming contingent beings in experience to affirming a necessary being surpassing all experience we have of being, thus raising the question of religion at the end of metaphysics through arguments for affirming a totally transcendent Being.

Requirements:

We shall proceed mainly through class presentation and discussion, with periodic reflection papers every two or three weeks, when we come to the end of a particular theme. At the end of the course there will be a final oral examination. In addition each student will be required to choose an author or a theme, or a combination of the two, to explore reflectively and critically as part of this effort to do metaphysics in dialogue with other metaphysicians. This will be by individual arrangement with the professor beginning with a written proposal to be followed by a progress report leading up to a term paper.

Reading:

As a continuation of Philosophy of Being I, this course will pick up where we left off at the end of the first semester and proceed to discuss the Structure of Being, the Communication of Being and the Summit of Being. The required reading for the course will be *Philosophy of Being: A Reconstructive Essay in Metaphysics* (CUA Press, 2003). We shall follow the outline of this book in order to come to the end of metaphysics or to the threshold of theology, which is as far as the question of being can take us in philosophy.

PL 709 01 Aristotle On Science and the Sciences

William Wians

Th 4:30-6:20

Level - Graduate

Description:

Scholars increasingly appreciate the profound connections between Aristotle's philosophical positions and his theory of scientific knowledge, its conditions and methods. Knowledge may be practical, productive, or theoretical; it may be mathematical, physical, or theological; and while some things are more knowable to us, others are more knowable in themselves. Whether in ethics, natural science, or metaphysics, Aristotle's epistemological and methodological commitments determine his starting points, shape the exposition, and decisively influence the outcome of his investigations.

Requirement:

The course will be devoted to a careful study of Aristotle's theory of scientific knowledge (epistêmê), both as it is explicitly formulated and as it shapes the treatises. The primary task for seminar members will be to engage in a close reading of the Posterior Analytics, which presents the theory in all its complexity and subtlety. At key point along the way, portions of other Aristotelian works, including Topics I, Parts of Animals I, Nicomachean Ethics VI, and Metaphysics IV, will be consulted. Throughout the semester, students will be guided to the extensive secondary literature on the subject. Course grades will be determined by seminar participation and one or two research papers.

Because of the pervasive influence of the theory of science, the course should provide a rigorous and far-ranging encounter with the philosophy of Aristotle and serve as a foundation for the study of much of the later history of philosophy.

PL 718 01

**Ethics, Globalization &
Critical Theory**

Jonathan Trejo-Mathys

M 2 – 3:50

Level – Graduate

Description:

After beginning with a brief look at some of the empirical and social-scientific issues involved in assessing in at least a general way the socio-political import of the various processes referred to in recent decades as “globalization”, we will turn to *diagnoses* of what, from a moral-political point of view, is good and what is bad, what is threatening and what is promising, in “globalization”, as well as the *prescriptions* we might give in response. First we will familiarize ourselves with various positions in liberal international political theory and a gamut of “critical” alternative positions. Then we will take a look at specific issue areas using the topic of political authority and obligation as a focusing lens. Issues canvassed may include the interrelations between international law, national (democratic) sovereignty, and human rights; the idea of a “constitutionalization” of international law; international or foreign intervention and ‘transitional’ or ‘provisional’ authority; the European Union; the authority of global financial/economic institutions such as the WTO and the IMF; and the authority of private collective actors such as firms and NGOs.

PL 762 01

Soren Kierkegaard

Vanessa P. Rumble

T 4:30-6:50

Level – Graduate

Description:

This course will deal primarily with the early pseudonymous writings of Soren Kierkegaard. The following topics will be emphasized: (1) the function of irony and indirect communication in the pseudonymous works, (2) Kierkegaard's conception of freedom and subjectivity, and (3) the nature of the relationship which Kierkegaard posits between reason, autonomy, and faith.

Requirements:

Weekly reflection papers, 2 pages typed

Final paper, roughly 12-15 pages

Readings:

Søren Kierkegaard,

Fear and Trembling and Repetition

Concept of Anxiety

Philosophical Fragments

Two Ages

Sickness Unto Death

PL 768 01

Insight

Patrick Byrne

W 4:30-6:50

Level - Graduate

Description:

“Thoroughly understand what it is to understand, and you will not only understand the broad lines of all there is to be understood but also you will possess a fixed base, an invariant pattern opening upon all further developments of understanding.”

Lonergan, *Insight*

Bernard Lonergan wrote his major philosophical work, *Insight*, to address what he regarded as the great challenges posed by Modernity: modern natural science, modern historical thought, and the great revolutions in modern philosophy, especially in Descartes, Kant and Hegel. In many ways *Insight* shares the concerns of post-modernism, but departs from its pervasive relativism. Written after his scholarly investigations of Aquinas, Lonergan set himself the task of developing what he learned from those studies into a methodical way of treating philosophical metaphysical, ethical, historical, hermeneutical and theological issues. He called that method “self-appropriation” – that is, coming to better know how one actually thinks, knows, feels, decides and loves.

Can the tantalizing promises made by Lonergan be realized? That question forms the central theme of this course. We will undertake a careful, detailed and critical investigation of major sections of Lonergan's *Insight*, along with selections from Lonergan's later writings and the works of major Lonergan scholars.

Requirements:

(1) Class preparedness (15%; careful reading of the weeks assigned chapters, responses to study questions and exercises, and prepared notes of questions and comments for class discussion); **(2) A short paper (4-5 pages)** describing an insight you have had. **(15%); (3) Term paper (of 20-25 pages) (40%); (4) Final Exam (30%).**

Readings:

Lonergan, *Insight*

Lonergan, *Topics in Education*

Selected essays

Flanagan, *Quest for Self-Knowledge*

Cronin, *Foundations of Philosophy* (online)

PL 782 01

Philosophy of Language

Eileen Sweeney

TH 2–4:15

Level – Graduate

Description:

This course will consider major texts and movements in 20th century philosophy of language in both the analytic and continental traditions. We will study the work of Bertrand Russell, Ludwig Wittgenstein, J. L. Austin, Donald Davidson, Richard Rorty, Paul Ricoeur and Jacques Derrida. We will also consider major trends (and rifts) in the interpretative schools that have formed around the work of these thinkers. Our goal will be to bring together these very different approaches to what has been a central concern of philosophy in the 20th century.

Requirements: One mid term paper (10-12 pages), one term paper (25-30 pgs)

Reading: Bertrand Russell, *The Philosophy of Logical Atomism*, *Classics of Analytical Philosophy* (selections); Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*; J. L. Austin, *How To Do Things With Words*; Donald Davidson, selected essays; Richard Rorty, selected essays, Paul Ricoeur, *Interpretation Theory*, Jacques Derrida, *Limited Inc* and selected essays.

PL 783 01

Classical Ethics

Peter Kreeft

T 4:30-6:30

Level – Graduate

Offered Periodically

Description:

An exploration of 14 short Great Books in ethics centering on the practical, personal question What is the good life? (1) *Ecclesiastes* (2) Plato's *Gorgias* (3) Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* (4) Epictetus' *Enchiridion* (5) Jesus' *Sermon on the Mount* (6) Augustine's *Confessions* (excerpts) (7) Aquinas' *Summa* (excerpts) (8) Lao Tzu's *Tao Te Ching* (9) Kant's *Metaphysics of Morals* (10) the *Humanist Manifesto* (11) C.S. Lewis' *The Abolition of Man* (12) Sartre's *Existentialism and Human Emotions* (13) Marcel's *The Philosophy of Existentialism* and (14) Frankl's *Man's Search for Meaning*.

PL 791 01

Aristotle and Plotinus: On the Soul

Gary Gurtler, S.J.

T 4:30-6:20

Level - Graduate

Description:

The focus of this course is on the theories of sensation and knowledge that can be found in the writings of Aristotle and Plotinus. Aristotle understands the soul as form of the body and seeks to show the interrelation between sensing objects and understanding their nature. The *Parva Naturalia* supplements the more restricted discussion of the *De Anima* with material on memory and dreams. Plotinus assumes a Platonic soul that remains independent of the body, but nevertheless imports Aristotle's analysis of sensation, as well as material from the Stoics on sympathy and from others such as Galen on the nervous system, to give for the first time in the Western tradition a full theory of consciousness. Plotinus retrieves his predecessors in a remarkably fruitful synthesis.

Requirements

Class summaries, exams, term paper (15-20 pages).

Reading:

Aristotle, *On the Soul, Parva Naturalia*, Loeb Classical Library (Harvard University Press, 1986);

Plotinus, *Ennead IV*, Loeb Classical Library (Harvard University Press, 1984)

PL 794 01

Philosophy and the Church Fathers

Margaret Schatkin

TTH 3:00-4:15

Cross Listed with TH 794

Level 3 – Undergraduate/Graduate Elective

Description:

The interrelationship of Greek philosophy and the Church Fathers. The marriage of Greek paideia to Christianity. The God of the philosophers and the God of the Bible. Prayer in Greek philosophy and early Christianity. The development of Christian philosophy and its fundamental principles. John Chrysostom's true Christian philosophy.

Readings:

1. Origen. *Prayer*. Trans. Rowan A. Greer. New York Paulist Press 1979.
2. Hunter, David G. *A comparison between a king and a monk. Against the opponents of the monastic life*. Two Treatises by John Chrysostom. Edwin Mellen Press 1988.
3. Jaeger, Werner. *Christianity and Greek Paideia*. Harvard 1961.
4. Stead, C. *Philosophy in Christian Antiquity*. Cambridge Univ. Press 1994.
5. Tatakis, B. N. *Christian Philosophy in the Patristic and Byzantine Tradition*. Orthodox Research Institute 2007.
6. Brown, Michael Joseph. *The Lord's Prayer through North African Eyes*. New York, 2004.

PL 826 01
LL 822 01

Seminar on Law and Justice

David Rasmussen

TH 4:30 – 6:20

Level – Graduate

Description:

This seminar will concentrate on two recent books of in the realm of law and justice: Amartya Sen's, *The Idea of Justice* and Ronald Dworkin's, *Justice for Hedgehogs*.

Amartya Sen's argument focuses on the nature of justice in relationship to public reasoning and has been reviewed as a worthy successor to John Rawls' *Theory of Justice* although his orientation is distinctively different than Rawls. Ronald Dworkin's argument, which belongs to the great tradition of ethic as law, is based on the concept of value. Both books published in 2009 and 2011 respectively have already begun to shape the contemporary discourse on justice and law. This course is conceived of as a seminar We hope to invite **outside speakers** who are experts in the topics we will cover.

Requirements:

Students will be required to read the books mentioned above, to participate in vigorous discussion, to make presentations and to write a paper on a topic relevant to the seminar and their own research.

Readings:

Sen,. Amartya. *The Idea of Justice*. Harvard: 2009

Dworkin, Ronald. *Justice for Hedgehogs*, Harvard, 2011

PL 832 01

Philosophy and Theology in Aquinas

Oliva Blanchette

M 6:30-8:15

Level – Graduate

Description:

Philosophy and theology come together in Aquinas's *Summa Theologiae* as two distinct disciplines in need of one another. They intersect in the different Parts of the *Summa* in many different ways, both shedding light on one another without ever becoming confused with one another, as different matters are presented, matters of theoretical science concerning God and creation, matters of practical science concerning human action as return of the rational creature to God, and matters of historical science concerning the mediation of God's Word in this return to God.

This course will examine how Aquinas comes to understand sacred or religious teaching (*sacra doctrina*), as theology, or as a scientific discipline for believers, that has to use philosophy, or philosophical teaching, to make the truth of Revelation, or of articles of faith, more manifest to human intelligence, even for the believer as well as the non-believer. Special attention will be given to the methodological discussions at the beginning of the various Parts of the *Summa Theologiae* and of the *Summa contra Gentiles*, as well as to the different ordering of both philosophy and theology as scientific disciplines even at the points where they intersect. Also included for study will be Aquinas's discussions of the division and the methods of the sciences, philosophical and theological, in the *Commentary on the De Trinitate of Boethius*, where it will be shown why Aquinas made such ample use of the works of Aristotle in his theology, on which he also wrote such ample commentaries as a philosopher, elaborating on arguments or demonstrations he would use in his theology.

Requirements:

regular participation in the seminar, term paper, final oral examination.

Reading:

The Treatise on Divine Nature (ST I, qq. 1-13), Faith, reason and theology (qq. i-iv of Com on Boethius), The division and methods of the sciences (qq. v-vi of Com on Boethius), et al.