

Philosophy Department

Spring 2001 Electives

PL 202 01 Housing and Reality

Harry Gottschalk

W 3-5

Level - 1

This course is an in-depth analysis of urban housing conditions that views housing sites within the city and involves research into the causes of historical, architectural, governmental, financial and neighborhood action to maintain and/or create alleviation of the deepening housing crisis in our society.

Requirements: A reflection paper is required on each lecture and class discussion which will be due the following class. A final paper will be required at the termination of the semester. There will be a tour of the city of Boston neighborhoods for all the students at the close of this course.

Readings: Jacobs, Jane, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*; Doxiadis, C.A., *Anthropolis: City for Human Development*; Sennett, Richard, *The Uses of Disorder*

PL 216 01 Boston: An Urban Analysis

David Manzo

Th 3-5:30

Level - 1

"Intuition alone is never enough to explain what you see. One must 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. 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 first-hand study of a most intriguing and changing inner-city neighborhood.

PL 252 01 Practical Logic

Peter Kreeft

TTh @ 10:30

Level - 1

This course deals with essentially the same topics as the more usual symbolic, or mathematical, logic course: constructing and evaluating valid arguments, recognizing fallacies, clarifying and formulating propositions, and defining terms. However, it differs in: (1) being geared to practice more than theory, especially the most common practice of the formal verbal arts of reading, writing, listening, and speaking; the logic of the humanities; (2) using ordinary language rather than mathematical symbolism; (3) following the commonsensical pattern of Aristotelian Logic, the "three acts of the mind," beginning with words and terms rather than propositions, thus doing a logic computers cannot comprehend; (4) focusing on mastering the few most useful basics very well, by many exercises, rather than covering many seldom-used topics; (5) having a philosophical dimension and much interfacing with the "Great Books"; (6) having a philosophical foundation in commonsensical "Aristotelian realism"; (7) being Socratic in spirit and method, and including little extras like how to write Socratic dialogs, have a Socratic debate, and use the Socratic method with difficult people; (8) including different levels of difficulty, so that even the slowest student will firmly grasp the basics while the more philosophical student will be challenged to more difficult applications of these basics.

Requirements: weekly quizzes, final exam, also opportunities for extra credit: original essays in the form of critical logical analyses of arguments in the great philosophers.

Reading: *Socratic Logic*, Peter Kreeft

PL 264 01 Logic

Stuart Martin

MWF @ 11

Level - 1

Logic is the science of correct reasoning. The study of this science aims at perfecting the student's practical ability for critical analysis and precise argumentation. This course will emphasize the elements of traditional logic but will also introduce the student to the field of modern symbolic notation.

Requirements: Working exercises are supplied for each unit of study, and class participation is encouraged. There will be two tests during the semester as well as a final examination.

Reading: Robert J. Kreyche, *Logic for Undergraduates*

PL 264 03 Logic

Debby Hutchins

MWF @ 2

Level - 1

The purpose of this course is to give students a comprehensive introduction to modern propositional and predicate logic. Topics covered includes: validity, soundness, practical applications of logic, and direct and indirect truth tables. Upon completion of the courses, the student will be able to recognize and identify standard argument forms and to construct propositional predicate.

Requirements: There will be three exams. The final will not be cumulative, but will presuppose work done in the first part of the course.

Reading: Patrick J. Hurley, *A Concise Introduction to Logic*

PL 268 01 History and Development of Racism **Cross Listed with BK 268/SC 268**

Horace Seldon

T 3-5:30

Level - 1

Satisfies Cultural Diversity Core Requirement

This course concerns the interrelationships of individual and institutional forms of racism. The course will survey historical forms of racism in the United States and will identify past and present methods of opposing racism.

Requirements: Attendance and participation in class discussions and home groups, which meet during the class hours, is crucial. Weekly journals, one book reflection paper, a major paper are also required, and a final exam.

Reading: *Autobiography of Malcolm X*, Haley; *America Is in the Heart*, Bulosan; *Before the Mayflower*, Bennett; *Lies My Teacher Told Me*, Loewen

PL 292 01 Philosophy of Community II

David McMenamain

T 4:30-6:15

Level - 1

Prerequisites: Limited to members of the PULSE Council

This seminar, the second semester of a year-long course, explores the nature of community, with particular (but not exclusive) focus on community in the American context. Some of the central historical, cultural, political and religious forces which have shaped both American community and the American understanding of community are examined.

These issues are initially approached from a historical perspective with an assessment of the philosophical ideas that were evident in the political thinking of the American framers. The seminar then considers the historical development of those ideas in light of the way they are concretized in American political practice nationally and in local communities, arriving at a critical assessment of contemporary thinking on community and the relationship between community and individual.

Reading: Alexis DeTocqueville, *Democracy in America, Vol. II*; Jane Jacobs, *Death and Life of Great American Cities*; John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (excerpt/handout); Charles Taylor and/or Alasdair McIntyre (handout); Shlomo Avineri and Avner De-Shalit, eds. *Communitarianism and Individualism*

PL 309 01 Marriage and the Family

Francis Soo

TTh @ 3

Level - 1

The course begins with a cross-cultural understanding of marriage/family by examining some of its many cultural variations. Next, we will focus on the American traditional marriage/family and see why and how it has evolved into its present form, i.e., nuclear system. Thirdly, we will try to examine the personal dimension of marriage/family and study how interpersonal interactions take place within the context of marriage/family. Finally, we will organize a 2-day seminar to which students will invite speakers of different marital (and non marital) status to share their personal experiences (both positive and negative).

Requirements: midterm, final, and term paper

Reading: Stephens, *The Family in Cross-Cultural Perspective*, Fromm, *The Art of Loving*; other supplementary materials.

PL 335 01 Platonic Dialogues

Gerard O'Brien, S.J.

MWF @ 1

Level - 1

This is a course in what are generally called the early and middle dialogues of Plato, including most of his best known works such as the Republic, Symposium, Phaedo, Protagoras Gorgias and several others. The emphasis will be on reading the text in translation and attempting to think out the questions along with Plato. Some reading of secondary sources is expected, but these will not be stressed as much as reading the text of Plato. No previous courses in philosophy are required, and a knowledge of Greek is not needed for the course. Classes will be partly lecture and

partly discussion.

Requirements: one mid-term; one course paper; one final exam. Students are expected to read the dialogues so as to participate in class discussion, which counts towards the course grade.

Reading: Plato, *The Collected Dialogues of Plato*, ed. Edith Hamilton and H. Caverns. A list of secondary sources will be given in class. A few works especially recommended are the following: R. Brumbaugh, *Plato for the Modern Age*; G. C. Field, *Plato and His Contemporaries*; Paul Friedlander, *Plato: An Introduction*; A. Gouldner, *The Hellenic World*; G.M.A. Grube, *Plato's Thought*; W.K.C. Guthrie, *The Greek Philosophers*; J.E. Raven, *Plato's Thought in the Making*; Paul Shorey, *What Plato Said*; A. E. Taylor, *Plato: The Man and His Work*; T. L. Thorson, *Plato: Totalitarian or Democrat?*

PL 339 01 Heidegger Project II

Thomas Owens

TTh @ 1:30

Level - 2

Prerequisites: PL 338

This is a continuation of PL 338 given during the first semester and open only to students who have participated in that course.

Requirements: class presentations, term paper, oral, final examination

PL 340 01 Humanism and Anti-Humanism

William Richardson, S.J.

TTh @ 12

Level - 1

This course will examine contemporary notions of humanism (e.g., Sartre, Heidegger) and the critique that has been made of humanism by such thinkers as Althusser, Foucault, Derrida and Lacan.

Requirements: at least two philosophy courses beyond the Core.

Reading: General Reference: R. Kearney, *Modern Movements in European Philosophy*, Manchester, England: University Press; J. P. Sartre, *Transcendence of the Ego*, Farrar, Straus and Giroux; M. Heidegger, "Letter on Humanism," *Basic Writings*, Harper, San Francisco; selected readings from above authors.

PL 377 01 Normative Ethical Theory

Jorge Garcia

TTh @12

Level - 1

This course examines developments by twentieth-century British and American thinkers in theorizing about moral life, concentrating on utilitarian, neo-Kantian, and virtues-based approaches. Topics under utilitarianism include hedonism, position-relative value theory, direct and indirect consequentialism, hypermoralism (?moral imperialism?), and of consequential evaluation in deliberators and spectators. Topics under neo-Kantianism include the point and nature of contractual justificatory mechanisms and the role of moral reasons. Topics under virtues-based ethics include the pertinence of virtues to moral quandaries and obligations.

Readings include M. Baron, P. Pettit, and M. Slote, *Three Methods of Ethics*; G. Scarre, *Utilitarianism*; and T. Scanlon, *What We Owe to Each Other*; with possible addition of some recent articles by A. Sen, L. Zagzebski, and Garcia.

Assignments include two examinations and an argumentative paper.

PL 403 01 Does God Exist?

Ronald Tacelli, S.J.

MW @ 3

Level - 1

This course aims to be a serious examination, for capable undergraduates, of arguments for and against the existence of God.

PL 407 01 Medieval Philosophy

Thomas Hibbs

MWF @ 10

Level - 1

In this course we will examine the positions of a series of medieval authors on the following questions: what constitutes human excellence? what relationship is there between divine perfection and human perfection? and what is the relationship between natural reason's investigation of these questions and the sort of life led by a religious believer? Special attention will be given to the related but distinct accounts of the virtues constitutive of the human good in Augustine, Aquinas, and Catherine of Sienna.

Requirements: two papers, mid-term and final exam

Reading: Augustine, *City of God, Confessions*; Aquinas, excerpts on the virtues; Catherine of Sienna, *The Dialogue*

PL 408 01 19th and 20th Century Philosophy

Ingrid Scheibler

TTh @ 12

Level - 1

The course will be a combination of lecture and seminar discussion. In the nineteenth-century, we see an unprecedented rise to prominence of an awareness of history, and distinctive claims made on behalf of absolute knowledge. Starting with Hegel's conceptions of reason in history and the ethical life of the State in the *Introduction to the Philosophy of History* and the *Philosophy of Right*, we will turn to two influential critiques of Hegel: Marx's historical materialism and Kierkegaard's views on religion and faith.

After the mid-term, we consider Nietzsche's criticism of a philosophy of history, his characterization of the situation of modern Europe as one of "nihilism" and his attempt to surmount nihilism. While Hegel will be one of Nietzsche's main objects of criticism, we will look at the way both Nietzsche and Hegel launch a critique of metaphysics. Towards the latter part of the course, we will consider the writings of three 20th Century thinkers: M. Heidegger, S. Freud, and H. Arendt. We will place these major 20C thinkers in dialogue—both real and re-constructed—with the developments in 19C thought. Heidegger, Freud, and Arendt take up the challenge of re-thinking our historicity, and the claims to truth and knowledge in the situation of late-modernity.

Requirements: 1) the assigned readings will serve, for the most part, as the basis for lectures and class discussion. Readings should be done prior to class and participation will be counted into the final grade. All reading must be completed by the class meeting; 2) Mid-term exam (30%); 3) 8-10 page paper (30%); 4) Final exam (30%); 5) Participation (10%)

Reading: G.F.W. Hegel, *Introduction to the Philosophy of History* and *The Philosophy of Right*; Karl Marx, *The Marx-Engels Reader* (Selections); Soren Kierkegaard, *Fear and Trembling*; F. Nietzsche, *Basic Writings of Nietzsche* (Selections) and "On the Advantage of Disadvantage of History for Life?"; H. Arendt, *Between Past and Future* (Selections); *The Human Condition* (Selections); M. Heidegger, *The Question Concerning Technology* and other essays; S. Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontent*; W. Barrett, *Irrational Man* (Optional)

PL 423 01 Spanish American Philosophy

Gary Gurtler, S.J.

MWF @ 10

Level - 1

Satisfies the Cultural Diversity Core Requirement

The course is designed to give the student an opportunity to look at some fundamental philosophical issues regarding human nature and the origins and development of human thought from a fresh perspective. Unamuno's *Tragic Sense of Life* presents a critique of the rationalism of modern European thought by focusing on human life as dream, theater

and struggle. His work forms part of the existentialism current in Europe at the turn of the last century, but with the tragic sense that derives from the Spanish character going back to Cervantes? *Don Quixote*. Octavio Paz, in *The Labyrinth of Solitude*, explores the meaning of human existence through the lens, or perhaps the mask, of the Mexican quest for identity at the end of the present century. Here is a dual task in addressing Mexico's colonial and Indian past as well as the challenge of the Anglo-Saxon culture to its north. Paz works these out through the mask of dissimulation, the day of the dead and solitude of self and others.

Requirements: class summaries, class presentation, 10-15 page paper, final exam

Reading: *Tragic Sense of Life*, Miguel de Unamuno, trans. by J. Crawford Fritch (New York, Dover Publications, 1954) ISBN 0-486-20257-7; *The Labyrinth of Solitude*, Octavio Paz, trans. by Lysander Kemp et al. (New York, Grover Press, 1985) ISBN 0-8021-5942-X

PL 428 01 Introduction to Phenomenology

Jacques Taminioux

TTh @ 3

Level - 1

The course is an historical and textual survey of the development of the Phenomenological movement from Husserl to Heidegger.

PL 434 02 Capstone: Ethics in the Professions UN 508 02

Richard Spinello

Th 4:30-6:45

Level - 1

This course deals with two distinct but complementary approaches to ethics. It will consider programmatic moral analysis which involves working through and resolving vexing moral dilemmas that arise in four major professions: law, business, journalism, and medicine. For example, we will explore cases that raise controversial questions such as the following: How can the media balance the right to privacy with the public's right to know? Is the lawyer in the adversary system a pure legal advocate or a moral agent? What are the limits of zealous advocacy? When is it legitimate to restrict patient autonomy? Should physician assisted suicide be legalized? Is there a prima facie right to privacy in the workplace?

In addition to this sort of analysis, the course also seeks to provoke the moral imagination by raising larger moral questions—how do you hold on to your spiritual and religious values in a competitive, secular society? How do you strike the right balance between career obligations and obligations to one's family and friends? What happens when you compromise certain moral principles? Is virtue really its own reward? We will rely on a philosophical essay, a movie, and several short readings as a basis for discussing these issues.

Requirements: reflection papers and case analyses; final exam

Reading: *The Consolation of Philosophy* (Boethius); *Case Studies in Information Ethics* (Spinello); *Package of cases and readings* (available at BC Bookstore)

PL 442 01 Romanticism and Idealism

Vanessa Rumble

TTh @ 12

Level - 1

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

Reading: 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 444 01 Modern Philosophies of Imagination

Richard Kearney

MWF @ 2

Level - 1

Selected readings in the philosophy of imagination from Plato to postmodernity.

Reading: *The Wake of Imagination*, R. Kearney, Routledge, London and New York, 1990. Selected texts by Plato, Kant, Sartre and Barthes to be announced in class.

PL 456 01 Holocaust: A Moral History

James Bernauer, S.J.

TTh @ 3

Level - 1

The purpose of this course is to explore the issues of good and evil and how human beings succeed or fail to meet the challenge such issues pose. The Holocaust, the tragic series of events which ruptured modern western morality, will be examined from a variety of perspectives (literary, cinematic, philosophical, theological, and political). We shall

study the testimony of both its victims and its perpetrators. The special emphasis of the course will be devoted to a consideration of the intellectual and moral factors which motivated resistance or excused indifference. This consideration will be performed by a cooperative investigation into the ethical life-histories of representative individuals from this period. What part of themselves did they think of as primarily concerned with moral conduct? What form of obligation did they think of as specifically ethical? To what training did they commit themselves in order to develop as ethical beings? Why did they desire to be moral or why did they find it untroubling to be immoral? We shall conclude the course with an interpretation of the Holocaust for contemporary morality and of its theological significance for Christians and Jews.

Requirements: The major requirement of the course will be one's work on the analysis of the ethical formation and viewpoint of a selected figure who will serve as a paradigm of a specific group (German or Jew, Nazi or resister, intellectual or laborer, morally outraged or indifferent, etc.). Projects will be determined at the beginning of the semester and the materials for the investigations identified (court cases, memoirs, interviews, etc.).

Reading: Arendt, Hannah, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*; Davidowicz, Lucy, *The War Against the Jews, 1933-1945, A Holocaust Reader*; Lanzmann, C., *Shoah: An Oral History of the Holocaust*; Mayer, M., *They Thought They Were Free*; selected articles, interviews and court cases.

PL 497 01 Parmenides and the Buddha

Stuart Martin

MWF @ 2

Level - 3

Parmenides, the greatest of the Greek philosophers before Socrates, lived during a time when momentous yet similar changes were taking place?or being resisted?in civilizations as distant as Greece and China, and as diverse as Israel and India. He taught that being is One, ungenerated,unalterable?and arguably intelligent. Was this, as modern Rationalists maintain, a logical miscalculation? Or was it a mystical insight? To answer this question and to understand the role which Parmenides played in the impending shift of human consciousness, we will explore both visual materials and literary texts, as well as compare Greek mythology to its correlates in Taoism, in Hinduism and Buddhism, and in the Jewish and Christian scriptures. We will also examine C.G. Jung?s theory of the ?Collective Unconscious? as well as Mysticism (East and West) and the claims of modern Rationalism. We will then consider whether Parmenides? message has any bearing on our own time, a time when the exclusive claims of science are being questioned and ?new age? consciousness is beginning to assert itself. Few people would decry the benefits of technological progress, but is it worth what moderns have increasingly abandoned for its sake, namely, access to the mysterious realms of myth and religion?

Requirements: two conferences, one paper, two tests, a final examination

Reading: Class notes prepared by Dr. Martin; archeological accounts and video tapes of Elea (the native city of Parmenides) and Poseidonia; selections from the ancient historian Herodotos and from the biographies recorded by Diogenes Laertius; fragments of Parmenides? predecessor Xenophanes; a viewing of Euripides? *Iphigenia*; works of Eliade and Jung; selections from ?the Campbell Tapes,? and from the evolutionary theories expressed in Teilhard de Chardin?s *The Phenomenon of Man*; a guest lecture on Buddhism.

PL 505 01 The Aristotelian Ethics

Arthur Madigan, S.J.

MWF @ 1

Level - 3

This course includes a reading of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, and it examines its principal themes: happiness, virtue, responsibility, justice, moral weakness, friendship, pleasure, and contemplation.

Requirements: Close reading of Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, regular participation in class meetings; two 3-5 page explications of selected texts; mid-term exercise; final examination.

Reading: Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, transl. Terence Irwin (2nd edition)

PL 507 01 Marx and Nietzsche

David Rasmussen

TTh @ 1:30

Level - 3

In this course, through a reading of Marx and Nietzsche's basic writings, we will examine two of the most innovative programs for philosophy in the nineteenth century. Both considered themselves beyond the tradition from which they came and yet both were shaped by that very tradition. We will be particularly interested in examining their respective notions of critique as well as the way they addressed the relationship between philosophy and life. Ultimately, we will try to probe the question of the relationship between aesthetics and politics.

Requirements: Mid-term and final oral examinations for undergraduate and graduate students. In addition, graduate students are asked to prepare a medium-sized paper on a particular topic relevant to research interests. Undergraduate students may pursue a research project instead of the final exam upon agreement with the professor.

Reading: Marx, *The Marx-Engels Reader* (Tucker, ed.), Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, *The Genealogy of Morals*, *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, and *Unmodern Observations*

PL 541 01 Health Science: East and West

Pramod Thaker

TTh @ 9

Level - 3

Satisfies Cultural Diversity Core Requirement

This course will explore the underlying ethical suppositions of health care practice. Starting from concrete clinical problems such as the care of the elderly and the influence of technology, the course will attempt to draw out the philosophical assumptions of health care practice and show the necessity of an appropriate philosophical perspective in the resolution of day-to-day ethical dilemmas in health care. A close examination of medical practice, from

Hippocratic regimen to high-tech medicine, will be undertaken. As a counterpoint, another ancient medical tradition, from India of about 500 B.C. will be studied. We will investigate how the physicians and philosophers of such diverse schools approach philosophical and ethical problems inherent in medical practice.

Requirements: Two papers and a final written examination.

Reading: 1. Selected literature volume to be purchased from the BC Bookstore; 2. 'Handout' material given in the class; 3. Books on Reserve List in the Library.

PL 545 01 Philosophy of Physics

Ronald Anderson, S.J.

T 4:30-7

Level - 3

The manner in which physics explores the fundamental nature of physical reality has deep and remarkable philosophical implications for the ways we conceptualize and come to know the world, i.e., for the projects traditionally known as metaphysics and epistemology. This course will provide an introductory exploration of the themes of contemporary philosophy of physics noting in a number of cases the history of these themes in earlier physical theories and reflections on those theories. The areas considered will include the nature of space, time and spacetime as revealed by relativity theories, probability and irreversibility in thermodynamics and statistical physics, and how one is to understand measurement, locality, causality, and objectivity in the light of quantum theory. One of the underlying themes of the course will be the manner in which contemporary developments in physical theories have entailed a radical revision of prior ways we understand the world.

A prior course in physics and/or mathematics will be helpful for the material explored in this course. At least one needs to be prepared for considering the laws of physics as expressed in a mathematical form. However, it is intended that the course be accessible without extensive technical knowledge of physical theories.

Requirements: a regular series of reflection/comment/summary papers on the course readings; a mid-term project exploring a topic of the course in more depth; a final written assignment consisting of three short essays.

Reading: L. Sklar, *Philosophy of Physics* (Westview Press, Boulder, 1992), A course Reader
Further details at: <http://www2.bc.edu/~anderso/courses/pp.html>

PL 563 01 Logos and Beauty

Gary Gurtler, S.J.

MW @ 3

Level - 3

The road to reality in ancient philosophy makes three parallel ascents: intellectual (Truth), moral (Good), and aesthetic (Beauty). This course will wander up the aesthetic path, bringing a peculiar focus to the Greek understanding of reality and the capacity of the human mind to know it. This favors the Platonic tradition, but Aristotle and his followers are clearly not absent from the discussion. The understanding of logos in terms of beauty indicates how the Greeks found human knowledge and its expression in language to be both possible and paradoxical.

Requirements: class summaries, term paper (15-20 pp.), final exam.

Reading: Plato, *Republic*, tr. G. M. A. Grube (Hackett). ISBN 0-87220-136-8; *Plato's Erotic Dialogues*, tr. Cobb (SUNY) ISBN 0-7914-1618-6; Aristotle, *Poetics*, tr. Janko (Hackett) ISBN 0-87220-033-7; Plotinus, selections from I 6[1], "On Beauty," and V 8[31] "On the Intelligible Beauty."

PL 577 01 Symbolic Logic: An Introduction to its Methods and Meaning

Ronald Anderson, S.J.

TTh @ 3

Level - 3

This course will provide an introduction to symbolic logic and the powerful but straightforward techniques it provides to express and evaluate various forms of argumentation expressed in ordinary English. Such techniques reveal the ways in which logical structure is subtly woven into ordinary languages and enhance the skills necessary for effective reasoning. It is intended that overall, the course will provide an insight into and intuitive feel for the remarkable property of "logical necessity" which characterizes all valid deductive arguments. A number of interesting questions of 20th century logic will be considered such as the paradoxes associated with self-reference (e.g., "this sentence is false?") and whether or not the procedures of symbolic logic when computerized can capture the full range of human reasoning. No prior knowledge of logic will be presupposed.

Requirements: A series of short take-home assignments throughout the semester. Open book mid-term and final exams.

Reading: *The Logic Book*, 3rd edition. M. Bergmann, J. Moor, and J. Nelson (McGraw-Hill, 1998), & *Solution Book*.

Further details at: <http://www2.bc.edu/~anderso/courses/sl.html>

PL 602 01 Philosophy of World Religions

Peter Kreeft

TTh 1:30

Level - 3

Satisfies the Cultural Diversity Core Requirement

Prerequisites: Philosophy Core fulfilled

The purposes of this course are (1) to familiarize students with the teachings of each of the world's major religions; (2) to understand, empathize with, and appreciate them; (3) to appreciate one's own religion (or lack of one) better by comparison; (4) to philosophize critically and rationally about a subject that is not in itself critical and rational; (5) to question and search for a universal nature or core of religion if possible; (6) to raise and explore the question of religious truth; (7) to explore differences and similarities among world religions, especially between Eastern and Western religions; (8) to foster dialog especially between Christianity and other world religions; (9) to examine key concepts like "pluralism," "equality," and "uniqueness," in trying to compare world religions; (10) to find and evaluate

alternative possible answers to the question of comparative religions; (11) to explore the relation between religion and morality, religion and life in different cultures; (12) to focus on religion's cultural role as offering an overall meaning and purpose to human life and everything in it.

Requirements: midsemester and final and an original essay

Reading: Huston Smith, *The Religions of Man*; Lao Tzu, *Tao Te Ching*; Tucker Calloway, *Zen Way, Jesus Way*; Herman Hesse, *Siddhartha*; Peter Kreeft, *Between Heaven and Hell*

PL 603 01 Race and Philosophy

Jorge Garcia

TTh @ 12

Level - 3

This course is intended primarily for graduate students and undergraduate philosophy majors.

This course employs methods of recent Anglophone philosophy to examine such topics as whether races are real and, if so, what they are (social constructions? natural categories?) and how they come to exist; racial identity; the nature, preconditions, loci, subjects, and targets of racism.

Readings include N. Zack, *Thinking about Race*; R. Bernasconi and T. Lott, *The Idea of Race*; L. Harris (ed.), *Racism*; and D?Souza, *The End of Racism*.

Assignments will probably comprise two take-home examinations.

PL 615 01 Spinoza: Ethics of the Absolute

Oliva Blanchette

MW @ 3

Level - 3

Prerequisite: at least 5 courses in philosophy or the equivalent

Spinoza was the most systematic modern philosopher of the absolute to come before Kant. As such, he was a most important source and model for systematic thinkers after Kant, like Schelling, Hegel, and Blondel, who tried to restore some systematic philosophy of the absolute. For Spinoza, rational ethics had to be grounded in a metaphysics of infinite or absolute substance or of God. In fact, it is from the understanding of this unique Substance that he derived his ethics *more geometrico*.

This course will try to follow Spinoza in this geometric or logical elaboration of a rational ethic in a path that starts out from the understanding of God (Part 1) and goes on to the origin and nature of thought (Part II), the origin and nature of emotions (Part III), the sorting out of human bondage in the emotions by thought (Part IV), only to return to God in

the final liberation of human thought through the power of understanding and the intellectual love of God (Part V).

All this, including God and/or the Infinite, was taken to be within the grasp of human thought by Spinoza. If so, how so? Can we follow him in this systematic assertion of absolute necessity?

Reading: Spinoza: *The Ethics* and *On the Improvement of the Understanding*

PL 625 01 The Problem of Self-Knowledge

Patrick Byrne

TTh @ 3

Level - 3

"The unexamined life is not worth living." Socrates' proclamation forms the basic assumption of this course. However, important developments in Western culture, especially in the twentieth century, have made the approach to self-knowledge both more difficult and more essential. The modern western answers to questions about human identity have been severely criticized by post-modern thinkers, inaugurating a series of new approaches to ways of answering this question.

- Do we construct our self, or is our self constructed by our culture?
- Is self-knowledge even possible in contemporary society?
- Is the notion of selfhood a mere illusion?
- Is there even a self to be known?
- Can self-knowledge provide the key to the problem of justice?

These are some of the questions which this course will address.

The course will focus on the attempts by major modern and twentieth century authors to forge new answers to the identity question. The ideas of these authors will be evaluated by means of a careful analysis of the structures of your own consciousness as guided by the "experiment" of self-appropriation.

Requirements: Mid-term, final exam, and a 15-page term paper.

Reading: Descartes, *Meditations*; Locke, *Of Identity and Diversity*, *The Idea of Personal Identity*;" Hume, *Of Personal Identity*;" Hadot, *Philosophy as a Way of Life*; Sartre, *The Transcendence of the Ego*; Taylor, *The Ethics of Authenticity and Sources of the Self (selections)*; Boyle, *Who are We Now?*; Flanagan, *The Quest for Self Knowledge*; Lonergan, (*selections*)

PL 648 01 Great Books Seminar: The Problem of Evil

Peter Kreeft

T 3-5

Level - 3

Prerequisite: Philosophy/Theology majors and graduate students

An historical survey of 12 ways of confronting the most obvious and pervasive problem in life (and thought), the ? problem of evil?:

Pre-classical:

1. Despair (*Ecclesiastes*; Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*)
2. Detachment (Buddha, early sermons; Hesse, *Siddhartha*)
3. Doubt (*Job*)

Classical:

4. Morality (Socrates, *Gorgias*; *Apology*)
5. Metaphysics (Plato, *Phaedo*)
6. Myth (C.S. Lewis, *Till We Have Faces*)

Christian:

7. Conversion (Augustine, *Confessions*)
8. Apologetics (C.S. Lewis, *The Problem of Pain*)
9. Faith (Tolstoi, *Confession*)

Post-Christian

10. Psychology (Freud, *Civilization and its Discontents*)
11. Humanism (*The Humanist Manifesto I and II*, Sartre, *Existentialism and Humanism*)
12. Rebellion (Dostoyevski, *The Grand Inquisitor*)

Requirements: 1. Each student must be prepared to argue a single controversial thesis in class about each week's book. 2. This is to be expanded into a tightly-argued one-page paper (one per week). 3. A final, comprehensive original paper on the problem of evil.

PL 708 01 Pascal

Thomas Hibbs

MW @ 3

Level - Graduate

This 17th century French author, Pascal, was a brilliant mathematician, scientist, and religious apologist. After giving some attention to his historical context and to contemporary authors such as Montaigne and Descartes, we will turn to a careful reading of Pascal's most important works focusing especially on his remarkable apology for Christianity.

Requirements: Active participation in the seminar (there will be no lectures); final oral exam; essay (10-15 pages).

Reading: Montaigne, *Essays* (selections); Descartes, *Discourse on Method*; Hobbes, *Leviathan* (selections); Pascal, *Pensees*, and other writings.

PL 725 01 Descartes and His Critics

Robert Miner

W 4:30-6:15

Level - Graduate

This course--a seminar that will demand intensive reading and discussion--will have three parts. In Part 1, we will read some of the major works of Descartes, along with selections from his correspondence. In Part 2, we will consider several ways of responding to Descartes, as articulated by some of his most powerful critics within the early modern period (e.g. Pascal, Spinoza, Leibniz, Vico). In Part 3, we will look at some recent critiques of the Cartesian project which take their bearings from pragmatism, Heidegger, and Christian theology.

Requirements: Periodic exegetical exercises, in-class presentations, final term paper.

PL 729 01 Aliens, Gods and Monsters

Richard Kearney

W 6:15-8

Level - Graduate

This course will explore certain limit-experiences of philosophy at the edge. Concentrating on contemporary theories of narrative (Ricoeur, Taylor, Carr, MacIntyre) it will proceed to analyze a number of figures of 'sublime excess' which have captured and obsessed the postmodern social imaginary. Foremost amongst such figures studied will be 'aliens,' 'divinities' and 'monsters' - and combinations of all three. Practical examples will be drawn from recent literature, cinema, TV and popular cyber-culture. The aim of the seminar is to develop a new critical hermeneutics of the contemporary cultural unconscious.

Readings and bibliography to be announced and distributed in class.

PL 754 01 Heidegger's *Contributions to Philosophy*

William Richardson, S.J.

Th 6:30-8:30

Level - Graduate

A close reading of significant sections of the text and discussion of basic issues raised by this new translation of one of Heidegger's most controversial texts.

Requirements: Thorough knowledge of *Being and Time*.

Expectations: Active participation in discussion and one term paper or its equivalent.

PL 761 01 Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*

Oliva Blanchette

M 6:30-8:15

Level - Graduate

This is a textual analysis, with special attention to method, structure, and the social dimensions of spirit.

PL 762 01 Soren Kierkegaard

Vanessa Rumble

T 4:30-6:15

Level - Graduate

This course will deal primarily with the early pseudonymous writings of Søren 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, (3) the nature of the relationship which Kierkegaard posits between reason, autonomy, and faith.

Requirements: Weekly reflections, 1-2 pages typed. Final paper - 15 pages

Reading: *Fear and Trembling and Repetition, The Concept of Anxiety, Philosophical Fragments, Training in Christianity*

PL 777 01 Moral Theory

David Rasmussen

Th 4:30-6:15

Level - Graduate

In the last thirty years, in both European and American thought, there has been a pronounced return to questions of practical philosophy. In America, this starts John Rawls' *Theory of Justice*, and in Europe, this transformation occurred with the work of Jurgen Habermas, Paul Ricouer and Jacques Derrida. Central to the rediscovery of practical reason has been a new focus on moral theory. This course will focus on Thomas Scanlon's, *What We Owe to Each Other*, which concentrates on questions of moral motivation and the justification of moral norms, fundamental to the reemergence of practical philosophy.

Reading: Scanlon, Thomas, *What We Owe to Each Other*

PL 782 01 Philosophy of Language

Eileen Sweeney

TTh 1:30

Level - Graduate

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, and J. L. Austin from the Anglo-American tradition, and of Cassirer, Gadamer, and Derrida from the continental tradition. 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: 6-7 short reflection papers, one term paper (25-30 pgs)

Reading: Russell, *The Philosophy of Logical Atomism*, *Classics of Analytical Philosophy* (selections); Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*; J. L. Austin, *How To Do Things With Words*; Stanley Cavell, *Must We Mean What We Say*; Cassirer, *An Essay on Man*, Gadamer, selected essays; Derrida, selected essays.

PL 848 01 Plato's Legacy in the German Philosophies of Tragedy

Jacques Taminiaux

T 4:30-6:15

Level - Graduate

This course discusses the significance of the recurrence of Platonist patterns in the interpretations of Greek Tragedy by philosophers such as Hegel, Nietzsche, and Heidegger.

PL 856 01 Seminar: Heidegger II

Thomas Owens

W 3-4:30

Level -Graduate

Prerequisites: PL 855

This is a continuation of the fall semester course (PL 855) and open only to students who have participated in that course.

Requirements: class presentations, term paper, oral, final examination.

PL 901 01 Husserl's *Later Works*

Richard Cobb-Stevens

W 4:30-6:15

Level - Graduate

This course is designed as a continuation of the fall semester course in Husserl's *Logical Investigations*. It will focus on the principal themes of the following works of the later Husserl: *Cartesian Meditations*, *The Crisis of European Sciences* and *Transcendental Phenomenology*, and *Formal Transcendental Logic*.

PL 990 01 Teaching Seminar

Richard Cobb-Stevens

F 4:30-6:15

Level - Graduate

This course is required of all first- and second-year doctoral candidates. This course includes discussion of teaching techniques, planning of curricula, and careful analysis of various ways of presenting major philosophical texts.
