

# Spring 2007 Philosophy Courses

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## Philosophy Advising

[philadv@umd.edu](mailto:philadv@umd.edu)

**PHIL100.01 Introduction to Philosophy; (3 credits)** Grade Method: REG/P-F/AUD.  
CORE Humanities (HO) Course. USP Distributive Studies Area A: Cultural and Historical Course.

**TuTh.....11:00am-11:50am (KEY 0106) plus Friday discussions.**

**Maximum size – 225 Professor S. Jack Odell [sjodell@umd.edu](mailto:sjodell@umd.edu)**

Description: 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.

**PHIL100.02 Introduction to Philosophy; (3 credits)** Grade Method: REG/P-F/AUD.  
CORE Humanities (HO) Course. USP Distributive Studies Area A: Cultural and Historical Course.

**MW.....12:00pm-12:50pm (HJP 0226) plus Friday discussions.**

**Maximum size – 225 Professor Georges Rey [georey@carnap.umd.edu](mailto:georey@carnap.umd.edu)**

Description: An introduction to philosophical issues regarding reasoning, logic, religion, psychology and ethics as they are approached in contemporary analytic philosophy, a tradition that tries to apply the arguments and methods of science to these traditional issues, rather than relying on essentially literary or "mystical" insight (although we will discuss these, briefly). We will be concerned not with reaching final conclusions about some issue, although we will reach some pretty good tentative ones, but with examining good and bad reasons for adopting one conclusion rather than another. Not advised for those who would really rather not have their religious, ethical, or metaphysical views disturbed.

**PHIL140.01 Contemporary Moral Issues; (3 credits)** Grade Method: REG/P-F/AUD.  
CORE Humanities (HO) Course. USP Distributive Studies Area D: Social and Behavioral Sciences Course

**MW.....12:00pm-12:50pm (SHM 2102) plus Friday discussions.**

**Maximum size – 225 Professor Christopher Kelly [christok@umd.edu](mailto:christok@umd.edu)**

Description: The uses of philosophical analysis in thinking clearly about such widely debated moral issues as abortion, euthanasia, homosexuality, pornography, reverse discrimination, the death penalty, business ethics, sexual equality, and economic justice.

**PHIL140.02 Contemporary Moral Issues; (3 credits)** Grade Method: REG/P-F/AUD. CORE Humanities (HO) Course. USP Distributive Studies Area D: Social and Behavioral Sciences Course

**TuTh.....11:00am-11:50am (SHM 2102) plus Friday discussions.**

**Maximum size – 225 Instructor Darren Hick [darrenhick@HOTMAIL.COM](mailto:darrenhick@HOTMAIL.COM)**

Description: This course has been designed to introduce you to the study and practice of ethical reasoning through an array of currently-debated issues in moral philosophy. We will discuss the ethical issues surrounding such controversial practices as abortion, euthanasia, and pre-emptive war, as well as some of the central moral debates concerning sex (Is homosexuality wrong?), race (Is affirmative action wrong?), commerce (Is insider-trading wrong?), and intellectual property (What's wrong with copyright infringement?). Many of these are contentious issues for which you will already have firm beliefs or intuitions. Most of us do, though we certainly do not all agree. The aim of this course is not to provide definitive answers to these questions. Rather, its aim is to help you develop your ability to rationally evaluate, understand, and construct arguments in this realm of applied ethics.

**PHIL170 Introduction to Logic; (3 credits)** Grade Method: REG/P-F/AUD. CORE Mathematics or Formal Reasoning (MS) Course.

**MW.....10:00am-10:50am (SKN 0200) plus Friday discussions.**

**Maximum size – 225 Professor Allen Stairs [stairs@umd.edu](mailto:stairs@umd.edu)**

Description: This course will be a toolbox for reasoners. We'll cover a variety of topics in the basics of good reasoning, some formal and some informal. By the end of the course, you should have sharpened your skills at detecting bad reasoning in ordinary English, understand what it is for arguments to be valid or invalid, and know how to use such techniques as truth tables, syllogisms and counterexamples to test arguments. You'll also have a basic grasp of the ins and outs of reasoning with probability and an increased awareness of some of the psychological factors that get in the way of good reasoning.

**PHIL209A Philosophical Issues: Chinese Philosophy; (3 credits)** Grade Method: REG/P-F/AUD.

**TuTh..... 2:00pm- 3:15pm (SKN 1112)**

**Maximum size-30 Instructor Benedict Chan [bschan@umd.edu](mailto:bschan@umd.edu)**

Description: This course is designed to introduce some basic philosophical ideas from China. We will focus on the following areas: 1) The history of Chinese philosophy; 2) Chinese philosophical thought on ethics, politics and metaphysics; considered both on their own terms and in comparison with various western ideas; and 3) the original texts of Chinese philosophical works in English translation. We will concentrate on Confucianism and Taoism, the two main philosophical schools in China, and discussing related schools of thought as time permits. The discussion will also be set firmly within the context of Chinese history and culture whenever it is closely related to the philosophy of Confucianism and Taoism.

**PHIL230 Philosophy of the Arts; (3 credits)** Grade Method: REG/P-F/AUD. CORE History or Theory of Arts (HA) Course.

**TuTh.....11:00am-11:50am (TYD 2109) plus Friday discussions.**

**Maximum size-75 Professor Jerrold Levinson [august@umd.edu](mailto:august@umd.edu)**

Description: This course has the following aims: (1) To survey and critically examine some important theoretical perspectives on art from Plato to the present. (2) To frame general questions about the nature, function, value and limits of the arts, and to initiate reasoned

answers to them. (3) To clarify some notions crucial to thinking about art intelligently, notions such as work of art, form, content, expression, representation, style, medium, interpretation, realism, creativity, aesthetic experience, and aesthetic value. (4) To identify distinctive features of the arts, especially the visual arts, in the 20th century, and to assess their impact on attempts to theorize about art. (5) Lastly and most importantly, to provide students with the intellectual background and analytic skills to refine their own philosophical ideas about the arts.

**PHIL233 Philosophy in Literature; (3 credits)** Grade Method: REG/P-F/AUD. CORE Humanities (HO) Course.

**TuTh..... 2:00pm- 3:15pm (HZF 0106)**

**Maximum size-30**      **Instructor Elizabeth Picciuto [epicciuto@comcast.net](mailto:epicciuto@comcast.net)**

Description: This course will examine philosophical questions as they arise in literature. We will read and discuss works of fiction (including drama, short stories, and novels) along with philosophical works. In reading the literature, we will focus on how philosophical questions are raised by the work. Topics such as personal identity, consciousness, epistemology, aesthetics, philosophy of science, free will, life and death, God, and ethics will be covered. Special attention will be paid to the differences and similarities in the treatment of these topics by philosophers and authors of literature.

**PHIL245 Political and Social Philosophy I; (3 credits)** Grade Method: REG/P-F/AUD. CORE Humanities (HO) Course. USP Distributive Studies Area D: Social and Behavioral Sciences Course.

**MW..... 1:00pm- 1:50pm (TYD 2106) plus Friday discussions.**

**Maximum size-75**      **Professor Christopher Morris [cwmorris@umd.edu](mailto:cwmorris@umd.edu)**

Description: An introduction to modern political philosophy. This course aims to provide an overview of many of the major texts of political philosophy of the modern period. It will not be a course in the history of thought; we shall move too quickly for that. Rather, the aim is to ensure that you are familiar with the basic modern texts presupposed by contemporary philosophy. Prospective students should bear in mind that the amount of reading assigned will be considerable. Authors to be studied include Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Adam Smith, Karl Marx.

**PHIL261 Philosophy of the Environment; (3 credits)** Grade Method: REG/P-F/AUD. CORE Interdisciplinary & Emerging Issues (IE) Course.

*Not open to students who have completed HONR218F or PHIL209N. Formerly HONR 218F.*

**TuTh.....12:30pm- 1:20pm (TYD 2109) plus Friday discussions.**

**Maximum size-75**      **Professor Lindley Darden [darden@umd.edu](mailto:darden@umd.edu)**

Description: Why should the natural environment be preserved? What should be preserved--local populations, species, ecosystems, Gaia? What kinds of arguments have been given and can be given in answer to these questions? Human centered or non-anthropocentric? Pragmatic or based on fundamental ethical values? Factual/scientific or value/ethical? Secular or religious? Individualistic vs. planetary? Personal, social, legal? Heath vs. disease? Conservation vs. preservation? Management vs. wilderness? Pro-technological fix or back-to-nature? Recreational or business-centered? Aesthetic or economic? Scientific, philosophical, feminist, literary, and public policy issues in environmentalism are explored.

**PHIL280 Perspectives on the Mind: Philosophy and Cognitive Science; (3 credits)** Grade Method: REG/P-F/AUD. CORE Interdisciplinary & Emerging Issues (IE) Course.

**MW.....11:00am-11:50am (TYD 2106) plus Friday discussions.**

**Maximum size-75                    Instructor Michael Tetzlaff [mjt@umd.edu](mailto:mjt@umd.edu)**

Description: This course is an introduction to cognitive science, which lies at the intersection of psychology, philosophy, computer science, linguistics, and neuroscience. The focus is on how ideas like mental images, mental rules, concepts, mental symbols, logic, and computation have contributed to our understanding of how the mind works. Some of the issues addressed are: Is the mind (or any “part” of the mind) literally a computer? How might we come to understand consciousness? Could a robot feel pain or have emotions? What is the relation between the mind and the brain?

**PHIL308L Studies in Contemporary Philosophy: The Meaning of Life; (3 credits)** Grade Method: REG/P-F/AUD.

**TuTh.....12:30pm- 1:45pm (SKN 1115)**

**Maximum size-30                    Professor S. Jack Odell [sjodell@umd.edu](mailto:sjodell@umd.edu)**

Description: Some philosophers have argued that human existence is meaningless or pointless; others that it is inexorably miserable and disappointing; and others claim that it is absurd. We will examine all these claims as well as various others concerning the meaning of life. Among those philosophers and literary luminaries we will read are: Schopenhauer, Tolstoy, Bertrand Russell, Camus, Sartre, Paul Edwards, Thomas Nagel, and Robert Nozick.

**Requirements:** Two examinations (100 pts. each), an eight to ten page paper (100 pts.) and a final (200 pts.). You will also receive credit for attendance and participation (50 pts.).

**PHIL308P Studies in Contemporary Philosophy: Professional Ethics; (3 credits)** Grade Method: REG/P-F/AUD.

**TuTh..... 9:30am-10:45am (TYD 2102)**

**Maximum size-30                    Instructor Bénédicte Veillet [bveillet@hotmail.com](mailto:bveillet@hotmail.com)**

Description: Pick up any newspaper, browse any news site and you will notice that professionals –be they lawyers, physicians, CEOs, politicians, priests and ministers, lobbyists, journalists, scientists etc.– are being criticized for disregarding the rights of clients and the public interest. The course begins by exploring the nature of professions and the relation between ordinary and professional morality. It then moves on to investigate some of the recurring moral dilemmas that cut across professions focusing in large part on deception, privacy and social responsibility. The course will draw from the philosophical literature as well as from relevant current news items such as the Enron collapse, whistleblower protection, the Mohammed cartoons, governmental wiretapping programs and deception during war time.

**PHIL310 Ancient Philosophy; (3 credits)** Grade Method: REG/P-F/AUD.

*Prerequisite: six credit hours in philosophy or classics.*

**TuTh..... 9:30am-10:45am (LEF 2208)**

**Maximum size-75                    Professor James Lesher [jlesher@umd.edu](mailto:jlesher@umd.edu)**

Description: This course explores the nature of Greek philosophical thought from the late 6th century BCE down to the end of the classical period. The major figures studied are the Presocratic philosophers, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. The goal of the course is to acquaint students with the main elements of ancient Greek philosophical thought and the main ways in which ancient ideas and theories influenced the philosophy, science, art, and literature of later centuries. There will be two hour-exams and the final exam (review questions for all exams will be handed out well in advance). Format: lecture and discussion.

**PHIL341 Ethical Theory; (3 credits)** Grade Method: REG.

*Prerequisite: six credit hours in philosophy. Junior standing.* A critical examination of classical and contemporary systems of ethics, such as those of Aristotle, Kant, Mill, and Rawls.

**MW.....10:00am-10:50am (TYD 1102) plus Friday discussions.**

**Maximum size-75**      **Professor Christopher Kelly [christok@umd.edu](mailto:christok@umd.edu)**

Description: A critical examination of classical and contemporary systems of ethics, such as those of Aristotle, Kant, Mill, and Rawls.

**PHIL347 Philosophy of Law; (3 credits)** Grade Method: REG/P-F/AUD.

*Prerequisite: three credit hours in philosophy. Credit will be granted for only one of the following: PHIL347 or PHIL447. Formerly PHIL 447*

**MW.....12:00pm-12:50pm (KEY 0102) plus Friday discussions.**

**Maximum size-75**      **Professor Judith Lichtenberg [judith@umd.edu](mailto:judith@umd.edu)**

Description: The law by its nature limits people's liberty. But how far may it go? To answer this question we examine John Stuart Mill's "harm principle" and controversial legal issues involving paternalism, privacy, and freedom of expression. This leads to the study of constitutional interpretation. How should we understand and interpret the First Amendment ("Congress shall make no law abridging the freedom of speech. . .or of the press") or the Eighth Amendment, which prohibits "cruel and unusual punishment"? We go on to investigate the concept of responsibility as it arises in both civil and criminal law. Topics include the role of intention, the justification of class action suits, "Good Samaritan" laws requiring people to come to the aid of others, and the death penalty. Other topics may include the obligation to obey the law and civil disobedience.

**PHIL360 Philosophy of Language; (3 credits)** Grade Method: REG/P-F/AUD.

*Prerequisite: PHIL170, PHIL173, or PHIL271.* An inquiry into the nature and function of language and other forms of symbolism. Also offered as LING350.

**TuTh..... 9:30am-10:45am (SKN 1115)**

**Maximum size-37**      **Professor Paul Pietroski [pietro@umd.edu](mailto:pietro@umd.edu)**

Description: Speakers of a language, like English, understand the sentences of that language. Speakers know what sentences in their language mean. Speakers can also use language to talk about the environment, communicate information, make up stories, tell jokes, create metaphors, etc. But how do we understand sentences that we have never heard before? What is it for a sentence to have a meaning? And how are we able to do what we do with language? The course will focus on such questions, mainly as they have been addressed by philosophers working in a certain tradition. But part of the course will also be devoted to making connections between proposals offered by these philosophers, as part of an attempt to start explaining the facts mentioned above, and related works in linguistics.

**PHIL362 Theory of Knowledge; (3 credits)** Grade Method: REG/P-F/AUD.

*Prerequisite: six credit hours in philosophy. Not open to students who have completed PHIL462. Formerly PHIL 462.*

**MW..... 2:00pm- 3:15pm (TWS 0138)**

**Maximum size-27**      **Professor Georges Rey [georey@carnap.umd.edu](mailto:georey@carnap.umd.edu)**

Description: This course will provide an introduction to some of the main problems about the nature of knowledge and whether we actually have any. We will begin by considering some of the traditional skeptical worries that gave rise to rationalist efforts to ground knowledge in reason and empiricist ones to ground it in experience. After noting the problems with these "foundationalist" efforts, we'll turn to the supposed alternatives

provided by the recent “coherentist,” “externalist” and “reliabilist” proposals associated with the work of Quine and Alvin Goldman. We’ll also consider whether these latter proposals undermine traditional rationalist claims about supposed a priori knowledge in the way that Quine supposes, but which would seem to be supported by the work of Noam Chomsky.

**PHIL386** (*PermReq*) **Experiential Learning; (6 credits)** Grade Method: REG/P-F. Individual Instruction course: contact department or instructor to obtain section number.  
*Prerequisite: permission of department. Junior standing.* Consult Director of Undergraduate Studies: C. Manekin. Prerequisites: 12 credit hours of philosophy and 3.0 GPA. Carries no credit toward philosophy major.

**PHIL408C Topics in Contemporary Philosophy: Contemplation, Well-Being and Personal Identity; (3 credits)** Grade Method: REG/P-F/AUD.

**MW..... 2:00pm- 3:15pm (SKN 1115)**

**Maximum size-22** Professor Allen Stairs [stairs@umd.edu](mailto:stairs@umd.edu)

Description: In this course, we will consider a number of questions about well-being and personal identity through the lens of contemplation, and more specifically Vipassana meditation. We will consider scientific and psychological research on the effects of meditation and we will consider the relationship between this literature and the larger literature on well-being. This literature raises questions about narrative versus hedonic conceptions of happiness and the self, and we will consider those questions in the larger context of the philosophical problem of personal identity. Finally, we will ask whether there are any significant connections between contemplation and the idea of wisdom.

The course will have a practical component: students will be taught the basic technique of Vipassana meditation and will be expected to maintain a practice. This practice is non-doctrinal; it should be accessible to students regardless of their religious background or lack thereof.

Students will be required to pay a small fee to help bring guest lecturers to class.

**PHIL408J Topics in Contemporary Philosophy: Altruism, Charity and Justice; (3 credits)** Grade Method: REG/P-F/AUD.

**TuTh..... 9:30am-10:45am (SKN 1112)**

**Maximum size-22** Professor Judith Lichtenberg [judith@umd.edu](mailto:judith@umd.edu)

Description: Justice has been the leading concept in moral and political philosophy for decades. Charity (humanitarianism is one of many near-synonyms) has received much less attention. Where does justice end and charity begin? Can charity be morally required? Can one be bound by duties of justice to those outside one's society? What do the concepts of justice and charity presuppose about the possibility of unselfish behavior? Are these presuppositions warranted? We will read work in philosophy, psychology, biology, economics, and anthropology.

**PHIL426 Twentieth Century Analytic Philosophy; (3 credits)** Grade Method: REG/P-F/AUD. CORE Capstone (CS) Course.

*Prerequisite: permission of department. Senior standing. Credit will be granted for only one of the following: PHIL326 or PHIL426. Formerly PHIL 326.*

**MW..... 2:00pm- 3:15pm (SKN 1112)**

**Maximum size-20** Professor Michael Morreau [mimo@umd.edu](mailto:mimo@umd.edu)

Description: What sorts of things are there in the world? How is knowledge possible? What is the relation between the Body and the Mind? Around the beginning of the Twentieth Century, many traditional problems of philosophy seemed as far from solution as ever. Then philosophers and mathematicians including Gottlob Frege, Bertrand Russell and

Ludwig Wittgenstein turned to them with a new method, philosophical analysis. They showed how some problems of philosophy could be solved by paying careful attention to the logical structure of things. Other problems they exposed as mere confusions arising from misunderstandings about language.

In this course, we'll study the origins of analysis and the details of several analytic solutions to the problems of philosophy. We'll look into difficulties that arose with foundations of this method, including its distinction between synthetic and analytic truth. And we'll look at the long legacy that analytic philosophy has left, both within philosophy and in the wider world.

**PHIL428M Topics in the History of Philosophy: Hume; (3 credits)** Grade Method: REG/P-F/AUD.

**MWF.....10:00am-10:50am (SKN 1112)**

**Maximum size-22** Professor Mathias Frisch [mfrisch@umd.edu](mailto:mfrisch@umd.edu)

Description: In this course will study the first book of Hume's *Treatise*, with the aim of understanding the claims and arguments he makes about the nature, origin, and legitimacy of our ideas and beliefs. The main issues we will focus on are Hume's account of causal inference and of the notion of causal necessity; his discussion of our ideas of material objects and of the self. We will also address more general questions, such as: What lines of thought lead Hume to skeptical conclusions? How are Hume's naturalism and skepticism related to one another?

**PHIL428P Topics in the History of Philosophy: The Presocratics; (3 credits)** Grade Method: REG/P-F/AUD.

**Th..... 2:00pm- 4:30pm (HBK 1108)**

**Maximum size-20** Professor James Lesher [jlesher@umd.edu](mailto:jlesher@umd.edu)

**PHIL431 Aesthetic Theory; (3 credits)** Grade Method: REG/P-F/AUD.

*Prerequisite: six credit hours in philosophy or permission of department*

**TuTh.....11:00am-12:15pm (SKN 1115)**

**Maximum size-22** Professor John Brown [jhbrown@umd.edu](mailto:jhbrown@umd.edu)

Description: In this course we will deal with core issues in aesthetic theory as well as a selection of topics concerning applications. The core issues include the conception of the aesthetic as a distinctive domain of human experience and activity, the relation between the aesthetic and the artistic, the nature of aesthetic properties, the ontology of art objects and events, criteria of interpretation, and the like. Among the topics in applied aesthetics will be environmental and architectural aesthetics.

The main text is Robert Stecker, *Aesthetics and the Philosophy of Art*. This will be supplemented by a number of articles or excerpts from books. Course requirements will include a midterm test, an 8-10 page paper, a final exam, and contributions to a discussion file on the course website.

**PHIL454 Philosophy of Space and Time; (3 credits)** Grade Method: REG/P-F/AUD.

*Prerequisite: six credit hours in philosophy. Senior standing.* A nontechnical investigation of philosophical issues in the foundations of physics.

**MWF.....12:00pm-12:50pm (SKN 1112)**

**Maximum size-22** Professor Mathias Frisch [mfrisch@umd.edu](mailto:mfrisch@umd.edu)

Description: What is space? Is space a thing, like a star? Is it a 'container' in which objects and events live? Or is space nothing but the relative distances we can measure between different objects? What is the geometry of space? How do we come to know it? How has Einstein's theory of relativity come to influence the answers we give to these questions? Similar questions can be asked about time. But, in other ways, time is unlike space: We can

move around in space in any direction we please, but move inexorably forward with the march of time. Does time 'flow'? What is the difference between past, present, and future? Do past and future exist in the same way as the present or is only the present real? Is time travel possible?

In this course we will examine philosophical questions such as these, concerning space and time, and their 20th century offspring, spacetime. Our approach will be quasi-historical, with readings ranging from Aristotle, to a debate between Newton and Leibniz, to twentieth century philosophers and physicists.

**PHIL470 Logical Theory; (3 credits)** Grade Method: REG/P-F.

*Prerequisite: PHIL271 or permission of instructor.*

**MWF.....11:00am-11:50am (SKN 1112)**

**Maximum size-22**                      **Professor Lars Svenonius [lars@umd.edu](mailto:lars@umd.edu)**

**PHIL482 Philosophy of Psychology: Subjectivity; (3 credits)** Grade Method: REG/P-F/AUD.

*Prerequisite: six credit hours in philosophy; one of which must be PHIL280 or PHIL366.*

**TuTh.....12:30pm- 1:45pm (SKN 1112)**

**Maximum size-23**                      **Professor Peter Carruthers [pcarruth@umd.edu](mailto:pcarruth@umd.edu)**

Description: Consciousness has been described as 'the final frontier' for science; and explaining consciousness has been called 'the hard problem'. Some people deny that consciousness *can* be explained; and some claim that consciousness shows the inadequacy of functionalist and/or physicalist accounts of the mental. Others have attempted to explain consciousness in natural terms, but there are heated disputes about the kind of explanation that is needed. This course will examine a range of recent approaches to consciousness, focusing especially on attempts to provide a naturalistic theory. The aim of the course is to introduce students to these debates, and to encourage engagement with them in a sophisticated and knowledgeable way. Readings will be drawn from on-line materials available at no cost.

**PHIL485 Philosophy of Neuroscience; (3 credits)** Grade Method: REG/P-F/AUD.

*Prerequisite: six credit hours in philosophy; or a neuroscience major; or instructor's consent.*

*Students not majoring in philosophy are welcome.*

**TuTh..... 2:00pm- 3:15pm (SKN 1115)**

**Maximum size-22**                      **Professor Christopher Cherniak [cherniak@umd.edu](mailto:cherniak@umd.edu)**

Description: Methodological issues relating to brain science, including: the place of neuroscience in cognitive science, the nature of mental representation and processing in brains, optimization and bounded-resource models in neuroanatomy and neurophysiology. This occasionally-offered course explores interrelations between these issues and empirical research programs within neuroscience.

**PHIL489 Senior Seminar: Skepticism (3-6 credits)** Grade Method: REG/P-F/AUD

**TuTh..... 2:00pm- 3:15pm (SKN 1116)**

**Maximum size-7**                      **Professor S. Jack Odell [sjodell@umd.edu](mailto:sjodell@umd.edu)**

Description: This is an undergraduate seminar on the topic of skepticism. We can examine the origins of this topic in ancient philosophy through the work of Sextus Empiricus and other ancient skeptics. We can study its path through modern philosophy, especially as regards Descartes and Hume. And we can focus upon the direction it has taken throughout the twentieth century, in the works of Bertrand Russell, G. E. Moore, A. J. Ayer, Ludwig

Wittgenstein, J. L. Austin, and W.V. O. Quine. Moreover, we can examine and assess some of the most recent works on this topic, including the work of Peter Unger, Hilary Putnam, and Robert Nozick. Towards the end of the semester I will summarize what has been accomplished and offer for discussion my own views regarding the nature of certainty and whether or not philosophical skepticism is coherent. In our first meeting, we will consider these topics as well as others that arise during our discussion, and decide as a group which topics we will address during the course.

**Requirements:** Since this course is a seminar, the students will be encouraged to carefully study the assigned material in order to be able to discuss it during the seminar meetings. During the semester, each student will at some point initiate the discussion on the topic chosen for the day by preparing a short (5 page) paper. Within one week after his/her presentation, the student will expand his/her paper to take into account what transpired during the class discussion, and turn it into Professor Odell for his comments. In addition, each student must also write a longer paper (10-15) on one of our selected topics. This paper will be due on the Monday of the second-to-last week of the semester. The final draft of the shorter paper will be worth a maximum of 50 points. The longer paper will be worth a maximum of 100 points. Attendance in class and participation in class discussion will be worth an additional maximum of 50 points. The students will have the option of taking one or two exams during the course of the semester for extra credit. We will discuss this option during the first meeting of the class.

**Readings:** *Outlines Of Pyrrhonism*, Sextus Empiricus, *Our Knowledge of the External World*, Bertrand Russell, *Philosophical Papers*, G. E. Moore, *The Problem of Knowledge*, A. J. Ayer, *On Certainty*, Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Sense and Sensibilia*, J. L. Austin, and ["Epistemology Naturalized," W.V.O. Quine, "A Defense of Skepticism," Peter Unger, "Knowledge and Skepticism," Robert Nozick, and "Brains in a Vat," Hilary Putnam. These last four works are included in *Knowledge: Readings in Contemporary Epistemology*, edited by Sven Bernecker and Fred Dretske].

**PHIL498F (PermReq) Topical Investigations: Topical Investigation; (1-3 credits)** Grade Method: REG/P-F/AUD. Individual Instruction course: contact department or instructor to obtain section number.

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

**PHIL498G (PermReq) Topical Investigations: Topical Investigation; (1-3 credits)** Grade Method: REG/P-F/AUD. Individual Instruction course: contact department or instructor to obtain section number.

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

**PHIL660 Metaphysics, Mind, and Language; (3 credits)** Grade Method: REG/AUD.

*Prerequisite: Graduate status in philosophy or permission of department.*

**M..... 5:00pm- 7:30pm (SKN 1116)**

**Maximum size-15** Professor Michael Morreau [mimo@umd.edu](mailto:mimo@umd.edu)

Description: The twin conceptions of necessity and possibility lie right at the heart of analytical philosophy, and many philosophers rely on possible worlds to understand them. In the first part of this course, we'll see how possible worlds can be used to illuminate fundamental matters such as propositional attitudes, causation, and the relationship between necessity and aprioricity. Philosophers of language have long turned to possible worlds in order to gain an understanding of the semantics of natural languages and, in particular, of linguistic expressions whose interpretation is context sensitive, such as demonstratives and indexicals. In the second part of this course, we'll see how this work in

semantics led to two-dimensional modal logic, and to recent developments in our understanding of the mind/body problem.

**PHIL688W Selected Problems in Philosophy: Proseminar in Politics, Philosophy and Public Policy; (3 credits)** Grade Method: REG/AUD.

Also offered as GVPT859B and PUA698J.

**Tu.....12:30pm- 3:15pm (TWS 2228)**

**Maximum size-15**                      **Professor Karol Soltan [ksoltan@gvpt.umd.edu](mailto:ksoltan@gvpt.umd.edu)**

Description: This is the second semester of the core seminar in the program of the Committee on Politics, Philosophy and Public Policy. It can also be taken independently of the first semester course. It will be co-taught by Stephen Elkin (GVPT), Christopher Morris (Philosophy) and Karol Soltan (GVPT).

The focus of the course is on issues that arise when reform cannot be achieved through simple policy choice, but requires consideration of deeper issues of institutional and cultural change. So, to take an example, the World Bank and other development promoting institutions are now concerned less with monetary policy (say) of the countries to which they give their support, and more with the level of corruption of their institutions, and with the strength of the rule of law. Promoting "good governance" is now one of the Bank's central goals.

The course will survey what is required to approach such goals seriously, including questions of normative political theory and constitutional analysis. It will introduce the basic concepts and debates of political philosophy (on legitimacy, justice and the state). It will then discuss basic issues of democratic institutional design, design of state-market relations, and the question of global institutions.

Last spring's syllabus is available here:

<http://www.puaf.umd.edu/prospective/specialization/cp4/CP4-Syllabus-Spring2006.pdf>

**PHIL788G (PermReq) Research in Philosophy: Research in Philosophy; (1-6 credits)**

Grade Method: REG/AUD. Individual Instruction course: contact department or instructor to obtain section number.

**PHIL788I (PermReq) Research in Philosophy: Research in Philosophy; (1-6 credits)**

Grade Method: REG/AUD. Individual Instruction course: contact department or instructor to obtain section number.

**PHIL799 Master's Thesis Research: Masters Thesis Research; (1-6 credits)**

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

**PHIL838 Seminar in Aesthetics: Seminar in Aesthetics; (3 credits)** Grade Method: REG/AUD.

**Th..... 3:30pm- 6:00pm (SKN 1116)**

**Maximum size-15**                      **Professor Jerrold Levinson [august@umd.edu](mailto:august@umd.edu)**

Description:

**PHIL858A Seminar in Logic and Philosophy of Sciences: Mechanisms and Evolutionary Theory; (3 credits)** Grade Method: REG/AUD.

**Tu..... 3:30pm- 6:00pm ([SKN 1116](#))**

**Maximum size-15**            **Professor Lindley Darden [darden@umd.edu](mailto:darden@umd.edu)**

Description: Mechanisms and Evolutionary Theory

**PHIL858B Seminar in Logic and Philosophy of Sciences; (3 credits)** Grade Method: REG/AUD.

**Th..... 3:30pm- 6:00pm ([SKN 1116](#))**

**Maximum size-13**            **Professor John Horty [horty@umiacs.umd.edu](mailto:horty@umiacs.umd.edu)**

Description: This is an experimental seminar, organized around an idea, or a hope. The idea is that default logic can be used to develop a formally precise theory of reasons - what they are, how they interact - and that this theory can then be applied to other areas of philosophy in which talk of reasons is common, such as ethics or epistemology.

In order to explore this idea, we will have to spend some time understanding default logic - more particularly, prioritized default logic, and more particularly still, prioritized default logics in which it is also possible to reason, by default, about the priorities among defaults. I will try to guide you through this work as gently as possible, but there is no question that some of it is complicated and technical; students enrolled in the seminar should be prepared to read papers in logic. They should also be prepared to read papers that are not in logic, but in ethics or epistemology, and in this case I hope they will be willing to explain to me what is going on. I mean that.

Given the experimental nature of the seminar, I'm not exactly sure how things will develop, but I do have the first part of the course pretty well mapped out. We'll begin by looking at (A) Raymond Reiter's classic paper on default logic, along with bits of nonmonotonic inheritance reasoning. Then, to illustrate the applicability of default reasoning, we'll look at (B) some of the literature on normative conflicts ("moral dilemmas"), the problems they create for deontic logic, and how defaults can help. After that, we'll turn to (C) a careful study of prioritized default logics, as well as, possibly, (D) the alternative formalism of argument systems, although this latter topic may be skipped entirely. At this point, we'll move on to applications, beginning with (E) moral particularism, Jonathan Dancy's argument from "reason holism" to particularism, and a suggestion, based on our study of default logic, about how we might allow for reason holism without being forced into particularism. We may then turn to (F) some comparisons between the account of default reasoning developed in this course and John Pollock's theory of defeasible reasoning in epistemology.

**PHIL888 (*PermReq*) Professional Mentoring for Doctoral Students; (1-3 credits)** Grade Method: S-F. Individual Instruction course: contact department or instructor to obtain section number.

**PHIL889 (*PermReq*) Pedagogical Mentoring for Doctoral Students; (1-3 credits)** Grade

Method: S-F. Individual Instruction course: contact department or instructor to obtain section number.

**PHIL898 Pre-Candidacy Research; (1-8 credits)** Grade Method: REG. Individual Instruction course: contact department or instructor to obtain section number.

**PHIL899** (*PermReq*) **Doctoral Dissertation Research: Doctoral Dissertation Research; (6 credits)** Grade Method: REG. Individual Instruction course: contact department or instructor to obtain section number.