Spring 2021 – Philosophy Courses
(See below for descriptions.)

Three-Credit Courses:

CGS 10 Intro to Cognitive Science (IS)
TR 9:40-11:05, CRN: 21708
Professor Teehan

PHI 10G Wondering and Wandering: An Historical Tour of Western Philosophy (HP)
MW 2:40-4:05, CRN: TBA
Professor Acampora

PHI 12 Life, Meaning, and Philosophy (HP)
TR 1:00-2:25, CRN: 22822
Professor McEvoy

PHI 14 Introduction to Ethics (HP)
Multiple sections, multiple instructors

PHI 16 Philosophic Themes in Film (HP)
TR 11:20-12:45, CRN: 21154, Professor Karofsky
TR 2:20-4:05, CRN: 22133, Professor Farley

PHI 25 Theories of Human Nature (HP)
TR 4:20-5:45, CRN: 23825
Professor Slaninka

PHI 67 Evil: Religious, Philosophical and Scientific Perspectives (HP)
TR 4:20-5:45, CRN: 23826
Professor Teehan

PHI 120 Philosophy of Law (HP)
MWF 11:20-12:15, CRN: 20445
Professor Baehr

PHI 131 Ethics and Animals (HP)
MWF 10:10-11:05, CRN: 23827
Professor Acampora

PHI 143 Classical Modern Philosophy (WI)
TR 4:20-5:45, CRN: 20123
Professor Singer

PHI 148 Philosophy in America
TR 11:20-2:25, CRN: 23828
Professor McEvoy

PHI 150 Critical Reasoning (HP)
MWF 11:20-12:15, CRN: 22081
Professor Acampora

PHI 152 Scientific Reasoning (QR)
MW 9:40-11:05, CRN: 22134
Professor Eliot

PHI 163 Philosophy of Religion (HP)
TR 1:00-2:25, CRN: 23829
Professor Karofsky

PHI 181B Metaphysics
MW 11:20-12:45, CRN: 23830
Professor McEvoy

One-Credit Courses:

PHI 05L Insights: Love (1 credit)
T 6:00-7:25, CRN: 22821
Professor Slaninka

Four-Credit First Year Seminars:

HI 14S Ignorance, Lies and Truth
TR 2:40-4:35, CRN: 23824
Professor Godlove

PHI 14S The Meaning of Life
MW 9:10-11:05, CRN: 21499
Professor McEvoy
Course Descriptions (Spring 2021)

CGS 10 Introduction to Cognitive Science (IS)
Semester Hours: 3
Cognitive science studies the mind and behavior from a variety of disciplinary points of view: philosophy, psychology, neuroscience, computer science, biology, and others. In this course, we will consider how “mind” appears on the scene in the course of human evolution, and how to make sense of “mind” as embedded in the natural world. This will lead us to explore topics such as the problem of consciousness, the question of non-human animal minds, the role of the body in cognition, and the workings of the moral mind.

PHI 05L Insights: Love
Semester Hours: 1
What does it mean to love? What does it mean to be loved? How might love be relevant to doing philosophy (“love of wisdom”)?! This course seeks to understand these questions as well as provide some insights into the nature of love.

PHI 10G Wondering and Wandering: An Historical Tour of Western Philosophy (HP)
Semester Hours: 3
Philosophy proceeds by wonder, and in this course we will wander through ages spanning two and half millennia and the whole Mediterranean world from northern Africa through all of Europe in search of the wonderings of philosophers who constitute the Western tradition. Towards the end, we will briefly touch upon contemporary philosophers of America. Our twin targets of attention throughout will be metaphysics (or ontology) and epistemology (theory of knowledge).

PHI 012 What Does It All Mean? Life, Meaning and Philosophy (HP)
Semester Hours: 3
This course examines various approaches to the question of the meaning of life, and how this question relates to other important philosophical questions. On one view, life can only have purpose if God exists. This requires examination of the reasons for and against the idea that God exists. A related view holds that unless we have immortal souls, our lives are too brief to be genuinely significant. This requires examination of the reasons for thinking that humans have such souls. A third view holds that we can give our life meaning through the free choices we make. This raises the question of whether we have free will, or whether our choices are predetermined; it also raises the questions of whether the choices we make should be ethical choices, and what it is to act ethically (whether, for example one should focus on the consequences of one’s actions, or on one’s religious beliefs).
**PHI 014 Introduction to Ethics (HP)**
Semester Hours: 3
The focus of this course is on critical reasoning about ethics. It reviews major approaches to ethical values and examines the bases for why some conduct (like killing, deceit, fraud) is wrong, and why some things (like freedom, fairness, compassion) are valuable. The course also examines the relationship between ethics and society, with focus on contemporary issues. For example: ethics in professional or business contexts, health and medical contexts, ethics in personal relationships, and environmental ethics.

**PHI 14S Ignorance, Lies and Truth (HP)  FIRST YEAR STUDENTS ONLY**
Semester Hours: 4
Truth is sometimes said to be the aim of inquiry, a criterion of knowledge, and the relation between thought or language and the world. This class pursues the truth about truth through class discussions and readings.

**PHI 14S The meaning of Life (HP)  FIRST YEAR STUDENTS ONLY**
Semester Hours: 4
This class pursues questions about the meaning of life through discussions and readings.

**PHI 016 Philosophic Themes in Film (HP)**
Semester Hours: 3
An introduction to various philosophical issues that arise in contemporary films like *Ad Astra, Arrival, Ex Machina, Her, Beautiful Boy, Silence, A Serious Man, Edge of Tomorrow, Inception*, and *The Matrix*. Some of the issues examined include the problem of skepticism, the mind-body problem, personal identity, artificial intelligence, free will and determinism, moral dilemmas, and the meaning of life.

**PHI 025 Theories of Human Nature (HP)**
Semester Hours: 3
This course examines classical and contemporary theories of human nature. Considers persons as moral beings, as seekers of knowledge, and as social and political animals. Emphasis on the connection between theories of human nature and conceptions of the natural world.

**PHI 067 Evil: Religious, Philosophic and Scientific Perspectives (HP)**
Semester Hours: 3
If God is good, then why is there such evil in the world? Is the reality of evil an argument against the existence of God? And, if God is not responsible for evil, then who is? The “problem of evil” is central the philosophy of religion and is one of the oldest challenges to religious belief. However, “evil” is not simply a problem for the religious but is one of the deepest challenges in creating just and stable human communities. This course examines how both religious thinkers and secular philosophers have come to terms with “evil” and considers what insight scientific research on violence may provide into the dark side of human nature.
PHI 120 Philosophy of Law (HP)
Semester Hours: 3
This course explores various attempts to answer this question: What is law? Some say law is a kind of morality; or at least that its rules are intrinsically related to morality. Some deny this and assert that law is merely a sovereign’s commands or a set of rules a population is habituated to follow. Some argue that law is irreducibly political; and other says it is ideological, that is, merely an attempt to maintain the power of the privileged over everyone else.

PHI 131 Ethics and Animals (HP)
Semester Hours: 3
Inquiry into the ethical significance of non-human animals. Consideration of such issues as whether non-human animals have interests and rights; whether animals’ capacity for consciousness or for pain and pleasure is a basis for their having ethical significance; whether animals are due a certain level of care and concern. The course will also examine whether similarity to human beings is necessary for non-human animals to have ethical significance. The course may look at cases involving the treatment and portrayal of animals in agriculture and diet, science and education, wild nature and domestic life, and entertainment and fashion.

PHI 143 Classical Modern Philosophy
Semester Hours: 3
In this course we will examine the views of 17th and 18th century philosophers about knowledge and the nature of reality. The topics we will discuss include perception, the limits and the justification of knowledge, substance (is reality purely physical?), cause and effect, free will, personal identity, and the existence of God. We will also pay attention to the efforts these philosophers made to understand and advance science, to deal with turmoil about religious authority and religious beliefs (we’ll develop a working understanding of various ways to be a heretic), and—directly or indirectly—to improve human life.

PHI 148 Philosophy in America
Semester Hours: 3
This course presents an overview of classical American Philosophy from 1860’s to the present. The course will focus on that most distinctively American school of philosophy, pragmatism, and on its characteristic approach to such issues as truth, cognition, knowledge, freedom, and social justice. Pragmatism is a diverse tradition, but it is united by a common interest in the embedding of theory in practice, the fallibility of our knowledge, and a robust account of human experience. We will begin with Charles Sanders Peirce, William James, and John Dewey, and then take up Jane Addams and W. E. B. DuBois, and continue into the present with W. V. O . Quine, Susan Haack, Donald Davidson, and Richard Rorty.
**PHI 150 Critical Reasoning (HP)**
Semester Hours: 3
A study of reasoning and argument as they appear in ordinary usage. The aim of the course is to increase the student’s skills in critical thinking: how to recognize unsupported assertions, how to analyze and assess arguments encountered in everyday life, and how to formulate and present cogent arguments of one’s own.

**PHI 152 - Scientific Reasoning (QR)**
Semester Hours: 3
A systematic approach to scientific reasoning. Topics to be covered include the fundamental ideas of reasoning (support, evidence, argument); the nature of scientific theories and the evidence that grounds scientific theories; statistical reasoning, reasoning about causes, and the relation between the two; ways scientific reasoning commonly goes awry; and how statistical reasoning can support decision-making under uncertainty. Students will practice a variety of arguments from real contexts. Particular attention is paid to science as it is presented for non-specialist audiences, as for instance in science journalism.

**PHI 163  Philosophy of Religion (HP)**
Semester Hours: 3
Exploration of various debates between theists, atheists and agnostics, including: whether there is adequate proof of God’s existence; whether the existence of the universe can be explained if there is no God; whether God’s existence is necessary for morality; whether life can have meaning and purpose without God; and whether there can ever be adequate responses to any of these questions.

**PHI 180B Metaphysics**  
**PREREQUISITE:** Two previous philosophy courses or instructor permission  
Semester Hours: 3
How does one event cause another? When we talk of possible ways things might have turned out, does this mean there are other, possible, worlds? Might you have existed if your parents had not conceived for another two months? These are metaphysical questions, and this course will look at some of the ways philosophers have attempted to answer these, and other such questions.
Philosophy proceeds by wonder, and in this course we will wander through ages spanning two and half millennia and the whole Mediterranean world from northern Africa through all of Europe in search of the wonderings of philosophers who constitute the Western tradition. Towards the end, we will briefly touch upon contemporary philosophers of America. Our twin targets of attention throughout will be metaphysics (or ontology) and epistemology (theory of knowledge).
What does it mean to love? What does it mean to be loved? How might love be relevant to doing philosophy (“love of wisdom”)?!

This course seeks to understand these questions as well as provide some insights into the nature of love. **No credit for this course if you have already taken PHI 80. No prior experience in philosophy required.**
Like movies that make you 

**THINK?**

Then you should take 

**PHI 16: Philosophic Themes in Film**

In PHI 16, we will explore some key philosophical issues such as: skepticism, free will and determinism, artificial intelligence, and ethics. We will use movies like *Ad Astra, Arrival, Ex Machina, Her, Beautiful Boy, Silence, A Serious Man, Edge of Tomorrow, Inception,* and *The Matrix* in order to help us to think about these problems and analyze various solutions that are offered to them.

This course has no prerequisites.
People often make claims about good ways to live and right ways to act. What exactly do these claims mean? How, if at all, can we reasonably settle disputes about what way of life is best, and what action is right? What sort of authority do moral claims have over us? This course explores answers to these questions by studying several important moral theories.
PHI 25 (HP)

Theories of Human Nature

This course explores what is distinctive about human beings through readings in philosophy. This course is an excellent Introduction to Philosophy.

Some themes explored:
• Are we grown from the earth, self-made, or destined for transcendence?

• What makes human beings moral?

• Why are human beings seekers of knowledge?

• Do human beings have an essence?

• What's the connection between human nature and the natural world?
If God is good, then why is the world filled with so much evil?

Is Evil real, or just a way of describing/mis-describing events?

Why do humans do such horrible things to one another?

This course will examine how both religious thinkers and secular philosophers have come to terms with “evil.” We will also look at scientific research on violence and consider what insight this may provide into the dark side of human nature.
PHILOSOPHY OF LAW

What is law?

A special kind of morality?
The command of the sovereign?
What judges say it is?
A defense of the powerful?

In this class, students are empowered to develop their own convictions and to figure things out for themselves.

In this discussion-based class we think deeply and question everything
Inquiry into the ethical significance of non-human animals. Consideration of such issues as whether non-human animals have interests and rights; whether animals’ capacity for consciousness or for pain and pleasure is a basis for their having ethical significance; whether animals are due a certain level of care and concern. The course will also examine whether similarity to human beings is necessary for non-human animals to have ethical significance. The course may look at cases involving the treatment and portrayal of animals in agriculture and diet, science and education, wild nature and domestic life, and entertainment and fashion.
Philosophy 143
Classical Modern Philosophy

In this course we will examine the views of 17th and 18th century philosophers about knowledge and the nature of reality. The topics we will discuss include perception, the limits and the justification of knowledge, substance (is reality purely physical?), cause and effect, free will, personal identity, and the existence of God.

We will also pay attention to the efforts these philosophers made to understand and advance science, to deal with turmoil about religious authority and religious beliefs (we’ll develop a working understanding of various ways to be a heretic), and—directly or indirectly—to improve human life.

This course counts toward fulfilling the HCLAS Writing Intensive (WI) requirement, and requires successful completion of WSC 2, but has no other prerequisites.
This course presents an overview of classical American Philosophy from the 1860's to the present. The course will focus on that most distinctively American school of philosophy, pragmatism, and on its characteristic approach to such issues as truth, cognition, knowledge, freedom, and social justice. Pragmatism is a diverse tradition, but it is united by a common interest in the embedding of theory in practice, the fallibility of our knowledge, and a robust account of human experience. We will begin with Charles Sanders Peirce, William James, and John Dewey, then take up Jane Addams and W. E. B. DuBois, and continue into the present with W. V. O. Quine, Donald Davidson, Richard Rorty, and Susan Haack.
A study of reasoning and argument as they appear in ordinary usage. The aim of the course is to increase the student’s skills in critical thinking: how to recognize unsupported assertions, how to analyze and assess arguments encountered in everyday life, and how to formulate and present cogent arguments of one’s own.
How does scientific reasoning work?

It’s not obvious. And scientists disagree about it! Ideas about how scientific methods work have been changing since before science was called “science.” We will look at some of these ideas, from Bacon’s and Newton’s methods to the 20th century merger of scientific method with ideas about chance and probability. This isn’t a statistics course, but we work to understand some current disagreements about methods and the “replication crisis.” We will apply these ideas to many examples from actual science.

earns QR (Quantitative Reasoning) distribution credit

foundational for Minor in Sci Reasoning & Data Analysis
OMG!!

Does God exist?
Is there proof of God’s existence?
Is there proof of God's nonexistence?
How can the universe exist if it wasn’t created by God?
Can atheism explain morality? Can theism?
Can an atheist’s life have meaning or purpose?

These are just some of the questions that we’ll examine in:

PHI 163:
PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

**Open to everyone – believers, nonbelievers, and anyone in between.**
Metaphysics is sometimes defined as the study of the most fundamental aspects of reality, or as the study of the ultimate furniture of the universe. In other words, metaphysics is the study of:

The following questions are examples of metaphysical questions:

What kinds of things exist? How does one event manage to cause another? When we talk of possible ways things might have turned out, does this mean there are other, possible, worlds? Might you have existed if your parents had not conceived for another two months?

This course will look at some of the ways philosophers have attempted to answer these, and other such questions. **This course satisfies the metaphysics/epistemology requirement for the Philosophy Major.**
Introduction to Cognitive Science
CGS 10 (IS)*

Cognitive Science is an interdisciplinary study of the mind and behavior. This course will consider how “mind” appears on the scene in the course human evolution, and how to make sense of “mind” as embedded in the natural world. This will lead us to explore topics such as the problem of consciousness, the question of non-human animal minds, the role of the body in cognition, and the workings of the moral mind.

* This is interdisciplinary course (IS) is open to anyone; there are no prerequisites. It is a required course for those pursuing a Minor in Cognitive Science.