A thematic introduction to philosophy that focuses on some of the most central issues in the field. The topics we will discuss include the mind-body problem, free will, the nature of persons, the existence of God, and the nature of good and evil. By the end of the semester, students will not only be familiar with some of the central philosophical questions, but will have developed and sharpened their analytic and argumentative skills.

Readings: course packet

**[CRN – 10005] 1013/001 *Introduction to Philosophy** MWF, 9:30-10:20 TBA

**[CRN – 10006] 1013/002 *Introduction to Philosophy** MWF, 10:30-11:20 TBA

**[CRN – 27559] 1013/003 *Introduction to Philosophy [Honors]** TR, 12:00-1:45 Montminy

This course is a thematic introduction to philosophy that focuses on some of the most central issues in the field. The topics we will discuss include the mind-body problem, free will, the nature of persons, the existence of God, and the nature of good and evil. By the end of the semester, students will not only be familiar with some of the central philosophical questions, but will have developed and sharpened their analytic and argumentative skills.

Readings: course packet

**[CRN – 33260] 1013/900 *Introduction to Philosophy** M, 6:30-9:20 TBA

**[CRN – 10011] 1013/995 *Introduction to Philosophy** Online TBA

**[CRN – 10013] 1103/001 ****Critical Reasoning** MWF, 11:30-12:20 Cook

This is not a typical philosophy class. It has the purely practical goal of developing thinking skills that you will apply outside of this particular class. Accordingly, we won’t stress facts or complicated formulas that you might quickly forget. (The facts we will discuss are fascinating and hard-to-forget discoveries about how people reason badly.) We will stress techniques that you can use in other classes and in everyday life (and on tests like the Law School Admission Test and the Graduate Management Admission Test). Coursework: three one-hour examinations, quizzes, and short homework assignments. Texts: Daniel Kahneman, *Thinking, Fast and Slow*, and Swoyer, *The Critical Reasoning Course Manual* (the Swoyer text will be available free online).

**[CRN – 10021] 1113/002 ***Introduction to Logic** MWF, 12:30-1:20 Russo

Prerequisite: Math 0123 or satisfactory score on Math Placement Test

This course provides an introduction to the aims and techniques of deductive logic with a focus on syllogistic, propositional, and predicate logic. Consideration is given to the requirements of correct reasoning with special emphasis on informal fallacies, syllogistic forms, and the analysis of extended arguments. Logic is the science of correct argument, and our study of logic will aim to understand what makes a correct argument good. What is it about the structure of a proper argument that guarantees that, if the premises are all true, the conclusion will be as well? Our subject (though we can only scratch its surface) will be *truth and proof*, and the connection between them. Prerequisites: None.

**[CRN – 33919] 1113/003 ***Introduction to Logic** TR, 12:00-1:15 Hawthorne

Prerequisite: Math 0123 or satisfactory score on Math Placement Test

Deductive Logic is the logic by which the premises of an argument, if they are true, may guarantee that the conclusion of the argument is also true. This kind of logic is a central component of human reasoning. It plays an especially important role in the sciences and in mathematics. This course will introduce you to the central concepts of Deductive Logic: truth, tautology, contradiction, contingent sentence, logically consistent collection of sentences, logically equivalent pair of sentences, valid deductive argument. You will learn techniques for evaluating these logical properties of sentences and collections of sentences. We will first study the logic of compound sentences, called *sentential logic*. Then we will investigate the logic that attends the internal structure of sentences, called *predicate logic*. We will also briefly study *Inductive Logic*, which is the logic through which evidence may support (but not guarantee) the truth of a conclusion — it is the logic by which evidence supports scientific hypotheses and theories.

**[CRN – 10024] 1213/002 *Introduction to Ethics** TR, 10:30-11:45 Sankowski

Basic issues in moral philosophy examined through a consideration of selected philosophers, including a sampling of normative theories as well as an introduction to issues of metaethics.

**[CRN – 34503] 1223/001 **Introduction to Asian Philosophy** MWF, 12:30-1:20 TBA

**[CRN – 33933] 1273/001 **Introduction to Business Ethics** MWF, 1:30-2:20 TBA

**[CRN-29629] 1273/010 **Introduction to Business Ethics** MW, 9:30-10:20 Ellis

Moral considerations pervade our lives, and business situations are no exception. In this course we will be concerned with the ethical content of commerce, from the morality of market institutions to the normative considerations involved in business customer, employer employee, and firm shareholder relations. We will consider all of these issues from the standpoints of moral psychology and moral theory, as well as by considering cases.


**[CRN - 34507] 2023/900 Existentialism, its Sources and Influences** MWF, 11:30-12:20 Heiser

What is freedom? Beyond all political debate is the question of what freedom can mean for any of us, whose human existence is necessarily historical, conditioned, and temporary. Through the writings of Nietzsche, Kierkegaard, Sartre, and others, this course will examine existentialism as one of the pre-eminent intellectual movements of the twentieth century. We will also examine existentialism’s lasting relevance for any attempt to understand freedom as more than a slogan.

**[CRN – 34506] 3023/001 *Aesthetics and the Philosophy of Art** TR, 9:00-10:15 Irwin

In this course, we’ll consider a variety of questions about art: What is art’s purpose? What makes one artwork better than another? How do we decide which is better, and do some people’s judgments carry more authority than others? How do gender and race figure in the production and evaluation of art? How can theories of art accommodate different cultural perspectives? Do artworks have an overriding value for society? What’s the right way to interpret art? We will look at some particular art forms, including photography, fashion and popular music. To keep the texture of real art in mind, we will look at images, listen to music, etc. We will consider aesthetics

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***Denotes a Core Area I 'Mathematics Component' General Education Course

****Denotes a Core Area III 'Social Science' General Education Course
Department of Philosophy  
Spring 2016  
Course Descriptions

in relation to everyday experience and human appearance. Text: a mixture of historical and contemporary works by philosophers and art theorists. Course assignments include essays and a final exam consisting of essay questions distributed in advance.

**[CRN – 34524] 3033/001 *Philosophy and Literature**  
TR, 10:30-11:45  
Olberding

This course operates on the assumption that there are elements of human experience that merit careful philosophical consideration yet resist easy capture in the abstract reasoning that is the principal instrument of philosophical work. One such element is human mortality. Death is both a potently object of philosophical reflection and difficult to address adequately using only the tools of philosophy. Narrative representation of mortality and the anxieties it engenders offers a mechanism for joining the abstract reflection of philosophy to the consideration of death as it manifests in the particular circumstances of individual persons. In this course we will read several works of fiction that aim, both directly and indirectly, to represent the mortal condition. We will treat these works philosophically, asking what insights they offer into concerns about mortality. Evaluation will include essay exams, a term paper, and short writing assignments.

**[CRN – 33262] 3273/900 *Ethics and Business**  
TR, 3:00-4:15  
Sankowski

This course will examine selected ethical issues about “economic development”. Specifically, we examine the ethically legitimate or otherwise ethically relevant evaluative standards (including normative ethical cultural, legal, and political standards) for businesses. Business organizations obviously currently do play and in the foreseeable future will continue to play an important part in the political economy of “development”. What role ought this to be? The course will be philosophical and also interdisciplinary. Options for societal arrangements will be considered. Topics will include but not be limited to some subset of the following. Business activity and “sustainable development” will be discussed, including environmental ethics/policies issues. We may consider poverty alleviation and global justice topics insofar as they are related to business. The ethics of the respective societal roles of government and market(s) will be considered. The ethical relevance of globalization will be considered. Ethical questions about corporate governance will be considered. Other more specific ethics topics about business may be examined, if there is time for that. Authors and texts discussed may include but will not be limited to some subset of: selections from the report by Gro Harlem Brundtland and her collaborators (Our Common Future, 1987). Selections may be discussed from work by the economist and philosopher Amartya Sen (selections from Development as Freedom, 1999, possibly from The Idea of Justice, 2009, and other Sen writings) and some work by the economist Joseph Stiglitz (selections from Creating a Learning Society, 2015, co-authored by Stiglitz with business professor Bruce Greenwald). There will be a midterm and a final, as well as a “research paper”.

**[CRN – 10038] 3333/001 *History of Modern Philosophy**  
MWF, 10:30-11:20  
Priselac

The way the world appears and the way the world really is come apart. Standing on a mountaintop looking out over the world below you, it sure feels like you’re standing still. Watching the sun rise and set, it sure looks like the sun is moving around the earth. By the early modern period the gaps between appearance and reality were growing to be so large that many philosophers and (what we would nowadays call) scientists started to wonder and worry whether any knowledge was possible at all for us human beings. What is the nature and structure of the world? Can humans know the answers to those questions? If so, how? In this course we’ll look at different approaches to these issues that developed in 17th and 18th century Europe.

**[CRN - 33947] 3343/001 **Chinese Philosophy (HONORS)**  
TR, 1:30-2:45  
Olberding

This course surveys Chinese philosophy, with special attention to its earliest period and the philosophers of the pre-Qin era whose influence is felt throughout China’s philosophical history. We will study classical Confucianism, Daoism, Mohism, and Legalism. The first part of the course will examine each of these major philosophical schools, giving a robust overview of the philosophical issues and debates of the time. In the second part of the course, we will focus on contemporary efforts to draw early Chinese accounts of sagehood into dialogue with contemporary research on ethics and performance psychology. In several different strands of early Chinese philosophy, the sage is described as one who is able “not to try” and yet to achieve excellence. We will look at efforts to describe the sage that combine early Chinese philosophy with current research on human skill development, emotional ease, and equanimity. Evaluation will consist in essay exams, a term paper, and short writing assignments. Course provides non-western humanities credit.

**[CRN - 34505] 3433/001 **Modern Philosophy of Religion**  
TR, 1:30-2:45  
Judisch

This course focuses on philosophical reflection about religious topics produced by thinkers from the beginnings of the modern era (circa 1600) through the early twentieth century. Much of this work concerns the rationality of religious belief – including such questions as whether and how religious belief is (or can or must be) ‘based upon reason’ – but we will also look closely at metaphysical topics at the intersection of philosophy and theology. Philosophers to be studied include Descartes, Malebranche, Leibniz, Hume, Kant, Mill, Kierkegaard, Pascal, James and others.

**[CRN – 33923] 3443/001 *Contem. Issues in Phil. of Religion**  
TR, 9:00–10:15  
Judisch

This is a survey course covering some of the major topics of interest in contemporary philosophy of religion. Our focus will be on the writings of philosophers concerning religious subjects that have been produced within the last 100 years or so. Topics to be covered include religious epistemology (whether and how we can have any religious knowledge, or justifiably hold any religious beliefs), contemporary arguments for the existence and the non-existence of God, including the most recent philosophical work on the topic of evil, and contemporary examples of philosophical theology, the attempt to use the tools of philosophy to explore and sharpen articles of religious faith. Our goal will be to get a “fix” on the state of the art in these subdivisions of philosophy of religion, and to evaluate the contemporary relationship between philosophy and religion, reason and faith.

**[CRN – 34591] 3503/001 *Self and Identity**  
TR, 12:00-1:15  
Demarest

In this course, we will explore questions of personhood. Who am I? Am I the same person from one day to the next? What makes all of my experiences mine? How does my position in the world affect who I am? How does my free will relate to who I am? What can I know about myself? Who do I want to be? These are very difficult questions and students should be prepared for a lot of reading and discussion.

**[CRN – 34508] 3533/001 *Language, Communication, and Knowledge**  
MWF, 1:30-2:20  
Priselac

Language, perhaps more than anything else, distinguishes human beings from the rest of the animal kingdom. But non-human animals do communicate: bees dance, birds sing, apes gesture, and many animals use alarm calls. In this course we will study the ways in which language and linguistic communication differ from non-human animal communication systems. Are the differences merely differences of degrees or are there differences in kind? What do these differences reveal about the nature of the human mind and its place in nature? We will use classic philosophical texts on language and communication as well as recent research from biology, linguistics, and psychology to examine these questions.

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This class will cover the conceptual issues that arise in physics and cosmology (space, time, statistical mechanics, probability, special relativity, general relativity, quantum mechanics, and the big bang). While it does not presuppose any background in math or physics, it covers issues that are conceptually very challenging. Therefore, students ought to anticipate spending a great deal of time outside of class in order to master the readings and review lecture material.

**CRN – 32641** 3623/001 Philosophical Issues In Physics and Cosmology TR, 3:00-4:15

Demarest

This class will cover the conceptual issues that arise in physics and cosmology (space, time, statistical mechanics, probability, special relativity, general relativity, quantum mechanics, and the big bang). While it does not presuppose any background in math or physics, it covers issues that are conceptually very challenging. Therefore, students ought to anticipate spending a great deal of time outside of class in order to master the readings and review lecture material.

**CRN – 34580** 3811/001 Philosophy Writing Workshop R, 9:00-10:15

TBA

**CRN – 10062** 3833/100 History of Modern Philosophy for Majors MWF, 10:30-11:20

Priselac

Prerequisites: must have passed one of the following with at least the grade of “D” PHIL 3811, PHIL 3813, or PHIL 3853

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**CRN – 34525/34526** 4293 & 5293/001 Ethical Theory M, 3:00-6:00

Zagzebski

This course is designed to provide an overview of some of the main ethical theories and topics in contemporary ethics, and some of the most important classical texts from which they are inspired. We will look at versions of virtue theory, Kantian ethics, and utilitarianism, as well as some meta-ethical issues, including the relevance of emotion to moral judgment, moral realism vs. anti-realism, moral luck, and the categories of value.

**CRN - 10319** 4893/001 Senior Capstone in Philosophy R, 3:00 – 6:00

Montminy

The main point of this course is the composition of a substantive, quality paper on a philosophical topic of the student’s choice. This term paper will be preceded by class presentations and at least two drafts. There will be no readings assigned. However, students will be expected to read each other’s drafts and provide feedback on them.

**CRN – 33929** 5143/001 Symbolic Logic II TR, 1:30-2:45

Hawthorne

The purpose of this course is to familiarize you with the scope and limits of formal logics and computations. We will investigate fundamental properties of predicate logic, including the soundness and completeness of syntactic methods (such as natural deduction proofs) for determining the validity of arguments (i.e. for determining that arguments are truth-preserving). We will look into various other meta-theorems that show important limitations on the expressive power of formal logics. For example, we will study the Godel Incompleteness Theorem, which shows the inability of any logic to compute all the truths about the natural numbers.

**CRN – 34529** 5333/001 Rationalists W, 3:00-6:00

Cook

This course covers the philosophical works of Descartes, Malebranche, Spinoza, and Leibniz—the continental rationalists. Our primary goal will be to cover topics that contemporary philosophers and historians of philosophy find of particular interest. Texts: Descartes, The Philosophical Writings of Descartes, Vol. II; Malebranche, Philosophical Selections; Spinoza, A Spinoza Reader; Leibniz, Leibniz. Philosophical Essays.

**CRN – 34527/34528** 4523 & 5523/900 Epistemology MW, 6:30-8:00

Riggs

In this course, we will investigate fundamental evaluative questions about how human beings come to represent the world in particular ways. Epistemology is often glossed as the “theory of knowledge,” but this is artificially limiting. It assumes that all the important evaluative questions about how human beings come to view the world have to do with what we know, which they don’t. It also tends to narrow the discussion to finding the correct account or definition of some phrase like “S knows that p.” While that project is interesting, there are many issues, and above all knowledge, that do not reduce to providing such an account. We will be covering some of this broader territory in this class. My hope is to make clear how all these different elements are united by a common concern to understand how best to represent the world we find ourselves in.

**CRN –33931** 6023/001 Seminar in Aesthetics and Philosophy of Art T, 3:00-6:00

Irvin

In this seminar, we will think about the ontology of art, with a special focus on metaphysically relevant social processes, particularly as they have emerged in contemporary art. Most discussion of socially constructed objects in metaphysics focuses on examples like money, games and human races, whose (alleged) existence and nature depends chiefly on large-scale conventions and patterns of behavior. But many of the facts that shape a contemporary artwork are small-scale, local and highly subject to change from one case to the next: they involve specific actions and communications by the artist, often in institutional contexts. Contemporary artworks thus offer a kind of case study that metaphysics has not previously taken up to any great extent. We will read a number of recent philosophical contributions to the philosophy of art, as well as some works written by art scholars. We will also read some chapters of my forthcoming book that will be hot off the press (i.e., I will force myself to complete them by assigning them as reading for this seminar).

This seminar will count toward the metaphysics distribution requirement. No prior knowledge about art, philosophy of art, or metaphysics will be assumed.

**CRN – 33932** 6593/900 Seminar in Contemporary Philosophy TR, 6:30-8:00

Ellis

We will be looking at the emerging psychological picture of human beings as bias having script guided, ‘boundedly rational’ agents from the perspective of formal theories of rationality (e.g., decision theory, game theory). Appearance to the contrary notwithstanding, One of the key texts will be Cristina Bicchiéri’s The Grammar of Society; other papers will be on D2L.