

Spring 2014
Department of Philosophy
Graduate Course Descriptions

<http://www.philosophy.buffalo.edu/courses>

PHI 525 KEA
Mon, 4:00-6:50pm

Philosophical Analysis
Park 141

Kearns, J
#24067

This course will focus on speech acts, or language acts. We will begin by considering J.L. Austin's *How to Do Things With Words*, then move on to some of John Searle's major works, from *Speech Acts* through at least *The Construction of Social Reality*. Searle remains one of the most important living philosophers, and may well have a major impact on philosophy in the Twenty-First Century. However, there is more to be said about speech acts than Searle has said, so we will also consider some issues and approaches that I favor, especially in connection with illocutionary logic. It is a prerequisite of this course that students be familiar with (have read) the major works concerning reference and proper names. These include Frege's "On Sense and Reference," Russell's "On Denoting," Strawson's "On Referring," Russell's "Reply to Mr. Strawson," Donnellan's "Reference and Definite Descriptions," and Kripke's *Naming and Necessity*.

PHI 556 PLW
Thus, 1:00- 3:50pm

Top in History of Philosophy
Park 141

Powell, L
#24069

Few statements in the history of ethics are more familiar or provocative than David Hume's proclamation that "Reason is, and ought only to be the slave of the passions, and can never pretend to any other office than to serve and obey them." The relationship/conflict between sentiment and reason was a major focus in early modern ethics, and Hume is often regarded as the standard bearer for sentimentalism. In this course we will be examining Hume's moral sentimentalism, principally as it was presented in his *Treatise of Human Nature*. The class will involve close reading of the text, examination of some prominent secondary literature, and (time-permitting) discussion of some related views offered by Hume's contemporaries. Our principal goals will be to get clear on Hume's ethical and meta-ethical views, and to investigate the rich field of interpretive debates surrounding his influential ethical writings.

PHI 564 YU
Tues, 4:00- 6:50pm

Aristotle
Park 141

Yu, J
#24072

A critical examination of Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics, its central arguments, and its epistemological, metaphysical and psychological foundations. Some significant issues of the Eudemian Ethics will also be covered. Towards the end of the seminar, we will discuss the influence of Aristotle on contemporary virtue ethics.

Each student will do at least one seminar presentation and write a major research paper on the basis of the presentation and discussion. The seminar and the paper are each worth 50% of your final grade.

Text book:

The Complete Works of Aristotle, 2 vols. Ed. by J.Barnes (Princeton, 1984). If you have Greek, get the text from the Loeb Classical Library or Oxford Classical Texts.

If you want to save money, you can also use Aristotle: Nicomachean Ethics (translated by T. Irwin, Hackett, 1999, 2nd edition)

PHI 577 COH (w/ JDS 455)
Wed, 1:00- 3:50pm

Kant's 1st Critique
Park 141

Cohen, R
#24065

In his great masterwork *The Critique of Pure Reason* (1781) Kant refutes all possible "rational proofs" for the existence of God, and hence undermines the pretensions of rational theology. Yet Kant was a religious man, and his last book, entitled *Religion Within the Bounds of Reason Alone* (1792), defends a conception of religion tied to ethics. Focusing on the "Dialectic" of the first Critique, this course examines the enlightened critical thinking of Kantian thought in its relation to metaphysics, science, religion (with special attention paid to Judaism and Christianity), and ethics.

PHI 579 SHO
Tues, 1:00- 3:50pm

Metaethics
(Special Topics)
Park 141

Shockley, K
#21614

Much of the subject matter of metaethics revolves around two basic issues: the objectivity of values and the truth-aptness of value claims. In this course, following an all too brief

introduction to metaethics, we will consider these issues in light of two puzzles in ethical theory: the nature and significance of “thick concepts”, and the role of agent-neutral reasons in distinctively ethical justification. The truth apt-ness of value claims is often thought to be puzzling because of Humean concerns about the fact-value divide. Thick ethical concepts are, on some interpretations, concepts that possess both descriptive and prescriptive elements, thereby transcending the fact-value divide and avoiding this Humean concern. Understandably, they are contentious and subject to a range of interpretations (some more plausible than others). We will consider the nature of thick concepts, and the consequences for metaethics of accepting or rejecting various interpretations of them. The second puzzle we will consider involves the role of agent-neutrality in moral reasons. Ethical claims are often taken to be general or even universal: what is wrong for me to do is wrong for you to do. And one of the most common ways of making this universality clear is by appealing to the agent-neutrality of ethical claims: the validity or legitimacy of any ethical claim should not depend on the particular identity of any of the individuals subject to those claims. While it may be that all parents owe their children special treatment, there is no legitimate moral justification for my treatment of my child over general principle. The examination of thick concepts and agent neutral reasons will provide an excellent platform from which to consider a wide range of foundational issues in ethical theory.

PHI 582 LAW
Wed, 4:00- 6:50pm

Hegel’s Phenomenology of Spirit
Park 141

Lawler, J
#24149

Hegel called his *Phenomenology of Spirit* the first part of his system of science. It is the introductory part. Before there can be a scientific philosophy, the topic of the second part, it is necessary to demonstrate that scientific knowledge is both possible and necessary, starting from non-philosophical, non-scientific experience. Ordinary sensuous experience, as this is commonly be understood, therefore constitutes the starting point for this phenomenological (or descriptive) science of the development of consciousness up to the point at which it becomes necessary to embark on scientific knowledge per se. There are two basic standpoints of this phenomenology: that of the naïve consciousness that initially assumes that science and philosophy are unnecessary because common sense experience is adequate, and that of the student or reader of the *Phenomenology* who closely follows this initially common sense non-philosophical consciousness, and comprehends what the spontaneous consciousness is going through and why it must go through certain stages of consciousness as it does.

This course examines the first three stages in this process: the stage in which the spontaneous phenomenological consciousness believes that it can understand the external world without

reflectively understanding itself; the stage in which this consciousness first becomes self-conscious through practical experience, beginning with desires for natural satisfactions, proceeding through a life-and-death struggle with other conscious beings which culminates in the master-slave relationship, seeking freedom from this enslavement through initial forms of philosophical consciousness characteristic of the ancient Greek and Roman worlds, and culminating in the unhappy consciousness of medieval religion which follows; and, thirdly, the initial stage of the scientific revolution of the modern era.

The student may use any edition of the *Phenomenology*, but an on-line translation by Terry Pinkard, with the original German parallel text, will be supplied. The main text is a transliteration and elaboration of Hegel's text by Dr. Lawler, also available on line. Despite its length, much of Hegel's original text was written succinctly, as if to provide an outline for Hegel to lecture from or to elaborate with more detailed commentary. However as he set the *Phenomenology* aside to work on the further development of his system, he never provided the required elaboration and commentary. This succinctness provides a challenge to the reader to fill in sketchy presentations with references to previously developed ideas and with elaborations or examples to clarify the meaning, as well as with relevant developments from Hegel's later thought. Dr. Lawler's text is an attempt to do this while remaining faithful to Hegel's ideas.

Students are required to attend lectures, participate in discussions, and write a final paper of 15 to 20 pages on a topic relevant to the course.

PHI 598 (w/489) KOR

**Philosophy and the Senses
(Special Topics)**

Korsmeyer, C

Mon, 1:00- 3:50pm

Park 141

#24071

The five senses—vision, hearing, touch, taste, and smell—have long been recognized as the means by which we learn about the world around us: things, events, other persons, other animals. Most philosophical theories of the senses emphasize the operation of vision and hearing, the so-called intellectual or distance senses. In this tradition, the “bodily” senses of taste, smell, and touch have usually been regarded as merely animal aspects of our nature, relatively dumb, morally dubious, and aesthetically impoverished. However, recent challenges to such assumptions have invigorated interest in the study of the senses and their functions, resuscitating the value of taste, smell, and touch, and investigating their coordination with vision and hearing. This course will examine emerging philosophical perspectives on the senses, including their bodily aspects as “sensations”; their different modes of cognition; and

their roles in the arousal of emotions and in moral and aesthetic assessments. Since the revived theoretical interest in the senses is occurring across disciplines, we shall also consider some works by psychologists (e.g. on cross-modal perception); by anthropologists (e.g. on different societies' views of the senses); and by historians of culture.

PHI 599 All Faculty
ARR

Graduate Tutorials
ARR

All Faculty
Per HUB site

PHI 604 BIT
Fri, 4:30-5:30pm

Teaching Philosophy
Park 141

Bittner, T
#24068

PHI 605 BIT
ARR

Supervised Teaching
ARR

Bittner, T
#15002

PHI 634 BEE
Fri, 1:30-4:20pm

Epistemology
Park 141

Beebe, J
#24074

This course will be a comprehensive survey of experimental epistemology, the empirical study of how people think about knowledge, evidence, justified belief, and related epistemic notions. In addition to thinking critically about empirical studies, we will consider the relevance of recent findings to traditional philosophical theorizing in epistemology and various questions about philosophical methodology that they raise.

PHI 637 MIL
Wed, 7:00- 9:50pm

Philosophy of Perception
(Special Topics)
Park 141

Millar, B
#21576

Perceptual experiences seem to put you in direct contact with ordinary physical objects; when you have a visual experience of a particular book, for instance, the book itself seems to be presented to you directly. Simple reflection on what perceptual experiences seem to us to be, then, appears to support naïve realism—the view that the direct objects of perceptual experiences are ordinary physical objects, and that acquaintance with ordinary physical objects and their properties constitutes what perceptual experiences are like for their subjects. However, illusions and hallucinations present well-known difficulties for this account of the nature of perceptual experience: when you undergo an illusion the objects you perceive don't

actually instantiate the properties you seem to be directly presented with; and when you suffer a hallucination, the ordinary physical objects you seem to be directly presented with don't actually exist. In this course we will examine a number of influential attempts to provide a satisfactory account of perceptual experience that can accommodate illusions and hallucinations. First, we will examine the arguments of sense data theorists (such as Howard Robinson), who maintain that the direct objects of perceptual experiences are mind-dependent entities rather than ordinary physical objects. Next, we will examine the work of representational or content theorists (such as Gilbert Harman and Adam Pautz), who maintain that perceptual experiences are representational mental states similar to beliefs. And finally, we will consider recent attempts by disjunctivists (such as M. G. F. Martin and William Fish) to defend naïve realism against the arguments from illusion and hallucination by denying that veridical perceptual experiences are the same fundamental kind of mental state as illusory and hallucinatory perceptual experiences.

PHI 637	Categories (Special Topics)	
Course cancelled (11/12/13)		#24211

PHI 640 SAS	Graduate Research Ethics	Smith, S.L.
Wed, 5:00-7:00pm	TBA	#11090

This course will provide a comprehensive introduction to the field of ethics of scientific research and will satisfy all Federal requirements for education and exposure of graduate and post-doctoral students.

Commencing with an overview of the underlying philosophical approaches to ethics the issue of whether science is/should be value-neutral and whether there are areas of science that should not be explored will be discussed as well as the moral responsibilities of scientists who undertake research that may be used for destructive purposes.

The course will also deal with the nature of fraud, plagiarism and other unacceptable behavior in research, the ethics of scientific publication, the role of whistleblowers in science and intellectual property and scientific integrity. Human subject research will be discussed from the medical, social, and behavioral aspects, including cultural issues, and the roles of Institutional Review Boards (IRBs). The role of animals in medical research will be analyzed with particular emphasis on animal well-being and the benefits and drawbacks to animal research.

PHI 702 All Faculty
ARR

MA Thesis Guidance Tutorials
ARR

All Faculty
Per HUB site

PHI 704 All Faculty
ARR

Dissertation Guidance Tutorials
ARR

All Faculty
Per HUB site

See HUB Registration site for Individual Tutorial Course Sections with Philosophy Department Faculty to be Arranged with Permission of Instructor:

PHI 599	Graduate Tutorials	(Arranged with Professor)
PHI 702	MA Thesis Guidance	(Arranged with Professor)
PHI 704	Dissertation Guidance Tutorials	(Arranged with Professor)

Revised 11/13/2013