

PHILOSOPHY COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

WINTER QUARTER 2024

PHIL 107: Critical Thinking | TR 2-3:15 & 4-5:15 | BCOM GUR

Arguably, the biggest problem that humanity faces is not the problem of climate change, poverty, war, or pandemic. Arguably, the biggest problem we face is the problem of *human irrationality*, for this is what prevents us from solving all of the other problems. In order to combat human irrationality, we must learn to think slowly, to identify good and bad forms of inductive and deductive reasoning, and to investigate the nature of our biases alongside their sources. This course serves as an introduction to the art of critical thinking. In revealing cognitive illusions for what they are, we will sharpen our analytical reasoning skills and cultivate both precision and humility. (Christian Lee)

PHIL 112: Moral Issues | MWF 10-10:50 & 11-11:50 | HUM GUR

Is it wrong to eat meat? Is it wrong to prevent someone from eating meat? Is anything wrong? Are right and wrong just a matter of what society says? In this class, we explore what makes an act wrong, whether there are any true generalities about right and wrong, and whether acts such as abortion, euthanasia and capital punishment are wrong. (Frances Howard-Snyder)

PHIL 113: Philosophy of Religion | MWF 3-3:50 & 4-4:50 | HUM GUR

Is there a God? Who or what is God, anyway? Does faith in God conflict with reason? This course will equip you to think through such questions for yourself. (Dan Howard-Snyder)

PHIL 114: Knowledge and Reality | MWF 12-1:15 & 2-3:15 | HUM GUR

What is it to be a human being? Are minds the same thing as brains? Or are they something else – for instance the *software* that is *loaded onto* brains? How should we go about trying to answer these kinds of questions? For that matter, how should we go about coming to know anything? Is it even possible to know things? We will explore these questions and many related ones. (Dennis Whitcomb)

PHIL 201: Logic I | TR 10-11:15 | QSR GUR

We all know that in order to argue well you have to get the *facts* straight. Less well-known is that in order to argue well you have to get the *reasoning* straight. Not all forms of reasoning are equally good; sometimes the very structure of our reasoning leads us from truth into error. Logic is the formal study of valid (or: truth-preserving) reasoning. By slowing down to think carefully and learning to assess our own patterns of thought as well as the way others reason, we stand to become better thinkers, to develop stronger and more effective arguments, and to cultivate both precision and humility. (Christian Lee)

PHIL 320: Ethical Theory I | MWF 1-1:50 | PREREQ: PHIL 112 or 115 or HNRS 201

This course explores several historical and contemporary explanations of what makes an action right or wrong, including utilitarianism, Kantianism, and virtue theory. Other questions addressed include: How is morality related to goodness? What is it to be a virtuous person? Can an act be wrong if it harms no-one? (Frances Howard-Snyder)

PHIL 330: Metaphysics I | TR 12-1:15 | PREREQ: PHIL 113 or 114 or HNRS 201

In this survey course, we'll examine some of our most basic concepts for thinking about the world, including *space*, *time*, *identity*, and *causation*. Among other things, we'll take a trip to *Flatland* to see whether space is real, recap *Back to the Future* to determine whether time travel is possible, and examine *Freaky Friday* in order to evaluate the bodily theory of personal identity. If you like philosophy, or science, or science fiction, then this is the class for you. (Wasserman)

Phil 335: Philosophy of Religion | TR 4-5:15 | PREREQ: 1 PHIL course or HNRS 201

Many of us put our faith in other people such as our friends and family, and many of us put our faith in God or some other divine reality. What is this thing called *faith*, exactly? Is it ever valuable or rational? How is it related to faithfulness? Is it compatible with doubt? In this course, we'll take a deep dive into the role of faith in human relationships and religion. (Dan Howard-Snyder)

PHIL 366: Rationalists | TR 2-3:15 | PREREQ: PHIL 113 or 114 or HNRS 201

Do we really know what we think we know? Can our nearly universal claims to knowledge withstand the critique of the sophisticated skeptic about other minds and the material world? Learn how Descartes answers these questions by articulating, advocating for, and pursuing a particular philosophical method. How powerful is the case for the claim that there are minds and ideas but no material objects? Learn how Leibniz argues for such Idealism by way of a rationalist-inspired metaphysics. (Hud Hudson)

Phil 367: Empiricists | MWF 2-2:50 | PREREQ: PHIL 113 or 114 or HNRS 201

Are there any innate ideas? Do we possess any substantive knowledge of the world that is not ultimately justified by experience? How do our ideas, the only immediate objects of our awareness, represent their objects in the external world? Learn how Locke answers these questions by articulating, advocating for, and pursuing a particular philosophical method. How powerful is the case for the claim that there are minds and ideas but no material objects? Learn how Berkeley argues for such Idealism by way of an empiricist-inspired metaphysics. (Hud Hudson)

QUESTIONS? CONTACT US AT
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