

**Expanded Course Descriptions
UC Davis Philosophy Department
Winter, 2005**

PHILOSOPHY 1

INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY

Victor Caston

MWF 11:00-11:50, 2205 Haring

CRNs: 86416-86423

TEXTS:

The Trial and Death of Socrates, Plato

The Consolation of Philosophy, Boethius

Meditations on First Philosophy, Descartes

Dialogues on Natural Religion, Hume

COURSE CONTENT:

Introduction to philosophical issues and methods. We will consider questions such as: How should I lead my life? What is the source of morality? Given the way the world is, can there be a just God? Is there anything we can know for certain? We will approach these issues using classic historical texts, together with contemporary techniques.

REQUIREMENTS:

4 to 5 one page papers, 2 four to five page papers; and a final examination.

PREREQUISITES:

None

G.E. CREDIT:

Arts & Humanities, Writing Experience.

PHILOSOPHY 5

CRITICAL REASONING

Jan Szaif

MWF 2:10-3:00 p.m., 176 Everson

CRNs: 93401-93402, 93611-93612

TEXT:

Open Minds and Everyday Reasoning, Zachary Seech
(2nd ed. 2004)

A Rulebook for Arguments, Anthony Weston, (3d ed.
2000)

COURSE CONTENT:

The aim of this course is to help students develop their abilities to critically evaluate arguments. We will examine different types of arguments, both good and bad, and we will develop informal analytical tools for assessing these arguments. We will also

discuss some practical techniques for keeping an open mind and making rational decisions.

REQUIREMENTS: Will include a mid-term, a final, and regular homework assignments

G.E. CREDIT: Writing Experience

PREREQUISITES: None

PHILOSOPHY 14

ETHICAL AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY

Connie Rosati
TR 10:30-11:50 a.m., 6 Wellman
CRNs: 92849-92854

TEXT: *A Rulebook of Arguments* (3rd ed.), Anthony Weston
Coursepack of readings

COURSE CONTENT: The theme for this course will be discrimination. We discriminate all the time—in our choice of food, friends, lovers, careers, commitments, pursuits, and political and religious affiliations. People (and cats) with fine taste are often described as “discriminating.” The criminal law discriminates in its decisions as to whom to punish; employers discriminate in determining whom to hire; universities discriminate in determining which students to admit. So when is discrimination a bad thing? What distinguishes immoral discrimination from permissible or justifiable discrimination? These questions will form the backdrop as we examine a number of moral issues that concern discrimination, including abortion, vegetarianism, affirmative action, racial profiling, gay marriage and military service, and pornography and sexual harassment. The aim of the course will not be to give you answers to these difficult moral issues! It will be to teach you how to think more critically and carefully, to distinguish good arguments from bad ones, so that you are in a better position to begin to decide for yourself which answers really make the most sense.

REQUIREMENTS: Probably several short papers, one longer paper and a final essay exam, but TBA.

G.E. CREDIT: Art & Humanities, Writing Experience

PREREQUISITES: None

PHILOSOPHY 38

INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY OF BIOLOGY

Karen Neander
MWF 10.00-10.50 a.m., 1150 Hart
CRNs: 86428 & 86429

TEXTS:

The Selfish Gene, Richard Dawkins
The Century of the Gene, Evelyn Fox Keller and L.L. Winship
Sense & Nonsense: Evolutionary Perspectives on Human Behavior, Kevin Laland & Gillian Brown.

COURSE CONTENT:

Non-technical introduction to philosophical, social and scientific ideas in contemporary biology, with a special focus on the role of the gene in evolution and in the physiological and psychological development of the individual. This course challenges students to evaluate controversial issues related to contemporary biology and to develop their argumentative and communicative skills. Some issues that will probably be discussed include the following: the gene as the unit of selection; the idea of the “genetic blueprint”; the “selfish gene”, the scientific credentials of Darwinian explanations of human nature, society and religion; evolutionary psychology and its work on race, ethnicity, gender and sexuality; biological and genetic determinism versus pluralism, and the control of nature through bioengineering.

REQUIREMENTS:

Grades include a component based on class participation, evidenced by oral (10%), 1 page written (10%) contribution of “talking points” for class discussion, 1 written page of contributions to a class Web site (10%), and two 1-2 page position papers which might be replies to work by other students in the class (10% each). In addition there is a 6-7 page argumentative essay (30%), and a final examination (20%). Students will have the opportunity to work on position papers in discussion sections, which will be used as writer’s workshops as well as “arguer’s workshops”.

PREREQUISITES: None.

G.E. CREDIT: Arts and Humanities, Writing Experience.

PHILOSOPHY 101

METAPHYSICS

Josh Parsons
MWF 1:10-2:00 pm, 230 Wellman

TEXT: *Metaphysics: an Anthology*, Jaegwon Kim and Ernest Sosa (eds), Blackwell.
Other readings to be determined.

COURSE CONTENT: Metaphysics is the branch of philosophy that poses the most general questions about the world. Many of these questions concern what there is: is there, for example, a God? Is there, in addition to all the red things, the color red? Does the past exist? Does the future? Other metaphysical questions are about how the world is and our place in it: what makes the child born to my parents the same person as me? To what extent is the world independent of human agency?

REQUIREMENTS: Two papers and a final exam.

PREREQUISITES: One course in philosophy.

PHILOSOPHY 112

INTERMEDIATE SYMBOLIC LOGIC

G. J. Matthey
MW 10:00-11:50 a.m., 233 Wellman
CRN: 86462

TEXT: *A Modern Formal Language Primer*, Paul Teller
(Available on-line at <http://tellerprimer.ucdavis.edu>)

COURSE CONTENT: An investigation of the formal logic of predicates and quantifiers. Rules for the formation of sentences of predicate logic will be given, along with a technique for interpreting them as to yield notions of truth to an interpretation, validity, etc. Extensive treatment will be given to the relation between formal logic and natural language. Sentential logic natural deduction rules will be extended to allow inferences involving quantifiers. Techniques for dealing with identity, functions, and definite descriptions will be developed.

REQUIREMENTS: Two midterms and a final exam.

PREREQUISITES: Philosophy 12, Mathematics 108, or the equivalent.

PHILOSOPHY 116

ETHICAL THEORIES

Pekka Väyrynen
TR 12:10-1:30 p.m., 212 Wellman
CRN: 92857

TEXT: *Deontology*, ed. Stephen Darwall (required)
Course reader (TBA)

COURSE CONTENT: An investigation of normative ethical theories from a foundational viewpoint: what makes right actions right? We'll contrast main forms of "consequentialism" – the view that the rightness of an action is determined solely by the goodness of its total consequences – mainly with its "deontological" rivals. To distinguish these competing approaches to normative ethics from one another and to evaluate them, we'll think hard about many central problems in contemporary moral philosophy. These include: agent-neutrality vs. agent-relativity; the question whether it is possible to "consequentialize" any moral theory; the so-called "paradoxes of deontology" revolving around the existence of "options" and "constraints"; and the question whether we should value equality of happiness or give priority to the worst-off (or, perhaps, neither). If time permits, we'll discuss recent particularist skepticism about the existence of general moral principles. Readings will be drawn almost entirely from currently active moral philosophers.

REQUIREMENTS: Two medium-length papers and a final exam.

PREREQUISITES: One course in philosophy; one course in ethics recommended.

PHILOSOPHY 117

Foundations of Ethics

Connie Rosati
TR 9:00-10:20 a.m., 7 Wellman
CRN: 92858

TEXT: The readings will likely all be contained in a coursepack
Ethics, second edition, William Frankena (recommended)

COURSE CONTENT: This is an advanced course in ethical theory, focusing on the area of moral philosophy called metaethics. In this area, philosophers address such questions as these: What do ethical words like 'good' and 'morally right' and the judgments containing them mean? Do ethical words and judgments refer to ethical properties? Are there ethical properties in the world, and if so, what are they like? Are there truths about ethics, and if so, how do we know them? The aims of this course are two: first, to introduce you to some of the major metaethical theories, issues, and debates of the twentieth century; and second, to assist you in developing your philosophical and analytical skills. The material for this course is fascinating. It is also quite difficult, so please check to make sure you have satisfied the prerequisite.

REQUIREMENTS: I take class participation very seriously, and especially given the complexity of the material for this course, I expect that you will be in class and do your best to participate. Written requirements are TBA, but will certainly include at least two papers and a final essay exam.

PREREQUISITES: One of the following philosophy courses—114, 115, 116, 101 or 137.

PHILOSOPHY 128

RATIONALITY

Pekka Väyrynen
TR 10:30-11:50 a.m., 176 Chemistry
CRN: 86469

TEXT: Course reader (TBA)

COURSE CONTENT: 'Rationality' is a multifarious notion. Beliefs, preferences, decisions, choices, behavioral patterns, persons, groups, and institutions can be said to be rational – or not. But what is rationality? Why is it desirable, at least typically? Can it be undesirable? To what extent is it attainable? Rationality has been the focal point of much fascinating research by

philosophers and social scientists. This course will discuss some of this research. It will concentrate especially on the philosophical significance of various psychological studies of human irrationality, some philosophical accounts of ideal rationality (both theoretical and practical) and their justification, and a selection of associated paradoxes.

REQUIREMENTS: Three take-home exams and a final exam.

PREREQUISITES: One previous course in philosophy. (Since about one-third of the readings are somewhat technical, a previous course in symbolic logic or critical thinking is recommended.)

PHILOSOPHY 157

Twentieth Century European Philosophy

G. J. Matthey

MW 2:10-4:00pm, 118 Olson

CRN# 92859

TEXTS:

The Essential Husserl, Edmund Husserl
Essays in Existentialism, Jean-Paul Sartre
Martin Heidegger: Basic Writings, Martin Heidegger
The Foucault Reader, Michel Foucault
A Derrida Reader, Jacques Derrida

COURSE CONTENT:

An overview of the main developments in "continental philosophy" as it developed in Europe during the twentieth century. The main movements to be covered are phenomenology, existentialism, post-structuralism, and post-modernism. The focus will be on five of the most influential continental philosophers: Edmund Husserl, Martin Heidegger, Jean-Paul Sartre, Michel Foucault, and Jacques Derrida. Selections from the writings of each of these philosophers will be examined in some detail.

REQUIREMENTS: Two medium-length papers and a final examination.

PREREQUISITES: One course in Philosophy

PHILOSOPHY 160

PRE-SOCRATICS

Jan Szaif

MWF 12:10-1:00 pm, 108 Hoagland

CRN: 93400

TEXT: *The PreSocratic Philosophers*, Kirk, Raven & Schofield

COURSE CONTENT: The course will examine the central doctrines and themes of the major presocratic philosophers.

REQUIREMENTS: Two short papers and a final exam.

PREREQUISITES: None

PHILOSOPHY 189A

TOPICS IN THE HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY

Henry E. Allison
TR 1:40-3:00 p.m., 90 SSH
CRN: 92860

TEXTS: *The Sickness unto Death Practice in Christianity*, S. Kierkegaard
Notes from Underground and the Grand Inquisitor, F. Dostoevsky
Twilight of the Idols and the Anti-Christ, F. Nietzsche

COURSE CONTENT: The main focus of the course will be on the contrast between Kierkegaard's "existential" analysis of Christian faith and Nietzsche's radical critique of Christianity. We shall also consider some themes from Dostoevsky, who has important affinities with both thinkers. The course is intended for students with interests in the philosophy of religion, the nineteenth century roots of "existentialism," the relation between philosophy and literature, and European intellectual history.

REQUIREMENTS: Grades will be based on mid-term and final take-home essay exams and class participation.

PREREQUISITES: One course in the history of philosophy.

PHILOSOPHY 203

PHILOSOPHY OF MIND

Karen Neander
W 3:10-6.00 p.m., 2275 SSH
CRN: 92862

TEXT: TBA

COURSE CONTENT: What is the relation between intentionality and consciousness? The idea of representation has played a large role in theories of intentionality for the last fifty years, and more recently it has played a large role in theories of introspection, qualia and phenomenal consciousness. This course explores one class of answers to the question that starts this paragraph by examining representational theories of consciousness.

REQUIREMENTS: Two short papers and/or presentations and one longer paper, presumably an expansion of one of the short papers.

PREREQUISITES: Graduate standing in Philosophy or the permission of the instructor.

PHILOSOPHY 237

PHILOSOPHY OF LANGUAGE

Michael Glanzberg
T 3:10-6:00 p.m., 2275 SSH
CRN: 92863

TEXT: TBA

COURSE CONTENT: Topics in philosophy of language. Topics may include presupposition and semantics/pragmatics interaction, reference, and the nature of quantification.

REQUIREMENTS: Term paper.

PREREQUISITES: Graduate standing or permission of instructor.

PHILOSOPHY 262

ARISTOTLE

Victor Caston
R 3:10-6:00pm, 2275 SSH
CRN: 92864

TEXT: *On the Soul, Parva naturalia, On Breath*, Aristotle (trans. W. S. Hett, Loeb Classical library)
De anima, Aristotle, (trans. D. W. Hamlyn)
On Sleep and Dreams, Aristotle, (trans. D. Gallop)
Essays on Aristotle's De anima, Nussbaum, M. C. & Rorty, A. O. (eds) (recommended)

COURSE CONTENT: This quarter we will be examining Aristotle's theory of intentionality in depth. We will look at his theory of perception, representation, and thought. If time permits we will also look at the topics of action, the passions, and desire.

REQUIREMENT: None

PREREQUISITES: Graduate status or the consent of the instructor.

PHILOSOPHY 298

Group Study: Narrative

George Wilson

M 3:10-6:00 p.m., 2275 SSH

CRN: 86551

TEXT: There are no books to be purchased. Readings will be supplied in the seminar.

COURSE CONTENT: Recently there has been a resurgence in interest in topics connected with narrative. These topics include the following. What is it for a set of represented events to constitute a narrative? If necessary and sufficient conditions are impossible here, what kinds of represented connections make for a discourse with a significant degree of narrative structure? Do narratives provide or purport to provide explanations of a special character? If so, what is this character? Are narrative explanations especially valuable or, as is often claimed, especially problematic. Narration is the activity of presenting a narrative, but the concept is ambiguous when it is applied to narrative fictions. In these cases, there is both the fictional telling of the narrative by the fictional or fictionalized narrator, and there is the construction of the narrative discourse by the actual author. However, the relevant concept of fictional 'telling' is hard to apply to visual media such as cartoon strips and films. How are such problems to be resolved? In the seminar, we will address these and a number of related issues. We will read recent writings by Bernard Williams, David Velleman, and a manuscript by Gregory Currie, forthcoming from Oxford Press.

PREREQUISITES: Graduate status or the consent of the instructor.