

PHILOSOPHY (PHIL)

*** PHIL 034a, *Alice's Adventures with Philosophy*** Zoltan Szabo

The seminar is on Lewis Carroll. We read the two *Alice* books along with a number of commentaries, interpretations, and we listen to and watch various adaptations in music, theater, and film. The aim is to discuss how literary form and philosophical content can combine and yield a unique form of understanding. Enrollment limited to first-year students. Preregistration required; see under First-Year Seminar Program. HU

*** PHIL 080a, *Writing Philosophy: Human Beings and Nature—Topics in Metaphysics, Mind and Action*** Paul Forrester

This course serves as an introduction to topics in metaphysics, philosophy of mind, and philosophy of action. The main question that ties these topics together is: how, if at all, do human beings stand apart from the rest of the natural order? We start by covering debates in metaphysics about the structure and persistence conditions of ordinary objects. We then cover the nature of personal identity. What makes you the same person you were ten years ago? We also study some foundational issues in philosophy of mind, like how, if at all, the mind differs from the body and how they interact with one another. Finally, we discuss the nature of free will and ask whether free choice is possible in a deterministic universe. This is a "writing in the disciplines" course, and students have the opportunity to study and engage with some of the best writing in philosophy, and learn how to write like a philosopher themselves. WR, HU

PHIL 113b / CGSC 186b / RLST 186b / SAST 270b, *Fear, Suffering, Anger, Love: Buddhist Philosophy of Mind* Sonam Kachru

This course introduces students to classical Indian Buddhist philosophy of mind and the reasons why Buddhists pursued it—"the reinvention of ourselves," or the pursuit of the transformation of persons from unhealthy to healthy ways of being minded. Class materials are drawn from categories and concerns found in theoretical and practical manuals from roughly the first to the fifth centuries C.E., but the topics are salient, including: What is the difference between mind and consciousness? Is there an unconscious? How does one model mental actions, such as attention or categorization? Are our minds structured by primal fear? Or anger? Do we ever have reason to be angry? What is cognitive control? Why do minds wander? Should mental dynamics be merely observed or attenuated or sculpted in some other way? What, if anything, is peace of mind? HU

PHIL 115a, *First-Order Logic* Staff

An introduction to formal logic. Study of the formal deductive systems and semantics for both propositional and predicate logic. Some discussion of metatheory. QR
o Course cr

PHIL 118a / RLST 127a / SAST 261a, *Buddhist Thought: The Foundations* Staff

This class introduces the fundamentals of Buddhist thought, focusing on the foundational doctrinal, philosophical, and ethical ideas that have animated the Buddhist tradition from its earliest days in India 2500 years ago down to the present, in places such as Tibet, China, and Japan. Though there will be occasional discussion of the social and practical contexts of the Buddhist religion, the primary focus of this course lies on how traditional Buddhist thinkers conceptualize the universe, think about the nature of human beings, and propose that people should live their lives. Our main

objects of inquiry are therefore the foundational Buddhist ideas, and the classic texts in which those ideas are put forth and defended, that are broadly speaking shared by all traditions of Buddhism. In the later part of the course, we take up some of these issues in the context of specific, regional forms of Buddhism, and watch some films that provide glimpses of Buddhist religious life on the ground. HU o Course cr

PHIL 125a / CLCV 125a, Introduction to Ancient Philosophy Staff

An introduction to ancient philosophy, beginning with the earliest pre-Socratics, concentrating on Plato and Aristotle, and including a brief foray into Hellenistic philosophy. Intended to be taken in conjunction with PHIL 126. WR, HU o Course cr

PHIL 126b, Introduction to Modern Philosophy from Descartes to Kant Keith DeRose

An introduction to major figures in the history of modern philosophy, with critical reading of works by Descartes, Malabranche, Spinoza, Leibniz, Locke, Berkeley, Hume, and Kant. Intended to be taken in conjunction with PHIL 125, although PHIL 125 is not a prerequisite. HU o Course cr

PHIL 175b, Introduction to Ethics Shelly Kagan

What makes one act right and another wrong? What am I morally required to do for others? What is the basis of morality? These are some of the questions raised in moral philosophy. Examination of two of the most important answers, the theories of Mill and Kant, with brief consideration of the views of Hume and Hobbes. Discussion of the question: Why be moral? HU o Course cr

PHIL 177b / AFAM 198b / CGSC 277b / EDST 177b / EP&E 494b, Propaganda, Ideology, and Democracy Jason Stanley

Historical, philosophical, psychological, and linguistic introduction to the issues and challenges that propaganda raises for liberal democracy. How propaganda can work to undermine democracy; ways in which schools and the press are implicated; the use of propaganda by social movements to address democracy's deficiencies; the legitimacy of propaganda in cases of political crisis. HU o Course cr

PHIL 179a, Life Staff

Examination of elements that may contribute to a good life, including the question of which truly have value and why. Factors to consider in choosing a career; the significance of the decision whether to have children; the value of education; the importance of love and accomplishment. HU o Course cr

PHIL 180a / PLSC 191a, Ethics and International Affairs Thomas Pogge

Moral reflection taken beyond state boundaries. Traditional questions about state conduct and international relations as well as more recent questions about intergovernmental agencies, nongovernmental organizations, and the design of global institutional arrangements. HU

PHIL 182a / CGSC 282a / PSYC 182a, Perspectives on Human Nature Staff

Comparison of philosophical and psychological perspectives on human nature. Nietzsche on morality, paired with contemporary work on the psychology of moral judgment; Marx on religion, paired with systematic research on the science of religious belief; Schopenhauer paired with social psychology on happiness. HU o Course cr

*** PHIL 202a / RLST 277a, Existentialism** Noreen Khawaja

Introduction to key problems in European existentialism. Existentialism considered not as a unified movement, but as a tradition of interlocking ideas about human freedom woven through the philosophy, religious thought, art, and political theory of late modern Europe. Readings from Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Heidegger, Fanon, Sartre, de Beauvoir, Césaire. HU

PHIL 204a / GMAN 381a, Kant's Critique of Pure Reason Eric Watkins

An examination of the metaphysical and epistemological doctrines of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*. Prerequisite: PHIL 126 or DRST 004. HU

*** PHIL 227b / ENGL 268b / HUMS 254b / LITR 463b, Literature and Philosophy, Revolution to Romanticism** Jonathan Kramnick

This is a course on the interrelations between philosophical and literary writing beginning with the English Revolution and ending with the beginnings of Romanticism. We read major works in empiricism, political philosophy, and ethics alongside poetry and fiction in several genres. Topics include the mind/body problem, political ideology, subjectivity and gender, and aesthetic experience as they take philosophical and literary form during a long moment of historical change. WR, HU

PHIL 267a, Mathematical Logic Sun-Joo Shin

An introduction to the metatheory of first-order logic, up to and including the completeness theorem for the first-order calculus. Introduction to the basic concepts of set theory. Prerequisite: PHIL 115 or permission of instructor. QR

PHIL 269a, The Philosophy of Science Lily Hu

Central questions about the nature of scientific theory and practice. Factors that make a discipline a science; how and why scientific theories change over time; interpreting probabilistic claims in science; whether simpler theories are more likely to be true; the laws of nature; whether physics has a special status compared to other sciences; the legitimacy of adaptationist thinking in evolutionary biology. HU

PHIL 270a, Epistemology Keith DeRose

Introduction to current topics in the theory of knowledge. The analysis of knowledge, justified belief, rationality, certainty, and evidence. HU

PHIL 271a / LING 271a, Philosophy of Language Jason Stanley

An introduction to contemporary philosophy of language, organized around four broad topics: meaning, reference, context, and communication. Introduction to the use of logical notation. HU o Course cr

*** PHIL 274b / GMAN 254b / JDST 335b / RLST 249b, Jewish Philosophy** Paul Franks

Introduction to Jewish philosophy, including classical rationalism of Maimonides, classical kabbalah, and Franz Rosenzweig's inheritance of both traditions. Critical examination of concepts arising in and from Jewish life and experience, in a way that illuminates universal problems of leading a meaningful human life in a multicultural and increasingly globalized world. No previous knowledge of Judaism is required. WR, HU

PHIL 276a / CGSC 276a, Metaphysics Staff

Examination of some fundamental aspects of reality. Topics include time, persistence, modality, causation, and existence. HU o Course cr

PHIL 290a / EVST 219a, Philosophical Environmental Ethics Staff

This is a philosophical introduction to environmental ethics. The course introduces students to the basic contours of the field and to a small number of special philosophical problems within the field. No philosophical background is required or expected. Readings are posted on Canvas and consist almost entirely of contemporary essays by philosophers and environmentalists. SO o Course cr

*** PHIL 312a, Aristotle's Philosophy of Mind and Action** David Charles

The main aim of the course is to understand and assess central aspects of Aristotle's psychological theory, in particular those concerned with perception, memory, and action. We also consider his discussion of the relation between psychological and physical states, processes, and properties. Knowledge of Greek is not required. HU

*** PHIL 315a, Truth and Relativism** Zoltan Szabo

Recent philosophical work on relativism and the relationship between truth and objectivity. The possibility of objective truth; rational disagreement; relativism and moral and scientific truth; bases for taking a stand on objectivity's limits. Prerequisite: At least one course in philosophy. HU

*** PHIL 328b, Nozick's Anarchy, State, and Utopia** Shelly Kagan

2024 marks the 50th anniversary of Robert Nozick's contemporary classic, *Anarchy, State, and Utopia* (ASU). ASU is a brilliant and challenging defense of libertarianism—the view in political philosophy that nothing more extensive than a minimal state is morally justified—and it is filled with original, witty, and thought-provoking arguments on a wide range of topics in moral and political philosophy (to list just a few: the nature of well-being, the basis of rights, the state of nature, animal ethics, property rights, free markets, distributive justice, the nature of coercion, self-defense, and what utopia might be like). The seminar is devoted to reading ASU in its entirety and evaluating its various arguments. Even those who reject Nozick's conclusions—maybe especially those who do so—can profit immensely from working through Nozick's views. Prerequisite: A previous class in moral philosophy or political philosophy. HU

PHIL 341a / EALL 308a, Sages of the Ancient World Mick Hunter

Comparative survey of ancient discourses about wisdom from China, India, the Near East, Egypt, Greece, and Rome. Topics include teaching, scheming, and dying. HU

*** PHIL 346a / GMAN 366a / HUMS 419a / LITR 393a, The Short Spring of German Theory**

Reconsideration of the intellectual microclimate of German academia 1945-1968. A German prelude to the internationalization effected by French theory, often in dialogue with German sources. Following Philipp Felsch's *The Summer of Theory* (English 2022): Theory as hybrid and successor to philosophy and sociology. Theory as the genre of the philosophy of history and grand narratives (e.g. "secularization"). Theory as the basis of academic interdisciplinarity and cultural-political practice. The canonization and aging of theoretical classics. Critical reflection on academia now and then. Legacies of the inter-War period and the Nazi past: M. Weber, Heidegger, Husserl, Benjamin, Kracauer, Adorno, Jaspers. New voices of the 1950s and 1960s: Arendt, Blumenberg, Gadamer, Habermas, Jauss, Koselleck, Szondi, Taubes. German reading and some prior familiarity with European intellectual history is helpful but not essential. HU

* **PHIL 347b / CLCV 447b, Pleasure in Plato and Aristotle** Verity Harte

Pleasure is a central topic of moral psychology. This course focuses on certain central questions and the answers given by philosophers of Classical Greek antiquity: What is pleasure? Where and how does it fit in animal and human psychology? Where and how does it fit in a good human life? Is pleasure a good, the good, something else entirely? The main philosophers in focus are Plato and Aristotle, but the hedonist theories of Epicurus and of the Cyrenaic school are points of comparison and contrast. Our reading is supplemented by appropriate material from modern philosophical and psychological discussions of pleasure and of hedonism. All readings are in translation. Enrollment priority is given to seniors and juniors if necessary. All participants must have taken at least one prior course in the history of ancient philosophy and at least one other prior course in philosophy. HU

* **PHIL 353a, Practical Reasoning and Metaphysics** Michael Della Rocca

An examination of the metaphysical underpinnings of central concepts in the philosophy of practical reasoning. Among the concepts to be investigated are: action, reasons for action, irrational action, intention, the good, the right, virtue, direction of fit. Exploration of the near-universal dogma that theoretical reasoning and practical reasoning are distinct. Skepticism about the possibility of practical reasoning will be taken seriously. Authors to be discussed include: Anscombe, Korsgaard, Foot, Schapiro, Williams, Michael Smith, Bratman, Frankfurt, Davidson, and Thompson. Prerequisites: Two courses in philosophy. HU

* **PHIL 375a, Kant's Transcendental Dialectic** Eric Watkins

In the "Transcendental Dialectic", which forms the bulk of the second half of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant presents a powerful and sustained critique of traditional metaphysics, one that calls into question claims concerning God, freedom, and the immortality of the soul, among other things. In this seminar, we attempt to understand Kant's conception of metaphysics, how he criticizes these metaphysical claims, and what contemporary significance these criticisms have for the practice of metaphysics today. Previous coursework in Philosophy required. HU

* **PHIL 395a / CGSC 395a, Junior Colloquium in Cognitive Science** Isaac Davis

Survey of contemporary issues and current research in cognitive science. By the end of the term, students select a research topic for the senior essay. Enrollment limited to Cognitive Science majors. ½ Course cr

* **PHIL 404a, The Philosophy of Leibniz** Michael Della Rocca

A close examination of Leibniz's vast, intricate, and still poorly understood philosophical system. Topics include substance, necessity, freedom, psychology, teleology, and the problem of evil. Attention to philosophical and theological antecedents (Spinoza, Descartes, Suarez, Aquinas, Aristotle) and to Leibniz's relevance to contemporary philosophy. HU

* **PHIL 421b, John Rawls** Thomas Pogge

This seminar offers a close study of Rawls's principal writings. It explores how his thinking evolved in communication with contemporary debates in philosophy, political science, law, and economics. And it probes the suitability of his mature conception of justice in regard to the role Rawls intended this conception to play in the 21st century United States. Featuring ample feedback on written and oral work, this seminar is

meant to prepare students for future graduate work at a top institution. Prerequisites: Two courses with substantial normative content. HU

* **PHIL 426b / CGSC 426b / EP&E 490b / PSYC 422b, The Cognitive Science of Morality** Joshua Knobe

Introduction to the emerging field of moral cognition. Focus on questions about the philosophical significance of psychological findings. Topics include the role of emotion in moral judgment; the significance of character traits in virtue ethics and personality psychology; the reliability of intuitions and the psychological processes that underlie them. HU

* **PHIL 427b, Computability and Logic** Sun-Joo Shin

A technical exposition of Gödel's first and second incompleteness theorems and of some of their consequences in proof theory and model theory, such as Löb's theorem, Tarski's undefinability of truth, provability logic, and nonstandard models of arithmetic. Prerequisite: PHIL 267 or permission of instructor. QR, HU

* **PHIL 429b / RLST 430b / SAST 470b, Indian Philosophy in Sanskrit Literature** Aleksandar Uskokov

In this course we focus on issues of philosophical significance in Sanskrit literature of "non-standard" philosophical genres, i.e., other than the treatise and the commentary. Specifically we read from canonical Hindu texts such as the Upani#ads, Mahābhārata, Rāmāya#a, Bhāgavata Purā#a, Bhagavad-gītā, and Yogavāsi##ha; the classical genres of drama and praise poetry; and hagiographical literature, all in English translation. Attention is paid not only to substance but also form. The selection of philosophical problems includes philosophy of mind and personal identity; allegory; the ethics of non-violence; philosophy, politics, and religious pluralism; the highest good; theodicy; philosophical debate; etc. HU

* **PHIL 437a, Philosophy of Mathematics** Sun-Joo Shin

We take up a time-honored debate between Platonism and anti-Platonism, along with different views of mathematical truth, that is, logicism, formalism, and intuitionism. Students read classical papers on the subject. Why do we need the philosophy of mathematics? This question could be answered toward the end of the semester, hopefully.
none HU

* **PHIL 442b, Language and Power** Jason Stanley

Investigation into the way language shapes our social world, drawing on readings from feminist theory, critical race theory, formal semantics and pragmatics, political psychology, and European history. Prerequisite: one philosophy course; a basic course in logic would be helpful. HU

* **PHIL 450b / EP&E 478b, The Problem of Evil** Keith DeRose

The challenge that evil's existence in the world poses for belief in a perfectly good and omnipotent God. The main formulations of the problem of evil; proposed ways of solving or mitigating the problem and criticism of those solutions. Skeptical theism, the free-will defense, soul-making theodicies, and doctrines of hell. HU

* **PHIL 455a / EP&E 334a, Normative Ethics** Shelly Kagan

A systematic examination of normative ethics, the part of moral philosophy that attempts to articulate and defend the basic principles of morality. The course surveys and explores some of the main normative factors relevant in determining the moral

status of a given act or policy (features that help make a given act right or wrong). Brief consideration of some of the main views about the foundations of normative ethics (the ultimate basis or ground for the various moral principles). Prerequisite: a course in moral philosophy. HU

* **PHIL 457b / EP&E 235b / PLSC 283b, Recent Work on Justice** Thomas Pogge
In-depth study of one contemporary book, author, or debate in political philosophy, political theory, or normative economics. Focus varies from year to year based on student interest and may include a ground-breaking new book, the life's work of a prominent author, or an important theme in contemporary political thought. HU

* **PHIL 464a / PLSC 291a, Justice, Taxes, and Global Financial Integrity** Thomas Pogge and James Henry
Study of the formulation, interpretation, and enforcement of national and international tax rules from the perspective of national and global economic justice. Prerequisites: previous courses in one or two of the following: law, economics, political science, or political philosophy. HU

* **PHIL 469a / GMAN 288a / HUMS 480a / LITR 482a, The Mortality of the Soul: From Aristotle to Heidegger** Martin Hagglund
This course explores fundamental philosophical questions of the relation between matter and form, life and spirit, necessity and freedom, by proceeding from Aristotle's analysis of the soul in *De Anima* and his notion of practical agency in the *Nicomachean Ethics*. We study Aristotle in conjunction with seminal works by contemporary neo-Aristotelian philosophers (Korsgaard, Nussbaum, Brague, and McDowell). We in turn pursue the implications of Aristotle's notion of life by engaging with contemporary philosophical discussions of death that take their point of departure in Epicurus (Nagel, Williams, Scheffler). We conclude by analyzing Heidegger's notion of constitutive mortality, in order to make explicit what is implicit in the form of the soul in Aristotle. HU

* **PHIL 477a, Feminist Philosophy** Robin Dembroff
This course surveys several feminist frameworks for thinking about sex, gender, and sexual orientation. We consider questions such as: Is there a tenable distinction between sex and gender? Between gender and sexual orientation? What does it mean to say that gender is a social construction, or that sexual orientation is innate? What is the place of politics in gender and sexual identities? How do these identities – and especially resistant or transgressive identities – impact the creation and revision of social categories? HU

* **PHIL 480a, Tutorial** Daniel Greco
A reading course supervised by a member of the department and satisfying the following conditions: (1) the work of the course must not be possible in an already existing course; (2) the course must involve a substantial amount of writing, i.e., a term essay or a series of short essays; (3) the student must meet with the instructor regularly, normally for at least an hour a week; (4) the proposed course of study must be approved by both the director of undergraduate studies and the instructor.

* **PHIL 484a, Teleology and Mechanism** Paul Franks
Examination of teleology, with special emphasis on Aristotle, Kant, Schelling, and Hegel, as well as recent discussions of invisible hand explanations, which explain the appearance of purposiveness. Additional exploration of conceptions of mechanism,

both in the history of modern philosophy and science, and in recent debates about so-called new mechanical philosophy. HU

*** PHIL 489b / PLSC 296b, Political Philosophy in a Time of Crisis: Strauss, Berlin, Oakeshott, and Aron** Steven Smith

This course examines four giants of twentieth-century political philosophy—Leo Strauss, Isaiah Berlin, Michael Oakeshott, and Raymond Aron—who all wrote under the shadow of totalitarianism. The themes of the course include (but are not limited to) the sources of contemporary anti-liberalism, the revival of political philosophy in an age of positivism, the case for value pluralism, and the role of liberal education in a free society. One of the following are recommended, but not required: Directed Studies, Introduction to Political Philosophy, courses in relevant areas in history or philosophy. HU, SO

*** PHIL 490a, The Senior Essay** Daniel Greco

The essay, written under the supervision of a member of the department, should be a substantial paper; a suggested length is between 8,000 and 12,000 words for one-term projects, and between 12,500 and 15,000 words for two-term projects. Students completing a one-term project should enroll in either 490 in the fall or 491 in the spring. Students completing a two-term project should enroll in both 490 and 491. The deadline for senior essays completed in the fall is December 5; the deadline for both one- and two-term senior essays completed in the spring is April 21.

*** PHIL 493a / HUMS 397a / RLST 428a, Neighbors and Others** Nancy Levene

This course is an interdisciplinary investigation of concepts and stories of family, community, borders, ethics, love, and antagonism. Otherwise put, it concerns the struggles of life with others – the logic, art, and psychology of those struggles. The starting point is a complex of ideas at the center of religions, which are given to differentiating "us" from "them" while also identifying values such as the love of the neighbor that are to override all differences. But religion is only one avenue into the motif of the neighbor, a fraught term of both proximity and distance, a contested term and practice trailing in its wake lovers, enemies, kin, gods, and strangers. Who is my neighbor? What is this to ask and what does the question ask of us? Course material includes philosophy, literature, psychology, and film. WR, HU

*** PHIL 499b / CLCV 320b, Before Socrates** Brad Inwood

The origins of Greek philosophy lie in the period before Socrates and Plato. The so-called Presocratics set up many of the questions developed by Plato: the nature of being, the structure of matter, human knowledge and its limitations, causation, etc. Three of the most important early Greek thinkers are studied in this course: Heraclitus, Parmenides, and Empedocles. Knowledge of ancient Greek is not required. Prerequisites: PHIL 125, CLCV 125 or the fall semester of Directed Studies Philosophy. WR, HU