

Spring 2008 Philosophy Courses

www.philosophy.umd.edu

Philosophy Advising

philadv@umd.edu

PHIL100.01 Introduction to Philosophy; (3 credits) Grade Method: REG/P-F/AUD. CORE Humanities (HO) Course.
Instructor Darren Hick darrenhick@hotmail.com

Books

TuTh.....12:30pm- 1:20pm (CHM 1407) plus Friday discussions.

An introduction to the principles, concepts, methods, and applications of Western philosophy, dealing with such topics as the value of philosophy, the meaning of life, the existence of God, the nature of the world and our knowledge of it, and approaches to ethical problems. Among the philosophers we shall discuss will be Socrates and Plato, Aristotle, St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Anselm, René Descartes, David Hume, John Locke, Jeremy Bentham, John Stuart Mill, Immanuel Kant, Bertrand Russell, J.L. Mackie, Peter Singer, and others.

PHIL100.02 Introduction to Philosophy; (3 credits) Grade Method: REG/P-F/AUD. CORE Humanities (HO) Course.
Instructor Georges Rey georey@carnap.umd.edu

Books

MW.....12:00pm-12:50pm (ASY 2203) plus Friday discussions.

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.
Instructor Leland Saunders lelandfsaunders@gmail.com

Books

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

This course will teach students to think critically about many contentious moral issues, such as euthanasia, abortion, capital punishment, animal rights, and famine relief, among others. The emphasis will be on analyzing and evaluating moral arguments, rather than formulating definitive conclusions for any of the issues studied.

PHIL140.02 Contemporary Moral Issues; (3 credits) Grade Method: REG/P-F/AUD. CORE Humanities (HO) Course.
Instructor S. Jack Odell sjodell@umd.edu

Books

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

This course will be concerned primarily with contemporary ethical issues including: euthanasia, abortion, the death penalty, sexual practices, pornography, warfare, legalization of drugs, and cloning. We will begin with a study of basic ethical theories: the divine command theory, Kantian duty ethics, virtue ethics, consequentialism, relativism, emotivism and existentialism. We will then look carefully at each of the issues referred to in the first sentence, and determine how each of these various ethical theories would deal with these issues. Finally, we will attempt to determine which of these theories best deals with all the issues. **Readings:** Required: Zembatty and Mappes, *Social Ethics*. Recommended: Robert Holmes, *Basic Moral Philosophy*; S. Jack Odell, *On Consequentialist Ethics*.

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

Instructor Allen Stairs stairs@umd.edu

Books

MW.....10:00am-10:50am (HJP 0226) plus Friday discussions.

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 Chinese Philosophy; (3 credits) Grade Method: REG/P-F/AUD. CORE Humanities (HO) Course. CORE Diversity (D) Course.

Instructor Benedict Chan bschan@umd.edu

[Books](#)

TuTh..... 2:00pm- 3:15pm (EDU 0206)

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.

Instructor Jerrold Levinson august@umd.edu

[Books](#)

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

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.

PHIL245 Political and Social Philosophy I; (3 credits) Grade Method: REG/P-F/AUD. CORE Humanities (HO) Course.

Instructor Bénédicte Veillet bveillet@hotmail.com

[Books](#)

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

PHIL256 Philosophy of Biology I; (3 credits) Grade Method: REG/AUD. CORE Humanities (HO) Course.

Instructor Kent Erickson erickson@umd.edu

[Books](#)

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

Issues in the discovery and justification of biological theories and models. Focus on cases from twentieth century biology, such as the genetic revolution or evolutionary theory.

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.

Instructor Susan Bilek sbilek@umd.edu

[Books](#)

MW.....11:00am-11:50am (MCB 1207) plus Friday discussions.

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

Instructor Christopher Cherniak cherniak@umd.edu

[Books](#)

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

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

Prerequisite: six credit hours in philosophy or classics

Instructor Pierre Destrée Destree@sofi.ucl.ac.be

[Books](#)

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

PHIL324 Existentialism; (3 credits) Grade Method: REG/P-F/AUD.

Prerequisite: six credit hours in philosophy.

Instructor Matt King mattking@umd.edu

Books

TuTh..... 9:30am-10:20am (TYD 2109)plus Friday discussions.

This course could just as well have the title: "Introduction to Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, and Sartre" Its main aim is to help you to understand and evaluate some central ideas of these three 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 three philosophers is sometimes classified as an "existentialist," but we will not focus on the origins or merits of this classification.

PHIL332 Philosophy of Beauty; (3 credits) Grade Method: REG/P-F/AUD.

Prerequisite: six credit hours in philosophy, literature, or the arts.

Instructor John Brown jhbrown@umd.edu

Books

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

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.

Instructor Elizabeth Schechter lizschechter@gmail.com

Books

TuTh..... 9:30am-10:20am (ARM 0112) plus Friday discussions.

The law by its nature limits people's liberty. But how far may it go? We can all agree that the law should prohibit rape, murder, and robbery. But is the government justified in prohibiting sodomy? Hate speech? Would such laws be moral? Would they be constitutional? How is the constitutionality of a statute determined? The first part of this course will explore what kinds of law there ought to be, and the second part will look at philosophical issues relating to law enforcement: why is insanity a defense for crime? Is capital punishment "cruel and unusual?" This is a course about: 1) the relationship between law and morality 2) whether and in what sense the Constitution bestows rights to privacy, liberty, equality, etc. 3) legal responsibility 4) the justification of punishment.

PHIL354 Philosophy of Physics; (3 credits) Grade Method: REG/P-F/AUD.

Prerequisite: PHYS260 or MATH220 or equivalent; or permission of department. Recommended: PHYS270, PHYS401. Not open to students who have completed PHIL452. Credit will be granted for only one of the following: PHIL354 or PHIL452.

Instructor Allen Stairs stairs@umd.edu

Books

MW..... 2:00pm- 3:15pm (WDS 0104)

In this course we will consider relativity and, especially, quantum mechanics with the aim of understanding the conceptual puzzles that each theory gives rise to. Although we will sometimes use mathematics, this is not a physics course. Our goal is to consider what these physical theories tell us about the nature of the world, and to consider the controversies that arise when we try to interpret the theories. As we will see, the puzzles become especially baffling when we turn to quantum theory, but relativity will provide a useful point of departure and will continue to be relevant when we move on to quantum theory.

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.

Instructor Erin Eaker eeaker@umd.edu

Books

MW..... 2:00pm- 3:15pm (JMZ 0122)

This course will serve as an introduction to the philosophy of language and will address such questions as: What is a language? How are human languages similar to computer languages? What makes our linguistic utterances meaningful? What is the relationship between thought and linguistic meaning? We will also discuss why some philosophers have thought that by studying language we can gain insight into the basic structure of the world. Readings for this course will include classic works by Frege, Russell, Carnap, Quine, Wittgenstein and Kripke, as well as some more contemporary texts.

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: A. Stairs (stairs@umd.edu) Prerequisites: 12 credit hours of philosophy and 3.0 GPA. Carries no credit toward philosophy major.

PHIL408E Topics in Contemporary Philosophy: Equality and Impartiality; (3 credits) Grade Method: REG/P-F/AUD.

Prerequisite: 6 credit hours of philosophy courses or permission of department.

Instructor Dan Moller dmoller@umd.edu

Books

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

This course will discuss the roles that equality and impartiality play in our moral and political lives. We will discuss such questions as whether equality should be a political ideal, whether patriotism and nationalism are good, whether we should be impartial in our treatment of distant strangers versus family members, and whether we are capable of meeting the demands of impartiality. We will read large tracts of Rawls' *Theory of Justice* and Nozick's *Anarchy, State, and Utopia*, along with other writers such as Thomas Nagel and Peter Singer.

PHIL408K Topics in Contemporary Philosophy: Skepticism; (3 credits) Grade Method: REG/P-F/AUD.

Prerequisite: 6 credit hours of philosophy courses or permission of department.

Instructor Jack Odell sjodell@umd.edu

Books

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

We will examine the origins of this topic in ancient philosophy through the work of Sextus Empiricus, touch upon its course through the middle ages, detail its path through modern philosophy, especially as regards Descartes and Hume, and concentrate 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 will 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 my own views regarding the nature of certainty and whether or not philosophical skepticism is coherent.

Readings: *Outlines Of Pyrrhonism*, Sextus Empiricus, *Our Knowledge of the External World*, and *The Problems of Philosophy* 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].

PHIL414 The Philosophy of Aristotle; (3 credits) Grade Method: REG/P-F/AUD.

Prerequisite: six credit hours in philosophy. A critical study of selected portions of Aristotle's writings.

Instructor Pierre Destrée Destree@sofi.ucl.ac.be

Books

MW..... 2:00pm- 3:15pm (BPS 1232)

PHIL424 The Philosophy of Spinoza; (3 credits) Grade Method: REG/P-F/AUD.

Prerequisite: six credit hours in philosophy or permission of department. Also offered as JWST453. Not open to students who have completed JWST453. Credit will be granted for only one of the following: PHIL424 or JWST453. An investigation of the metaphysical, ethical and political thought of the 17th century philosopher Benedict Spinoza.

Instructor Charles Manekin manekinc@umd.edu

Books

Tu..... 3:30pm- 6:00pm (SKN 1112)

An investigation of the metaphysical, ethical and political thought of the 17th century philosopher Benedict Spinoza. We will read carefully *The Theological-Political Treatise* and the *Ethics*. Among topics to be discussed: Spinoza's monism, dual-aspect theory, determinism, biblical theory, and political philosophy.

PHIL428G Topics in the History of Philosophy: Retreat from Aristotelianism; (3 credits) Grade Method: REG/P-F/AUD.

Prerequisite: 6 credit hours of philosophy courses or permission of department.

Instructor Lars Svenonius lars@umd.edu

Books

MWF..... 1:00pm- 1:50pm (SKN 1115)

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

Prerequisite: nine credits in philosophy or permission of department. Study of the theory of the aesthetic as a mode of apprehending the world and of the theory of criticism, its conceptual tools and intellectual presuppositions.

Instructor Jerrold Levinson august@umd.edu

Books

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

This course will focus on issues at the intersection of ethics and aesthetics, with emphasis on the latter. Among the issues we will take up are these: a) the legitimacy of ethical criticism of artworks; b) the separability of aesthetic, artistic, and moral value; c) the ethics of aesthetic behavior or the aesthetic life ;d) the ethics of humor and joking; e) the role of art and the aesthetic in the good life.

Texts: B. Gaut, *Art, Emotion and Ethics* (Oxford); J. Bermudez & S. Gardiner, eds., *Art and Morality* (Routledge); various recent journal articles.

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.

Instructor Georges Rey georey@carnap.umd.edu

Books

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

PHIL484 Reason, Self and Will; (3 credits) Grade Method: REG/P-F/AUD.

Prerequisite: six credit hours in philosophy courses, at least one 300-level or above; or permission of department

Instructor Patricia Greenspan pg@umd.edu

Books

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

This course deals with issues in philosophy of mind, ethics, and neighboring areas of psychology and related fields concerning such topics as: autonomy, freedom of action, free will; self-control, weakness of will and practical reasoning; the nature of the self or person; the sources of moral motivation. In its current version the course focuses on a collection of essays by a particular author developing views on responsibility issues, including free will, weakness of will, and the status of psychological compulsion and addiction.

The course carries a prerequisite of two prior courses in philosophy, at least one of them 300 level or above, or permission of the department. In an attempt to ensure student readiness for the readings and coherent class discussions, this prerequisite is enforced strictly. It would also be helpful (though not a prerequisite for admission to the course) if students were familiar with key concepts of the philosophy of action, as discussed particularly in PHIL 282.

Readings for the course will be drawn mainly from:

Gary Watson, *Agency and Answerability* (Oxford) [0-19-927228-x].

Note that Watson's approach is that of an essayist in the humanistic tradition. While some further, recommended texts or articles may be made available in the bookstore or the Philosophy Department lounge, our main emphasis throughout the course will be on piecing together Watson's emerging view and discussing the diverse issues it brings together.

Written requirements of the course will include a midterm, a final, and a paper writing up the results of group discussions of issues in some of our later readings.

PHIL489 Undergraduate Seminar in Philosophy: 20th Century Epistemology; (3-6 credits) Grade Method: REG/P-F/AUD.

Prerequisite: 15 credit hours of philosophy courses or permission of instructor.

Instructor Jack Odell sjodell@umd.edu

Books

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

This is an undergraduate seminar on the topic of 20th Century Epistemology. We will study the direction epistemology has taken in the twentieth century, in the works of Bertrand Russell, G. E. Moore, A. J. Ayer, Ludwig Wittgenstein, J. L. Austin, W.V. O. Quine, Rudolph Carnap, Hilary Putnam, and Robert Nozick. We will decide together where to put the emphasis on these topics. 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.

Readings: *Our Knowledge of the External World*, and *The Problems of Philosophy*, Bertrand Russell, *Philosophical Papers*, G. E. Moore, *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]. We will also read a paper on Wittgenstein's Anti-Skepticism by S. Jack Odell.

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.

PHIL640 Value Theory; (3 credits) Grade Method: REG/AUD.

Prerequisite: Graduate status in philosophy or permission of department.

Instructor Dan Moller dmoller@umd.edu

[Books](#)

Th..... 2:00pm- 4:30pm ([SKN 1116](#))

PHIL688W Selected Problems in Philosophy: Proseminar in Politics, Philosophy and Public Policy; (3 credits)

Grade Method: REG/AUD.

Also offered as GVPT859B and PUA698J.

Instructor Karol Soltan ksoltan@umd.edu

[Books](#)

Tu.....12:30pm- 3:15pm ([LEF 1221](#))

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.

PHIL808 Seminar in the Problems of Philosophy: Naming, Necessity, and Natural Kinds; (3 credits) Grade

Method: REG/AUD.

Instructor Erin Eaker eeaker@umd.edu

[Books](#)

Tu..... 2:00pm- 4:30pm ([SKN 1116](#))

Kripke's classic *Naming and Necessity* contains insights into a broad spectrum of philosophical topics: the relationship between language and thought; the nature of linguistic meaning; the proper scope and form of a semantic theory; and the relationships that hold among epistemological notions (like *a priori* knowledge), metaphysical notions (like necessary truth) and semantic notions (like analytic truth). In our seminar we will begin with an attempt to tease out the various strains of Kripke's views on semantics, epistemology and metaphysics and to situate them against the general backdrop of early 20th century analytic philosophy. Next, we will consider Kripke's influence on the philosophy of language and metaphysics by looking at more contemporary reflections on the semantics of natural kind terms, on essentialism and on the metaphysics of natural kinds. Finally, we will take biological species as a "case study" and consider whether Kripke-inspired views about essentialism, natural kinds and the semantics of natural kind terms are adequate in this domain.

PHIL848 Seminar in Ethics: Practical Rationality and Ethics; (3 credits) Grade Method: REG/AUD.

Instructor Patricia Greenspan pg@umd.edu

Books

M..... 4:30pm- 7:00pm (SKN 1116)

In an effort to “demystify” the idea of a moral “ought,” or the property of moral wrongness, some contemporary philosophers have tried to explain morality in terms of reasons – practical reasons, or reasons of the sort that apply to action. Reasons influence us to act (or they do to the extent that we’re rational) in the way that morality is supposed to do. Interpreted as facts about the world that we act in light of (rather than as psychological states of agents purporting to register such facts), they also can be thought of as mind-independent, or objective. Skeptical dismissals of moral facts would be hard to extend convincingly to reasons, given how often we need to refer to reasons outside moral contexts in explaining everyday action.

However, we still need to ask what practical reasons amount to and how exactly they bear on action. Many philosophers, claiming to follow Hume (and sometimes Aristotle), restrict practical reasoning to an instrumental or means/end conception, according to which acts are assessed as rational by their relation to the agent’s desires, ends, or purposes, with at least some desires, ends, or purposes taken for granted as ultimate reasons, not subject to rational assessment themselves. On this account, desires or other noncognitive attitudes (arguably including emotions) are needed to generate action; reason alone, as Hume put it, is “inert,” and morality has no power to influence anyone who doesn’t already have certain desires. Others follow Kant (and interpret Aristotle differently) in allowing for *noninstrumental* reasons and reasoning. They think of practical reason as sufficient to give rise to action – and as the source of an inescapable moral “must.”

Recent literature within ethics and related areas uses the term “practical rationality” to unite long-running debates like the one just outlined into a relatively new subfield of philosophy, overlapping ethics and action theory. As yet there’s no available basic text that surveys the field, but we can start off at a relatively elementary level by reading some introductory material from recent anthologies that gives an idea of the main issues and positions. I’ll order a range of readings as recommended, but students might want to put off buying books for the course until we have more information about class interests. Some background readings about historical treatments of the issues by Aristotle, Hume, and Kant, along with early contemporary treatments in Nagel, Williams, and Quinn, will also be recommended. Student background and interests will determine which of these essays will be assigned to the class as a whole, along with later readings from particular contemporary authors such as Scanlon, Raz, Broome, Bratman, Parfit, Korsgaard, Smith, and Wallace. We might also want to read some of the literature on practical *irrationality* by Davidson, Watson, Mele, Arpaly, Holton, and others. Some of the instructor’s current work may also be assigned; very briefly, it represents an attempt to interpret reasons in terms of criticism and responses to criticism, in order to carve out an intermediate position between the Humean and Kantian extremes and to provide a basis for deontological ethics that does not involve inflating the force of reasons. Students with dissertation projects relevant to practical rationality will also be encouraged to present some of their own work and/or to submit papers based on their projects. The only written requirement of the seminar will be a substantial (c. 20-page) term paper.

PHIL879 Seminar in Philosophy and Cognitive Studies: Mind Reading and Meta-Cognition; (3 credits) Grade Method: REG/AUD.

Instructor Peter Carruthers pcarruth@umd.edu

Books

Th..... 5:00pm- 7:30pm (SKN 1112)

This seminar will examine the relationships between our access to our own mental lives (meta-cognition) and our access to the mental lives of other people (mind-reading). One view is Cartesian. It is that our capacity to attribute mental states to others is dependent upon our prior introspective access to our own mental states. One version of such an account is the “simulationist” position defended at length by Goldman (2006), which is also in the background of the recent experimental literature attempting to demonstrate meta-cognitive processes in non-human animals. (An assumption of the latter is that meta-cognition might be the first evolutionary step on the way to full-blown mind-reading. This literature is critiqued in Carruthers, 2008.) A second view is that mind-reading and meta-cognition are independent and dissociable psychological processes. This is the account defended by Nichols and Stich (2003). A third view is the converse of Goldman’s: it is that meta-cognition is dependent upon a prior capacity for mind-reading. On one version of this account, there is no such thing as introspective access to our own propositional attitude events (e.g. judging and deciding). Our only form of access to those events is via self-interpretation, turning our mind-reading faculty upon ourselves. This view has been defended by Carruthers (2006, 2007, forthcoming).

A subsidiary question, connected to those above, concerns the manner in which mind-reading capacities are acquired in the course of childhood development. One view is that these capacities are a result of some sort of general-learning process, either involving simulation and generalization from the results of simulation, or involving hypothesis formation and testing. A contrasting view is that the mind-reading faculty is innate, emerging in the course of normal

development under maturational constraints. A further subsidiary question concerns the best explanation of the main elements of the autistic syndrome, included in which is a well-documented set of difficulties with third-person mind-reading. Both Goldman and Nichols & Stich are committed to the view that meta-cognitive capacities should remain intact in autism. Carruthers, in contrast, is committed to claiming that they are not.

References & readings

- Carruthers, P. (2006). *The Architecture of the Mind: massive modularity and the flexibility of thought*. Oxford University Press.
- Carruthers, P. (2007). The illusion of conscious will. *Synthese*, 96.
- Carruthers, P. (2008). Meta-cognition in animals: a skeptical look. *Mind and Language*, 23.
- Carruthers, P. (forthcoming). Introspection: divided and partly eliminated.
- Goldman, A. (2006). *Simulating Minds: the philosophy, psychology, and neuroscience of mindreading*. Oxford University Press.
- Nichols, S. and Stich, S. (2003). *Mindreading: an integrated account of pretence, self-awareness, and understanding other minds*. Oxford University Press.

The books by Goldman and Nichols & Stich should be purchased. Other readings will be made available on-line.

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.