

**DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY
GRADUATE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS**

Fall Session August 27 – December 7, 2018

[PHI 579 Expressivism](#)

Professors Alexandra King and David Braun
Monday, 4:00 PM – 6:40 PM
Class #: 23693

This course will examine the prospects for metaethical expressivism. Metaethical expressivism is a family of views on which moral claims express states of mind, rather than describe a way the world is or could be. We will begin by looking at issues squarely in philosophy of language, including the semantics of expressive terms like “but,” “oops,” and slurs, and the semantics of non-declarative sentences, such as imperatives. We will then segue into expressivism proper, including contemporary work on the Frege-Geach problem, minimalism about truth, and quasi-realism. Readings will be drawn from figures such as David Kaplan, Allan Gibbard, Mark Schroeder, and Jamie Dreier.

[PHI 598 Applied Ontology](#)

Professor Barry Smith
Monday, 1:00 PM – 3:40 PM
Class #:24696

See course materials on the related site, [National Center for Ontological Research](#).

An ontology is a structured collection of terms and definitions that is developed with the goal of making data deriving from heterogeneous sources more easily searchable, comparable or combinable. The course will provide an introduction to ontology from an application oriented point of view, including examples in the areas of data science and artificial intelligence. Examples will be drawn from biology and medicine, social science, law, and finance. The course will be of interest not only to philosophers but also to those interested in biomedical informatics and in the computer and information sciences.

This course will provide an introduction into the methods and uses of ontological engineering, focusing on applications in areas such as military intelligence, healthcare, and finance. It will provide an overview of how ontologies are created and used, together with practical experience in the development of ontologies using the (OWL) Web Ontology Language. It will also address some of the human factors underlying the success and failure of ontology projects, including issues of ontology governance and dissemination.

PHI 634 HOV, Topics in Metaphysics and Epistemology – Metaphysical Foundations of Bioethics

Professor David Hershenov

Wednesday, 4:00 PM – 6:40 PM

Class #: 23694

The course will investigate the major metaphysical accounts of personal identity in order to decide whether each provides support or obstacles for opposing moral positions regarding beginning and end of life issues such as abortion, embryonic stem cell research, euthanasia, genetic interventions, physician-assisted suicide, advanced directives, informed consent and organ procurement.

The theories to be discussed are Animalist, Hylomorphic, Cartesian, Constitution, Neo-Lockean, Four-Dimensionalist, and Brain (Embodied Mind) accounts of personal identity. We will explore the strengths and weaknesses of each metaphysic in an effort to determine how well the approach in question fares as a general theory of personal identity. A particular emphasis in evaluating a theory will be on how well it deals with the so called 'Problem of Too Many Minds.' How a theory fares with this problem will bear directly upon whether the approach makes informed consent in medical settings unlikely or even impossible.

We will also focus upon when each particular theory posits that someone comes into and goes out of existence. This will enable us to understand whether it is possible for a harm to occur at the time of the medical procedure in question.

PHI 637 BEE, First Year Writing Seminar

Professor James Beebe

Wednesday, 1:00 PM – 3:40 PM

Class #: 23941

This course is a writing-intensive seminar required of all incoming philosophy graduate students. This seminar will cover a variety of issues and debates in contemporary epistemology and some of their roots in the history of philosophy. Many of the issues will center around fallibilism about human knowledge, including motivations for the view, challenges that it faces, whether it should be understood in an epistemically internalist or externalist manner, the Gettier problem, ways in which it might leave open the possibility of radical skepticism, how skeptical challenges should be handled, and relevant alternatives or contextualist ways of construing fallibilism. We will also cover some topics from social epistemology such as the question of how trusting or skeptical we should be with regard to the testimony of others and whether or not we should lower our confidence when we discover that people who are just as well-informed as we are disagree with us. Data about folk epistemology gathered by experimental philosophers may also be introduced along the way.

Individual Tutorial Course Sections

See [HUB Registration site](#) for Individual Tutorial Course Sections with Philosophy Department Faculty, to be arranged with permission of instructor:

PHI 599 Graduate Tutorial

PHI 701 MA Thesis Guidance Tutorials (Arranged with Professor)

PHI 703 Dissertation Guidance Tutorials (Arranged with Professor)