

**DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY
GRADUATE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS**

Fall Semester August 28 – December 11, 2023

[PHI 579 Special Topics: Locke's Essay](#)

Dr. Stewart Duncan
Thursday, 1:00 PM – 3:40 PM
Class #: 23814

Course description will be forthcoming.

[PHI 579 Nature and Culture](#)

Dr. Barry Smith
Monday, 1:00 PM – 3:40 PM
Class #: 23815

Monism is the view that there is only one kind of entity in the universe, namely matter. Dualism is the view that there is a second kind of entity, namely mind. On a simple account, we might identify nature with the sum total of what is material, and culture with the creations of the mind. This course will take this simple account as its starting point, focusing especially on questions such as:

What is nature?

What is culture?

How do we treat cultural entities – such as laws, debts, works of music, theorems in mathematics and models in physics – which are not made of matter?

What does it mean to say that something is made of matter?

Is everything in nature made of matter?

Further information is available at

https://ncorwiki.buffalo.edu/index.php/Nature_and_Culture

PHI 582 Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit

Dr. James Lawler

Wednesday, 4:00 PM – 6:40 PM

Class #: 23816

Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit is a massive work of nearly 500 pages in the English translation. What makes it more difficult for teaching purposes is that each of these pages is a highly compact condensation of thought that requires considerable elaboration for adequate appreciation. Hegel himself found it unteachable, and attempted to present courses on particular aspects of the Phenomenology, such as his lectures on Philosophy, Art, and Religion, or on the State-topics that take up relatively limited spaces in the Phenomenology. In doing so he abandoned the essence of the Phenomenology, in which such topics should be considered as integrated in a totality of forms of an evolving consciousness.

This course will provide a general understanding of the structure of this totality, while giving detailed attention to certain parts, with special attention to the Introduction, in which Hegel criticizes Kant's Critique of Pure Reason, the first chapter on Sense Certainty, and then the continuous dynamic that goes from the Life and Death Struggle to the Master-Slave Relation to the development of Stoicism, Skepticism, and the Unhappy Consciousness. We conclude with Hegel's examination of modern natural science in the chapter on "Observing Reason" that follows the Unhappy Consciousness of the Middle Ages.

All course materials will be supplied.

PHI 634 Metaphysics

Dr. Neil Williams

Tuesday, 1:00 PM – 3:40 PM

Class #: 22085

Course description will be forthcoming.

PHI 637 Special Topics: Personal Identity

Dr. David Hershenov

Wednesday, 1:00 PM – 3:40 PM

Class #: 22372

Animalism is the theory of personal identity that identifies human persons and human animals. The philosophical tradition has been mostly opposed to this identity claim, instead insisting that persons are distinct from their animals. Some philosophers have claimed that persons are souls or soul/body composites. Others claim that persons are constituted by animals, much as statues are constituted by lumps. There are also opponents of animalism who believe that persons are small roughly brain-size parts of the animal. The seminar readings will be chapters of the Snowdon-Blatti edited anthology Animalism: New Essays on Persons, Animals and Identity. One part of the book consists of essays critical of animalism penned by Derek Parfit, Lynne Rudder Baker, Mark Johnston, Dennis Robinson, and Sydney Shoemaker. The middle portion of the book contains defenses of animalism by Eric Olson,

Stephen Blatti, Rory Madden, and David Hershenov. The final third of the book is a collection of essays primarily concerned with exploring animalism's practical applications by Jens Johansson, Paul Snowdon, Mark Reid, David Shoemaker, Jeff McMahan and Tim Campbell.

PHI 637 Special Topics: PPE Seminar

Dr. Justin Bruner

Monday, 4:00 PM – 6:40 PM

Class #: 24497

This course will introduce students to the dominant framework used in PPE: rational choice theory. The readings will address both the philosophical foundations and philosophical applications of rational choice. No prior knowledge or mathematical competence (beyond basic predicate logic) is assumed.

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 605 Supervised Teaching

PHI 701 MA Thesis Guidance Tutorials (Arranged with Professor)

PHI 703 Dissertation Guidance Tutorials (Arranged with Professor)