

**Spring 2016**  
**Department of Philosophy**  
**Undergraduate Course Descriptions**

<http://www.buffalo.edu/cas/philosophy/undergrad-study/ug-courses.html>

**PHI 101 Introduction to Philosophy**

Professor Lewis Powell  
T TH 9:30-10:50  
Class #14045

Philosophy is a broad field of inquiry, encompassing questions about the nature of the world around us, our own natures, our values, and about how we should live our lives. In this course, we will look to historical and contemporary writings on a vast array of issues, including debates in ethics, free will, metaphysics, and epistemology. Our inquiry will span from the extremely practical to the extremely abstract, and students will develop philosophical skills for engaging with these debates.

**PHI 105 Contemporary Moral Problems**

Professor Kenneth Shockley  
MWF 9:00-9:50  
Class #23891

This introductory course is designed to introduce students to the role of ethical reasoning when we think about contemporary moral problems. Among the topics we will cover will be capital punishment, human enhancement, the limits of markets, obligations of wealthy nations to poor nations, and war. We will approach these topics in two ways. First, we will describe what it is about each of these issues that make it so important. On the basis of our understanding of what is at stake, we will work to come up with a response that everyone can acknowledge. Second, we will read through classic arguments for different positions regarding these topics.

The focus of this course will be on ethical reasoning. The tools found in ethics will be used not only to evaluate the arguments presented in our readings, but also to approach these difficult topics from our own points of view. These tools will be used to consider what options are available, how to weigh those options meaningfully, and how to render decisions based on the best available evidence. The class will emphasize the practical nature of ethics. Rather than attempt to show what is the right thing to do, the goal of this course is to develop the skills necessary to deliberate about the right course of action.

## **PHI 107 Introduction to Ethics**

Professor Kah Kyung Cho

MWF 10:00-10:50

Class #19245

Required Textbook: Max Scheler, *The Nature of Sympathy* Several Handouts;

Max Scheler is the most famous Scholar in the area of phenomenological ethics, and his "Nature of Sympathy" is by far the best known book that explored the essence of sympathy phenomenologically.

While this rich text will keep us busy for about the half of the semester, we will include in our study Ecology, Eco-ethical topics which was received at the World Congress of Philosophy at Athens in 2013 enthusiastically by audiences, for having opened the door to the living natural world from a "nature-internal" moral perspective.

## **PHI 107 Introduction to Ethics**

Professor Alexandra King

T TH 11:00-12:20

Class #13825

This course introduces students to three major areas of ethical thought: metaethics, normative ethics, and applied ethics. Metaethics is concerned with the status of morality: whether or not it's objective, what moral language means, and so on. Normative ethics asks about general theories of right and wrong - what it's right for us to do, think, and feel. Applied ethics addresses topics of particularly pressing concern, such as capital punishment, affirmative action, or donating to charity. Readings will come from a textbook as well as some historical and contemporary thinkers.

## **PHI 107 Introduction to Ethics**

Robert Kelly

M W 7:00-8:20pm

Class #23890

"This course introduces you to some of the central topics, questions, and thinkers in moral philosophy (classic, contemporary, and experimental), as well as the basic method for analyzing and constructing philosophical arguments. We will move through the main areas within ethics (value theory, normative ethics, metaethics, and applied ethics) and focus on developing the skills needed to read, discuss, and write about different issues within moral philosophy. We'll address questions like: Is anything intrinsically good for us? What makes an action morally right? Is morality just subjective? Is abortion morally wrong? Is torture

ever morally permissible? Occasionally, the readings/topics will be supplemented with relevant empirical work pertaining to the issues that are discussed."

### **PHI 115 Critical Thinking**

Professor James Beebe  
M W 3:30-4:50  
Class #21140

This course will focus upon developing students' critical thinking skills through careful analysis, reasoned inference, and thoughtful evaluation of contemporary culture and ideas. Students will learn how to clarify ideas, analyze arguments, and evaluate inductive, deductive, comparative, ideological, and empirical reasoning.

### **PHI 115 Critical Thinking**

Professor Thomas Bittner  
T TH 12:30-1:50  
Class #19246

*Forthcoming*

### **PHI 175 Introduction to Deductive Logic**

Professor Randall Dipert  
T TH 12:30-1:50  
Class #22304

*Forthcoming*

### **PHI 215 Symbolic Logic**

Professor Randall Dipert  
T TH 9:30-10:50  
Class #19247

*Forthcoming*

## **PHI 215 Symbolic Logic**

Professor John Kearns

MWF 10:00-10:50

Class #23893

In the West, Aristotle invented logic as a subject matter, or field of study. For more than 2000 years, Aristotle's logic was about all there was. In the second half of the nineteenth century, a German philosopher and mathematician, Gottlob Frege, reinvented logic. Modern logic dates from that period. In the modern period, logic quickly became an active field of research, which it continues to be. Logic is now important for philosophy, mathematics, computer science, cognitive science, and ontology, among other fields. It is a valuable resource for scholars working in those areas, and its further development promises to provide new understanding of many subjects and issues.

In this course, we develop logical theories investigating the two fundamental languages of modern logic, the propositional language whose logical expressions are symbolic connectives, and the quantificational language of first-order logic with identity. In developing each theory, we will consider the truth conditions of sentences in the language, we will learn how to understand and to make statements employing the logical expressions in the language, and will devise techniques for determining when statements are logically true, when statements imply other statements, and when statements are incompatible. For the propositional language, these techniques involve truth-tables. For each theory, we will set up a deductive system for constructing arguments and proofs which employ sentences of the logical language, and will gain proficiency in constructing such arguments.

This course is a suitable introduction to more advanced studies in logic, but the primary goal for most students taking the course is to improve the ability to recognize, and to carry out, reasoning that is deductively correct

## **PHI 234 Environmental Ethics**

Professor Kenneth Shockley

MWF 10:00-10:50

Class #19518

Environmental ethics is an area of study that examines how humans ought to relate to and interact with their environment as individuals, through organizations, and as a species. This course is designed to provide a comprehensive overview of the key philosophical issues and arguments within this growing field. It will be of particular value not only to Philosophy majors and those concentrating in environmentally oriented disciplines, but also to those with a keen interest in humankind's complicated relationship with our natural environment.

In this course we will consider the nature of this relationship, humankind's responsibilities

to and regarding that environment, the kinds of actions prescribed by those responsibilities, and possible justifications for those responsibilities. In particular, we will examine the merits of considering our responsibilities to the environment from an entirely human-centered standpoint, possible alternatives to this approach, and various ways these options might be applied to actual environmental problems. To engage in this examination adequately we will need to consider both theoretical issues underlying various approaches to the environment and the various ways those approaches have been put into practice.

### **PHI 237 Bioethics; Social and Ethical Values In Medicine**

Ariane Nomikos  
T TH 11:00-12:20  
Class #24074

In this course we will consider a variety of ethical questions that arise in the biomedical field, and we will survey various attempts to answer these questions through the lens of different ethical theories (e.g. deontology, utilitarianism). Questions to be addressed include: Is it immoral to genetically engineer humans? How should we adjudicate the conflict between one's right to control one's body and duties to save another's life? Is screening for disability immoral? Is cloning morally permissible? Is there a difference between killing and letting die? Is there a difference between refusing treatment and suicide? How should we distribute limited healthcare resources? What constitutes an appropriate relationship between medical professional and patient?

### **PHI 237 Bioethics; Social and Ethical Values In Medicine**

Brendan Cline  
T TH 9:30-10:50  
Class #24076

We have recently witnessed a dramatic increase in our technological prowess, granting us unprecedented control over our bodies and minds. These developments have confronted us with a number of ethical challenges.

In this course, we will study several classic ethical theories and survey attempts to apply them to some of the bioethical issues raised by recent technological innovations. Questions to be addressed include: Is it immoral to use biotechnology – such as genetic engineering and designer drugs – to extend human abilities and “upgrade” human nature? Are cloning and stem cell research morally wrong? What restrictions and obligations apply to medical professionals in their relationship with patients?

## **PHI 237 Bioethics; Social and Ethical Values In Medicine**

Brian Donohue  
T TH 9:30-10:50  
Class #11091

In this course, we will survey several issues in biomedical ethics, in particular (1) issues at the margins of life (embryonic stem cell research, human cloning, abortion, euthanasia, physician-assisted suicide, death, and organ donation) and (2) issues pertaining to the relationship between patients and healthcare providers (patient autonomy, informed consent, advanced directives, the nature and goals of medical practice, and conscientious objection). Before addressing these issues, we will briefly survey standard philosophical approaches to ethical theory and questions of personal identity. No prior knowledge of philosophy is required. No textbook is required, as all readings will be posted to UBLearn. Coursework will include open-book/online reading quizzes, three short papers (3-4 pages each), a midterm exam, and a final exam.

## **PHI 237 Bioethics; Social and Ethical Values In Medicine**

Clint Dowland  
MWF 11:00-11:50  
Class #24075

We begin this course by briefly considering some ethical principles that are important in relation to medical ethics, and then move on to our three main topics: (1) euthanasia and advance directives, (2) death and personal identity, and (3) abortion. Through readings and discussion, we consider different sides of some controversial issues related to these topics.

## **PHI 237 Bioethics; Social and Ethical Values In Medicine**

Jake Monaghan  
MWF 11:00-11:50  
Class #14712

This course is concerned with the moral issues that arise in medicine. We'll cover debates about what we are essentially, when we come into and go out of existence, what it takes to have moral status and who has it, the morality of abortion, suicide, and euthanasia, whether there ought to be markets in organs, and the requirements of informed consent. Readings will be available on UBLearn.

## **PHI 237 Bioethics; Social and Ethical Values In Medicine**

Stephen McAndrew  
MWF 10:00-10:50  
Class #11090

This is a course in bioethics in which we will discuss ethical problems in the medical field. To discuss these problems students will learn basic ethical concepts and critical thinking skills. These ethical concepts and critical thinking skills will be used to analyze problems such as abortion, euthanasia, informed consent to medical procedures, human cloning, and human organ procurement. Grades will be determined by class attendance and participation, three exams, and a final paper.

## **PHI 270 Modern Philosophy**

Professor Lewis Powell  
T TH 12:30-1:50  
Class #22305

We're all familiar with the claim that 'appearances can be deceiving,' or that 'things aren't always what they seem.' And we've all had experiences that exemplify those claims as well; we glance quickly from a distance and wind up mistaking a stranger for a close friend, or we get confused by an optical illusion. Since we make our judgments about the way things are on the basis of the way things seem, it makes sense to ask ourselves how we can tell the cases where appearances are deceiving from the cases where they are not.

What is reality like, and how can we figure that out from the way things seem or appear to be? This question was a major concern for philosophers in the early modern period, and in this course, we will study some of the most important/influential attempts to answer it offered by leading scholars of the day. We will also see how their answers to these questions relate to their views on freedom of the will, ethics, and personal identity.

## **PHI 288 Twentieth-Century Philosophy**

Professor Richard Cohen  
T TH 2:00-3:20  
Class #23963

Three independent schools of philosophy developed across the twentieth century: (1) Continental European phenomenology and social-political thought; (2) Anglo-American linguistic and logical analysis and (3) American pragmatism and process philosophy. Some major figures of each are: (1) Husserl, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, Sartre, Levinas, Frankfurt School, Derrida and Deleuze; (2) Frege, Russell, Moore, Ayer, Wittgenstein, Quine, Rawls,

Austin, Searle; (3) Dewey, Mead, Whitehead, Buchler, Randall Jr., Hartshorne and Neville. Depending on the Instructor, an introduction to the development and key ideas of one or more of these schools will be taught.

### **PHI 298 Animal Ethics (Special Topics)**

Professor Maureen Donnelly  
T TH 11:00-12:20  
Class #23964

Most of us agree that non-human animals do not have the same kind of rights to life and liberty as do human beings. Nonetheless, many of us assume that it is wrong to mistreat at least dogs and cats—news stories of abusive pet owners garner widespread public outrage. We also seem to think that the lives of certain wild animals—for example, Cecil the lion—are intrinsically valuable and deserve protection. But we are much less concerned about the treatment and lives of animals raised for food. And we generally take it for granted that common pests, like mosquitoes and cockroaches, deserve no consideration at all.

The purpose of this course is to consider our treatment of non-human animals in the context of ethical theories. Moral issues surrounding human-animal interaction raise a number of important and fascinating philosophical questions. Are any animals at all the kinds of beings that deserve moral consideration? If so, exactly which animals deserve consideration and on what basis? If not, why not? (On what basis might a two-month old human deserve moral consideration, but not a chimpanzee, a cat, or a dog evincing much greater cognitive sophistication and potential for co-operation?) Also, if some animals do have moral standing, do they have inviolable rights or merely interests that must be weighed against human interests? If the latter, how do animal interests compare with those of humans?

We will be particularly interested in exploring the implications of such ethical issues for common practices of food production, scientific experimentation, habitat preservation, and the use of animals for entertainment or as pets.

Students are expected to complete regular reading assignments. Grading for this course will be based on short written assignments, two exams, and one paper. No prior background in philosophy is required for this course.

### **PHI 320 Philosophy of Mind**

Professor David Braun  
MWF 10:00-10:50  
Class #23965

We will discuss some fundamental questions about the nature of minds and mental states, and what is sometimes known as “the mind-body problem”. Are minds and mental states



physical or non-physical in nature? Are mental states just complex dispositions to behave in certain ways? Are mental states identical with certain kinds of brain states? In what respect (if any) is a mind like a computer? Could a purely physical object be conscious? How can a mental state represent something, or be *about* something? Could a physical state of a brain or computer do this? Our consideration of these questions will begin with arguments for and against several theories of the nature of minds and mental states, including dualism, materialism, behaviorism, and functionalism. The course will emphasize readings in contemporary philosophical literature. Pre-requisite: one prior course in philosophy. Requirements (tentative): Two papers and two exams. The second exam will occur during the final exam period.

### **PHI 321 Philosophy of Science**

Professor John Kearns  
MWF 11:00-11:50  
Class #21142

The world we live in depends, in large part, on the development of modern science. Cars, planes, nuclear weapons, computers, smart phones, radios, television sets, the internet, Google, and on and on are only available to us because of scientific discoveries and scientific theories on which they depend. Some of these items, like nuclear weapons, we might prefer to do without, but there is no getting away from the fact that our world has been shaped by, and still depends on, science and scientifically inspired technology.

In spite of the obvious importance of science, it has become a controversial philosophical matter to determine the status of science and scientific theories. Does science aim at, and actually succeed in delivering the truth about the world and the things in it, or does it have the more limited goal of making sense of the world we encounter, and providing a successful, coherent explanatory account, one which allows us to make use of physical objects and physical processes to realize our purposes and reach our goals? If it is the latter, then there may not be a uniquely correct scientific account toward which scientific research is heading.

### **PHI 335 Contemporary Ethical Theory**

Professor Alexandra King  
T TH 2:00-3:20  
Class #22306

This course will familiarize students with contemporary ethical issues and thinkers. We will cover a broad range of topics, with central focus on the major normative ethical theories of virtue ethics, deontology, consequentialism, and ethics of care. In addition, we will ask about the relationship between free will and moral responsibility, about the status

of moral rules, and about moral versus non-moral values - and why we should be moral at all.

Students will be assumed to have at least a passing familiarity with the basic elements of Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics, Mill's Utilitarianism, and Kant's Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals. A previous course in introductory or applied ethics should be sufficient preparation.

### **PHI 342 Political Philosophy**

Professor Ryan Muldoon  
MWF 1:00-1:50  
Class #23966

What is Justice? Are rights real things, or did we just make them up? When is the state allowed to coerce us? Why have a state at all? If we have one, how do we justify it? This course will explore modern political philosophy, with a focus on the justification and legitimate purpose of the state, and how the basic structure of society influences how we engage with each other as citizens. To explore these issues, we will look at the development of the Social Contract tradition, and responses to it. We will cover such philosophers as Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Rawls, Hume, Bentham, Mill, Marx and Nozick

### **PHI 356 Game Theory and Ethics (Special Topics)**

Professor James Beebe  
Wed 6:00-8:40pm  
Class #23967

Game theory and ethics: This course will introduce the central ideas of decision theory and game theory (which are attempts to provide mathematical descriptions of rational behavior) and will apply them to understanding certain topics in ethics, such as the reasons or motivations we have to be moral, engage in altruistic behavior, cooperate, avoid free-riding, or enter into social contracts. No prior knowledge of probability, decision theory, or game theory is required

### **PHI 454 Chinese Philosophy**

Professor Jiyuan Yu  
T TH 6:00-7:20pm  
Class #23968

This course examines the basic assumptions, methods, terminologies, and doctrines of major Chinese philosophers in the classical period, including Confucianism, Daoism, Mohism,

Yangism, and Legalism. We will also briefly introduce Buddhism and Neo-Confucianism. The course assumes no background in Chinese language or culture. Course sessions will combine lectures, seminars and discussion.

Evaluation: one short seminar presentation, one term paper, and a final exam.

Textbook: Wing-Tsit Chan, *A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy*, Princeton, 1963

### **PHI 489 Advanced Logic (combined with PHI 519 Advanced Logic)**

Professor David Braun

MWF 12:00-12:50

Class #23969

This course will discuss a variety of logical systems beyond elementary logic that are commonly used in philosophy. We will, however, begin with propositional (sentential) logic, so as to develop its syntax, semantics, and proof theory in a more rigorous way than is common in beginning logic courses. We will show that these “match” in a certain sense. More precisely, we will prove the soundness of a certain deductive system for propositional logic, and sketch a proof of its completeness. We will then turn to modal logic, which is the logic of necessity and possibility. We will consider the proof theory and semantics of several systems of modal logic, and the soundness and completeness of those systems. Depending on time, we will discuss some of the following: tense logic, deontic logic, counterfactual conditionals, first-order predicate logic, modal first-order predicate logic, and definite descriptions. Required work: Approximately fourteen homework assignments, and approximately three exams. The last exam will occur during the final exams period. Pre-requisite, **strictly enforced**: Philosophy 315 (Symbolic Logic) at UB or instructor permission. Students who have not taken Philosophy 315 at UB, but who believe that they have taken an equivalent course, or are otherwise qualified to take the course, must contact the instructor before enrolling.

**See HUB Registration site for Individual Course Sections with Philosophy Faculty Meeting Days/Times Arranged with Professors**

**PHI 402 Philosophy Honors Tutorials (Arranged with Professor)**

**PHI 499 Philosophy Undergraduate Tutorials (Arranged with Professor)**

**See Office of the Registrar for policy and registration requirements**

**<http://registrar.buffalo.edu/schedules/index.php>**

*Revised 10/7/15 PH*

