

Fall 2006 Philosophy Courses

www.philosophy.umd.edu

PHIL 100.01: Introduction to Philosophy

TuTh 11:00-11:50 am plus Friday discussions

Maximum Size 75

SHM 2102

Jennifer Runnels

jrunnels@wam.umd.edu

CORE Humanities (HO)

This course will serve as an introduction to both the methods and central problems of philosophy.

Recurring questions concerning the existence of God, the nature of knowledge and reality, freedom of the will, the nature of the mind, and our ethical obligations will be discussed. Readings will be drawn from both classical and contemporary sources.

PHIL 100.02: Introduction to Philosophy

MW 12-12:50 p.m. plus Friday discussions

Maximum Size 225

KEY 0106

Professor S. Jack Odell

sjodell@umd.edu

CORE Humanities (HO)

An introduction to the principles, concepts, methods, questions, theories, applications, and subdivisions of philosophy – metaphysics, epistemology, logic, ethics, and aesthetics. We will learn how to determine whether or not an argument is valid. We will look at what various philosophers have said about: ethical obligation; God's existence; the existence of ourselves, other persons, and physical objects; whether or not human existence is absurd, and about various contemporary issues, for example, whether or not abortion is ethically permissible, and whether or not human intelligence is reducible to or identical with what a computer does, when it implements a program. Among the philosophers we will cover are Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, St. Anselm, Descartes, Locke, Berkeley,

Hume, Kant, Bentham, Mill, Bertrand Russell, Bernard Williams, A.J. Ayer, J.L. Austin, L. Wittgenstein, John Searle, Judith Jarvis Thomson, and Thomas Nagel.

PHIL 140.01: Contemporary Moral Issues

TuTh 12:30-1:20 pm plus Friday discussions

Maximum Size 225

SHM 2102

Chris Kelly

email address

CORE Humanities (HO)

The purpose of this course is to provide an introduction to the nature of ethical reasoning. It addresses questions like the following: Do ethical claims appeal to objective standards, or is any opinion as worthy as any other? What is the meaning of moral concepts like duty, rights, and the good, and how should we apply these concepts in the context of reasoning and talking about moral controversies? We will attempt to answer these questions by examining contemporary moral issues and arguments. Examples of issues we may discuss include: Do we have an obligation to obey the law? Do animals have rights? Should abortion or physician-assisted suicide be tolerated? Is it permissible to ban same-sex marriage? Under what conditions is war morally justified and what actions are morally acceptable during war? Should the rich be taxed to help the poor?

Our aim in this course is neither to try to answer these questions definitively, nor to ensure that every position on these issues is presented and discussed. We are less concerned with the conclusions of arguments than with the soundness of the reasoning that supports the conclusions. We will be discussing controversial issues, and one goal of this course is to learn the ability to discuss issues that are of great import and intensely emotional without losing our

ability to hear and rationally evaluate what those who disagree with us have to say.

PHIL 140.02: Contemporary Moral Issues

MW 12-12:50 pm plus Friday discussions

Maximum Size 225

SHM 2102

Professor Chris Morris

cwmorris@umd.edu

CORE Humanities (HO)

An introduction to *ethics* or *moral philosophy*. Our approach will be to think critically and systematically about several moral controversies. We shall concentrate on *questions of life and death*: in particular, euthanasia, abortion, capital punishment, the treatment of non-human animals, and killing in time of war. All of the controversies we shall study concern killing and causing death. Consequently the conclusions we reach about one controversy will usually have implications for others.

The questions we shall consider include: Why is it generally wrong to kill? What exactly is the harm of death? Who, or what, ought to be protected by norms against killing? May we ever kill ourselves? Is the difference between killing and letting die important? When do humans acquire *moral standing*? Might they ever lose it? May death be used as a form of punishment? When may we kill in war-time? Is it ever permissible to kill civilians in war? Students will also be introduced to a number of influential moral traditions such as natural law, contractarianism, utilitarianism, and Kantianism. Students will be asked to devote a great deal of effort to *reflecting* about the controversies that we shall be examining. The course does not presuppose a background in philosophy or critical reasoning. It does, however, presuppose a willingness to work hard and to think critically about some very difficult problems, and it will be hard to do well without a considerable investment of effort. The primary objectives of the course are (1) to acquaint students with contemporary philosophical discussions of some ethical problems and some influential moral theories, and (2) to assist students in developing certain skills: for instance, understanding a moral problem or controversy, presenting and evaluating the different sides of a debate, analyzing a moral

argument, developing a position and defending it, detecting nonsense.

PHIL 170: Introduction to Logic

MW 10-10:50 am plus Friday discussions

Maximum Size 300

SHM 2102

Professor Michael Morreau

mimo@umd.edu

CORE Mathematics or Formal Reasoning (MS) Course

Satisfies Philosophy Major Logic Requirement

Development of analytical reasoning skills through study of formal logics, reasoning systems, and fallacious inference patterns.

PHIL 233: Philosophy in Literature

TuTh 11:00-11:50 am plus Friday discussion

Maximum Size 75

TYD 0117

Professor Jerrold Levinson

august@umd.edu

CORE Humanities (HO) Course

Satisfies Philosophy Major Value Theory

Reading and philosophical criticism of fiction, poetry, and drama, dealing with issues of moral, religious, and metaphysical significance.

PHIL 234: Fundamental Concepts of Judaism

MW 2-3:15 p.m.

Maximum Size 20

KEY 0125

Professor Charles Manekin

manekinc@umd.edu

CORE Humanities (HO) Course

Satisfies Philosophy major Value Theory requirement.

Also offered as JWST250. Not open to students who have completed JWST250. Credit will be granted for only one of the following: PHIL234 or JWST250.

A conceptual introduction to Judaism, analyzing its fundamental concepts from both analytical and historical perspectives. Discussion of "normative" Judaism as well as other conceptions of Judaism. Topics include: God, the Jewish people, authority,

ethics, the sacred and the profane, particularism, and universalism.

PHIL 236: Philosophy of Religion

MW 11:00-11:50 am plus Friday discussions

Maximum Size 75

CSS 1113

Professor Allen Stairs

stairs@umd.edu

CORE Humanities (HO) Course

Satisfies Philosophy major Metaphysics & Epistemology requirement.

This course is open to believers and non-believers of all stripes. The only prerequisite is a willingness to think seriously and to take seriously the possibility that – whatever your religious or irreligious view – you might be wrong. A good bit of the course will cover familiar territory: we will look at the standard arguments for and against belief in God. We will also explore the topics of miracles, religious experience, and religious diversity. On this latter topic, we will spend some time thinking about several of the world's major religions, and guest speakers will help us gain insight into their meaning and doctrines. We will also think about the connection between religion and the meaning of life. Our texts will include philosophical works, and Houston Smith's *The World's Religions*. There will be a \$5 fee to help defer the costs of guest speakers and extra materials.

PHIL 250: Philosophy of Science

TuTh 11:00-11:50 am plus Friday discussions

Maximum Size 75

CHM 0115

Professor Mathias Frisch

mfrisch@umd.edu

CORE Humanities (HO) Course. USP

Distributive Studies Area A: Cultural and Historical Course

Satisfies Philosophy major Metaphysics & Epistemology requirement.

Main issues in the philosophy of science. Special attention to the ways scientific developments have influenced the philosophy of science and how philosophy of science has influenced scientific progress. Case studies of selected historical episodes in which science and philosophy have interacted

significantly, focusing on the physical, biological, or social sciences.

PHIL 256: Philosophy of Biology I

TuTh 12:30-1:45 pm

Maximum Size 37

SKN 1115

Professor Lindley Darden

darden@umd.edu

CORE Humanities (HO) Course

Satisfies Philosophy major Metaphysics & Epistemology requirement

The course examines philosophical issues in the biological sciences. Topics include conceptual issues in evolutionary theory, ecology, genetics, and in the discovery of the Watson-Crick model of the double helix structure of DNA. Ethical issues include questions about genetic testing and cloning. An additional aim of the course is for the student to learn to do and to practice critical thinking and writing. The course is a combination of lecture, discussion, debate, and group projects.

PHIL 271: Symbolic Logic

MW 2:00-3:15 pm

Maximum Size 25

KEY 0124

Professor Michael Morreau

mimo@umd.edu

USP Distributive Studies Area B: Natural Sciences and Mathematics Course

Satisfies Philosophy major Logic requirement.

Prerequisite: PHIL170 or CMSC250; or permission of department. Formerly PHIL 371

In this course in symbolic deductive logic, we introduce a symbolic language for sentential logic (the branch of logic that takes sentences as the fundamental units of logical analysis), and for predicate logic (the branch of logic that takes subsentence units - predicates and individual terms - as the fundamental units of logical analysis). In terms of this symbolic language - first-order logic with identity - we develop formal techniques for assessing the logical relations among sentences and groups of sentences in a wide range of arguments.

PHIL 282: Action and Responsibility

MW 12:00-12:50 pm plus Friday discussions

Maximum Size 75

KEY 0102

Professor Patricia Greenspan

pg@umd.edu

CORE Humanities (HO) Course

Satisfies Philosophy major Value Theory

requirement

Prerequisite: One course in philosophy or permission of department.

This course deals with problems in ethics and philosophy of mind concerning such topics as personal agency, moral motivation, guilt, free will, and responsibility.

The current version of the course will focus on issues of free will and excuses from moral or legal responsibility and punishment

Required readings for the course will be chosen from: Robert Kane, *A Contemporary Introduction to Free Will* (Oxford) and Carl Elliot, *The Rules of Insanity* possibly along with further readings containing highlights of contemporary debates over issues of responsibility.

Written requirements will include midterm and final exams plus biweekly quizzes of short paper.

PHIL 308A: Studies in Contemporary

Philosophy: Philosophy of Humor

TuTh 2:00-3:15 pm

Maximum Size 37

TYD 0102

Professor Jerrold Levinson

august@umd.edu

Satisfies Philosophy major Value Theory requirement

This is a course in the theory of humor. Through readings philosophical, psychological and sociological, and a broad range of examples of humor, we will attempt to deepen our understanding of what humor is, how it works, what it is for, and on what grounds it might be assessed. The question 'What is humor?' can be taken in a number of ways, but perhaps the most basic is that of what the *concept* of humor amounts to, i.e. what does it *mean* to say something is humorous, and a fair amount of attention will be devoted initially to that; a related issue that will occupy us is the degree of *objectivity* of humor. A second question concerns

what *makes* something humorous when it is, i.e. what are the *causes* and *conditions* of humor; and a good deal of attention will be devoted to that question as well. Next along is the issue of the *purpose* or *role* of humor in human life: what function does humor serve, how did it arise, and why is it perpetuated? Is humor essential to life? What would a world without humor look like? What is a sense of humor?

Finally, we will address a number of ineliminably *normative* questions about humor: Is humor of value, and if so, why? Is humor an aesthetic value, a cognitive value, both, or neither? Is humor at odds with morality, or simply tangential to morality? To what extent is humor properly subject to criticism on moral grounds? Can humor express insight or convey wisdom?

Throughout the course we will consider actual examples of humor--jokes, comics, drawings, stories, essays, plays--with which to assess the merits of the various theoretical proposals or studies we encounter. Students will also be encouraged to keep a humor file, and to propose interesting examples for analysis in light of the questions about humor central to the course.

Readings will be drawn from canonical authors such as Schopenhauer, Bergson, Freud, Koestler, all of whom offered important theories of humor, contemporary philosophers such as Ted Cohen, Noel Carroll, Robert Solomon and John Morreal, and also from contemporary psychology, linguistics and sociology.

PHIL 308C: Studies in Contemporary Philosophy: Philosophy and Feminism

TuTh 11:00 am-12:15 pm

Maximum size 32

SKN 1115

Instructor Elizabeth Schechter

lizschechter@gmail.com

Satisfies Philosophy major Metaphysics & Epistemology requirement

PHIL 320: Modern Philosophy

MW 11:00-11:50 am plus Friday discussions

Maximum Size 75

TYD 1102

Professor Charles Manekin

manekinc@umd.edu

Satisfies Philosophy major History requirement

Prerequisite: six credits in philosophy.

A study in the major philosophical issues of the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries through an examination of portions of the works of Descartes, Locke, Leibniz, Berkeley, Hume, and Kant, with special emphasis on the relationship between philosophical thought and the development of science.

PHIL 324: Existentialism

MW 9:30-10:20 am plus Friday discussions

Maximum Size 75

CSS 1113

Instructor Matthew King

mattking@umd.edu

Satisfies Philosophy major Value Theory requirement.

Prerequisite: Six credits in philosophy.

This course could just as well have the title: "Introduction to Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Sartre, and Camus." Its main aim is to help you to understand and evaluate some central ideas of these four philosophers. We will explore their reflections on morality, freedom, suffering, and the meaning of human life. Readings will include philosophical essays as well as works of fiction. Each of the four philosophers is sometimes classified as an "existentialist," but we will not focus on the origins or merits of this classification.

PHIL 364: Philosophy of Metaphysics

TuTh 2:00-3:15 pm

Maximum Size 37

SKN 1115

Professor Mathias Frisch

mfrish@umd.edu

Satisfies Philosophy major Metaphysics/Epistemology requirement.

Prerequisite: Six hours in Philosophy. Not open to students who have completed PHIL464. Formerly PHIL 464.

This course will focus on two central issues in metaphysics: laws of nature and causation, and related notions such as necessity and counterfactuals. That all massive bodies attract one

another is, we want to say, a law of nature. By contrast, that all the students in my class happen to wear glasses is not a law. But what accounts for this difference? In what sense might the former claim be necessary? What is the relation between the notion of law and confirmation? Could there be laws that have exceptions? Are laws more than mere catalogues of existing regularities?

Often laws are taken to govern causal relations in the world. But what is it for some event to be the cause of another? Do causes bring about their effects? What is the relation between the notions of law, cause, and counterfactual? Our aim will be to survey the main answers twentieth century philosophers have given to these and other questions.

PHIL 366: Philosophy of Mind

TuTh 12:30-1:45 p.m.

Maximum Size 32

PLS 1111

Instructor Benedicte Veillet

bveillet@hotmail.com

Satisfies Philosophy major Metaphysics/Epistemology requirement.

Prerequisite: Six hours in philosophy. Not open to students who have completed PHIL380.

An introduction to core issues in the philosophy of mind, focusing especially on the basic metaphysical question of dualism versus physicalism.

PHIL 408B: Topics in Contemporary Philosophy: Grammar and Meaning

MW 10:00-11:30 am

Maximum Size 13

PLS 1168

Professor Paul Pietroski

pietro@umd.edu

PHIL 414: Philosophy of Aristotle

Tu 2-4:30 p.m.

Maximum Size 20

HBK 1116

Professor James Leshner

jlesher@umd.edu

Satisfies Philosophy major History requirement.

Prerequisite: Two courses in philosophy

The Philosophy of Aristotle will focus on selected portions of the writings of Aristotle, one of the two major ancient philosophers and arguably one of the most important thinkers in all of human history. Readings and lecture topics will include: Aristotle's contributions to logic and the philosophy of science; Aristotle's philosophy of nature, ethical theory, metaphysics, and theology. Course requirements: a mid-term exam, a substantial philosophical paper (8 to 10 pages in length), and the final exam. Classes will be a mixture of lecture and discussion, with the last several weeks of the semester devoted to the presentation and discussion of student papers

PHIL 416: Medieval Philosophy

MWF 1:00-1:50 pm

Maximum Size 25

SKN 1112

Professor Lars Svenonius

lars@umd.edu

Satisfies Philosophy major History requirement.

The aim of the course is to make the student familiar with the thinking of some of the main figures in the Western philosophical tradition in the middle ages, from Augustine to Ockham. ("Western" here will admit non-European Arabic and Jewish authors.) Some attention will also be given to the ancient roots of medieval thinking (Plato, Aristotle, the Stoics, and Neoplatonists). In the course, we will study the chosen authors largely through reading their own works, and keep the reliance on secondary sources to a minimum.

PHIL 427: Wittgenstein

MW 2:00-3:15 pm

Maximum Size 25

SKN 1112

Professor S. Jack Odell

sjodell@umd.edu

**Satisfies Philosophy major
Metaphysics/Epistemology requirement.**

During the course of the semester: (1) we will identify and expound upon various themes and presuppositions inherent in Wittgenstein's early (*Tractatus Logico Philosophicus*) philosophy; (2) we will examine Wittgenstein's critique (*Investigations*) of his early philosophy (3) we will analyze

Wittgenstein's meta-philosophical perspective—that traditional philosophy is a form of institutionalized mis-thinking; (4) we will explicate and critically evaluate his views on certainty; and (5) we will conclude with a critical exposition of the relevance of Wittgenstein's later philosophy to cognitive science.

**PHIL 428M: Topics in the History of
Philosophy: Descartes and Mechanism**

Tu 4:00-6:30 pm

Maximum Size 25

SKN 1115

Professor Lindley Darden

darden@umd.edu

**Satisfies the history of philosophy requirement
for philosophy majors and graduate students**

This course explores the relation between the mechanical world view of the seventeenth century and mechanisms in contemporary science. About the first two thirds of the seminar will concentrate on the seventeenth century, especially Descartes' work: "Give me matter and motion and I will make a world." The last third of the seminar examines recent work in philosophy of science to characterize mechanisms as they are used in contemporary science, especially biology. However, students may investigate the role played by mechanisms in physics, chemistry, cognitive neuroscience, medicine, economics or other area, if they wish.

Questions to be addressed: What was the mechanical world view of the seventeenth century? What was Descartes' view and how did it differ from other accounts? How did his view change as his work developed? What, exactly, is a mechanism? What counts as an adequate description of a mechanism? How is the contemporary conception of a mechanism related to seventeenth century mechanical philosophy? What roles do analogies to human contrivances, such as clocks and automata, play in Descartes' work and in making mechanisms intelligible? Why are diagrams a particularly perspicuous way to represent mechanisms? What is distinctive about mechanistic explanation? How does the search for mechanisms shape the search for evidence and the design of experiments? Are there

strategies for discovering mechanisms? What is distinctive about theories that describe mechanisms? What is the relationship between mechanisms and laws of nature? What is the best way to understand the notion of causality implicit in the notion of a mechanism? What are functions, from the perspective of mechanisms? How are mechanisms investigated by different scientific fields integrated? When, where, and why has/does a mechanistic approach fail?

Students should have developed good analytical reasoning and writing skills before taking this course.

PHIL 440: Contemporary Ethical Theory

TuTh 9:30-10:45 am

Maximum Size 25

SKN 1115

Chris Kelly

Email address

Satisfies Philosophy major Value Theory requirement.

This course is intended to serve as an advanced introduction to meta-ethics. It will address questions like the following: In what sense, if any, are ethical claims true? How does one come to ethical knowledge? What is the relation between ethical concepts like the Right and the Good? Can the good motivate us? If yes, how? Are ethical claims reducible to claims about the natural world? Are they mind independent? We will attempt to answer these questions by looking at an extended attempt to defend the thesis that morality is a real, mind-independent, non-reducible, non-natural feature of the world.

PHIL 446: Law, Morality, and War

MW 2:00-3:15 pm

Maximum Size 25

SKN 1115

Professor Chris Morris

cwmorris@umd.edu

Satisfies Philosophy major Value Theory requirement.

Prerequisite: GVPT 300, GVPT 401, PHIL 341, or permission of department. Also offered as GVPT 403.

An exploration of fundamental moral and legal issues concerning war.

What wars, if any, are just? What are we forbidden from doing when prosecuting a war? We shall examine traditional doctrines of just war and contemporary discussions of war. Readings will draw from classical works as well as contemporary writings about the two Iraq wars. We shall also discuss terrorism.

PHIL 478: Topics in Philosophical Logic:

Philosophical Logic

TuTh 12:30-1:45 pm

Maximum Size 25

SKN 1112

Professor John Horty

horty@umiacs.umd.edu

PHIL 481: Philosophy of Psychology:

Representation

MW 2:00-3:15 pm

Maximum Size 25

SKN 1116

Professor Georges Rey

georey@carnap.umd.edu

Satisfies Philosophy major

Metaphysics/Epistemology requirement.

Prerequisite: Two courses in philosophy; one of which must be PHIL280 or PHIL366.

Semantics and representations within computational framework: intentionality, explicit vs. implicit representation, syntax vs. semantics of thought, connectionist approaches, images, classical vs. prototype theories of concepts.

PHIL 498: Topical Investigations: Topical Investigation

Individual Instruction course: contact department or instructor to obtain section number.

Prerequisite: Two courses in philosophy or permission of the department.

PHIL 498G: Topical Investigations: Topical Investigation

Individual Instruction course: contact department or instructor to obtain section number.

Prerequisite: Two courses in philosophy or permission of the department