

**DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY  
GRADUATE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS**

**Spring Semester January 27 - May 8, 2020**

**PHI 519 Modal Logic**

Professor David Braun  
Monday, 1:00 PM – 3:40 PM  
Class #: 24093

This course will introduce a variety of logical systems beyond first-order predicate logic that are commonly used in philosophy. We will spend the most time with modal logic (the logic of necessity and possibility). We will, however, begin with ordinary propositional/sentential logic, so as to develop its 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 introduce a proof system for propositional logic, and show that every theorem of this system is valid (this result is called “soundness”), and we will also sketch a proof that every valid sentence can be deduced within this system (“completeness”). We will then turn to modal logic. 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**: PHI 215 (Symbolic Logic) at UB or instructor permission. Students who have not taken PHI 215 at UB, but who believe that they have taken an equivalent course, must contact the instructor before enrolling.

**PHI 556 History of Early Modern Philosophy**

Professor Lewis Powell  
Wednesday, 1:00 PM – 3:40 PM  
Class #: 24094

In this seminar, we will examine historical (and some contemporary) views about the objects and contents of thought. Our focus will be on debates about the “way of ideas” in the early modern period, including the question of whether ideas help deal with the problem of empty terms/non-existent objects, the distinction between ideas and propositions, and the role of

ideas and objects of thoughts in distinguishing types of mental states. We will also examine some later views such as those from Brentano, A.N. Prior, Bertrand Russell, Alexius Meinong, William Alston, and more recent work on non-propositional intentionality.

### **PHI 598 Aesthetic Value and Normativity**

Professor Alexandra King  
Tuesday, 4:00 PM – 6:40 PM  
Class #: 24095

In this course, we will examine the nature of aesthetic judgment and aesthetic rules and reasons, with special attention to how these relate to the Acquaintance Principle. The Acquaintance Principle states that, in order to make a genuine or justified aesthetic judgment of something, you need to be acquainted with it. It's often thought that the Acquaintance Principle is true, and it's sometimes thought to support certain theories of aesthetic judgment over others. We will look at this connection, as well as the connection these issues bear to the also-common view that there are no general principles or rules in aesthetics.

### **PHI 604 Teaching Philosophy**

Professor Lewis Powell  
Thursday, 1:00 PM – 1:50 PM  
Class #: 24563

This will be a course in philosophical pedagogy. We will meet for one hour a week. Required work may include preparation of syllabi and assignments, practice lectures, and similar exercises intended to prepare students to teach their own courses in philosophy. This course is open only to matriculated graduate students in philosophy.

### **PHI 634 The Structure of Relations**

Professor Maureen Donnelly  
Friday, 1:00 PM – 3:40 PM  
Class #: 20905

Relations like *loves*, *between*, and *are equidistant* may apply to fixed relata in more than one way. For example, one way *loves* may apply to Abelard and Eloise is the way expressed in the claim: (*lovesAE*) Abelard loves Eloise. A distinct way for the *loves* relation to apply to these same relata is expressed in the claim: (*lovesEA*) Eloise loves Abelard. Because (*lovesAE*) and (*lovesEA*) claim that the same relation holds among the same relata, it is not obvious how to express the difference in the content of (*lovesAE*) and (*lovesEA*) in terms of that relation and these relata. But there does not seem to be anything involved in claims (*lovesAE*) and (*lovesEA*) in addition to the *loves* relation and Abelard and Eloise.

In this course, we will consider various ways of addressing this and related issues concerning the structure of relations. Our discussion will focus primarily on papers by Timothy Williamson, Kit Fine, and Peter van Inwagen, as well as responses to these, all of which raise serious problems for the so-called “standard account” according to which relations apply to their relata in an order (or direction). We will consider various alternative accounts of relations, including Fine’s own account.

## **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 702 MA Thesis Guidance Tutorials (Arranged with Professor)

PHI 704 Dissertation Guidance Tutorials (Arranged with Professor)