

Winterterm 2010: Courses from the Department of Philosophy

Philosophy courses sharpen your thinking skills and introduce you to issues, old and new, that go to the core of how we think of ourselves and the world. Philosophy students also do well on grad school exams such as the GRE and the LSAT.

PHIL100 Introduction to Philosophy (3 Credits) Grade Method REG/P-F/AUD CORE Humanities (HO) Course. Instructor: David McElhoes

This course will introduce students to some of the perplexing problems faced by contemporary philosophers, as well as the techniques they use to solve them. In an entirely online setting, we will attempt to answer such questions as: Does God Exist? Can we ever know anything with certainty? Is the mind separate from the body? Do we have free will? Questions? Send email to thedave@umd.edu.

PHIL140 Contemporary Moral Issues; (3 credits) Grade Method: REG/P-F/AUD. CORE Humanities (HO) Course. Instructor: Stephen Emet

Abortion, animal rights, euthanasia - these are things we all have strong opinions about. In this class, we'll look at some of the best arguments on both sides of these (and related) issues. This course provides an introduction to philosophical reasoning on controversial topics. It will help you to develop your ability to understand, evaluate, and construct arguments in the realm of applied ethics.

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

Instructor: Erin Eaker

In this course you will learn two logical languages-- sentential logic and predicate (quantifier) logic. We will see that many arguments that can be expressed in ordinary English can be translated into these languages. Doing this can help us to see whether the arguments we might provide for any given conclusion are valid arguments and, if not, why not. Thus, symbolic logic, though involving logical symbols rather than ordinary language, can help us to become better at reasoning. Many people take a logic course for just this reason. (In fact, many people take the course in order to improve their scores on exams like the LSAT.) Questions? Send email to eeaker@umd.edu.

PHIL308A Studies in Contemporary Philosophy: Moral Skepticism; (3 credits) Grade Method: REG/P-F/AUD.

Instructor: Ryan Fanselow

In what sense can morality be said to be independent of culture? Does widespread disagreement about the requirements of morality undermine the apparent "objectivity" of morality? Is the position that the requirements of morality vary with culture plausible? Or is such a claim self-defeating? We will address these and related questions. Questions? Send email to rfanselo@umd.edu.

PHIL408W Studies in Contemporary Philosophy: Wisdom; (3 credits) Grade Method: REG/P-F/AUD.

Instructor: Joel Gibson

What is wisdom? What makes someone wise? Can wisdom be acquired? In this course, we will read wisdom literature in several traditions and genres. Most centrally, we will contemplate the nature of the universe, the condition of human beings, and ask what represents the most authentic response to that condition. Questions? Send email to joel_gibson11@hotmail.com