

Summer 2015
Department of Philosophy
Undergraduate Course Descriptions

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

PHI 101 Introduction to Philosophy

Ariane Nomikos
Online
Class #11516

This course will introduce students to some of the central questions and debates in philosophy. What (if anything) can we know about the world we inhabit, and how? What does it mean to have knowledge? How do minds relate to bodies? What is consciousness? Is freedom necessary for moral responsibility? Do we have reasons to be good? What is the extent of our ethical responsibilities to human and non-human animals? Under what conditions could a society be properly described as just? Philosophers have grappled with questions of this sort for centuries, and so will we. By examining various historical and contemporary approaches to such questions, the importance of philosophical reflection for everyday life should become evident.

PHI 101 Introduction to Philosophy

Robert Kelly
Online
Class #12721

This course will introduce students to some of the central questions and debates in philosophy. By examining various historical and contemporary approaches to such questions, the importance of philosophical reflection for everyday life should become evident.

PHI 107 Introduction to Ethics

Brandon Rudoff

Online

Class #12508

This course will serve as an introduction to the field of ethics and the study of morality. Here, we will examine questions such as: How ought we to act? What makes an action morally right/wrong? As human beings, what responsibilities do we have to ourselves and those around us? Are there objective moral facts in the world? To accomplish this, we will primarily survey the moral theories of Utilitarianism, Deontology, and Virtue Ethics. In conjunction with this, we may also cover relevant current ethical discussions, such as abortion, animal rights, euthanasia, and climate change. Grading for this course will be based upon discussion and participation in an online setting, quizzes, and a final essay assignment.

PHI 107 Introduction to Ethics

Sean McNamara

Online

Class #11517

This course will serve as an introduction to the field of ethics and the study of morality. Grading for this course will be based upon discussion and participation in an online setting, quizzes, and a final essay assignment.

PHI 115 Critical Thinking

John Beverley

Online

Class #12509

"Most of us aren't careful thinkers. We tend to take mental shortcuts and follow instinctive cues rather than reason attentively. Unfortunately, such shortcuts and cues often lead to incorrect conclusions. I imagine you can empathize with being swept up by your emotions, or perhaps being confident that the feeling in your "gut" will lead you to the truth. For instance, if you are vegetarian, then arguments in favor of eating meat may just *feel* wrong. However, I also imagine you can empathize with the experience of your "gut" *being* wrong. Untrained reactions to statistical data, for example, are notoriously unreliable. One goal of this course is learning to avoid gut reactions and pre-wired tendencies.

A second goal of the course is learning to reason correctly. To that end, we will be analyzing material from news articles and contemporary debates. These two goals converge as some of the material covered may evoke passionate responses if you are inclined to certain views.

Putting these goals together then, this course will result in your learning to neutrally evaluate arguments for and against positions, and become a more careful thinker."

PHI 237 Bioethics; Social and Ethical Values In Medicine

David Limbaugh
Online
Class #11519

"What is bioethics?" Great question. Bioethics is focused on humans and the issues that emerge in conducting biomedical and clinical research, healthcare, and the policies that ought to govern medicine, nursing, allied health, and the related biomedical sciences. This course is about making ethical decisions in medicine. We will explore what it means to live and die well, and the meaning of value in the context of medicine. This is for the purpose of building a framework with which we can think well about situations in medical ethics. We will accomplish this goal by diving into interesting articles, exploring television medical dramas, and doing a bit of writing.

PHI 237 Bioethics; Social and Ethical Values In Medicine

Jake Monaghan
Online
Class #11518

In this class, we'll focus on ethical issues that arise in the context of medicine. We start with a brief section on the nature of morality, and a method for making ethical decisions developed specifically for the healthcare professional. Next we turn to the issue of moral status. Who, or what, has moral status, and why? These considerations are applied to the debate about the permissibility of abortion. We then consider ethical problems about death. Is suicide morally permissible? Is it permissible for doctors to euthanize terminal patients? Should we honor advanced directives when patients have become severely demented and express the desire to receive lifesaving medical treatment? The course concludes by considering a topic determined by the class vote. Readings are made available for free on UBlerns.

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