Philosophy

Chair: Michelle Jenkins
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Philosophy courses provide the opportunity for the development of a critical and unified understanding of experience and nature. This is accomplished through their concern — from both historical and contemporary perspectives — with the ethical, social and political, aesthetic, religious, metaphysical, epistemological, and scientific dimensions of existence. All four-credit courses in philosophy meet the equivalent of three periods per week.

Learning Goals: Upon graduation, a student will be able to:

- develop individual insights, pursue them with depth, and present them clearly in writing.
- develop individual insights and present these insights clearly and rigorously orally.
- understand the history of philosophy and be able to reconsider questions and problems as they are raised and transformed by a succession of thinkers.
- use philosophical tools for close reading, investigation, analysis, and argument.
- discover and question hidden assumptions in their own work and the work of others.

Distribution: Courses completed in philosophy apply to the humanities distribution area, except for Philosophy 200 and 488, which apply to quantitative analysis.

Total credit requirements for a Philosophy major: 32

The Philosophy major:

- 32 Credits (36 credits if pursuing honors)
- Required Courses
  - Philosophy 201 and 202
  - One course from each of the three categories: Analytic, Continental, Ethics (see course list below)
  - At least two courses from the 300 or 400 level
- Other notes
  - No one course can be used to satisfy two categories
  - Philosophy 201 and 202 should be completed before the end of the students’ seventh semester
  - No courses may be taken PDF
- Senior Requirements
  - Rewriting of a seminar paper from a 300- to 400-level course
  - Written comprehensive exam
  - Oral exam
    - Focus on revised seminar paper and answers from the written exam
- Honors
  - Students submit a Honors in Major Study Application to their department
  - Students must submit a proposal for their thesis or project
    - Must be submitted within the first six weeks of the two-semester period in which student is eligible
  - Accumulated at least 87 credits
  - Completed two semesters of residency at Whitman.
  - Cumulative GPA of at least 3.300 on all credits earned at Whitman College
  - Major GPA of at least 3.500
  - Complete a written thesis or research project prepared exclusively for the satisfaction of this program
  - Earn a grade of at least A- on the honors thesis or project and the honors thesis course.
  - Pass the senior assessment with distinction
  - The department will submit the Honors applications to the Registrar’s Office of students pursuing Honors by the specified deadline
  - The department submit “Senior Assessment/Major Study Certificate” to the Registrar’s Office no later the Reading Day

- The Honors Thesis (a total of eight credits): Majors interested in writing an honors thesis must have a cumulative GPA of at least 3.300 on all credits earned at Whitman and a major GPA of at least 3.500, must complete at least 36 credits of coursework in philosophy and complete the following:
Submit a proposal to the department two weeks before the end of the spring semester of their junior year

Get consent from a member of the department based on departmental approval of the proposal to conduct an independent study in the fall semester of their senior year

Upon completion of a successful independent study, submit a new honors thesis proposal for departmental approval by the beginning of the last week of classes in the fall semester of their senior year. If approved, then write the honors thesis in the spring semester of their senior year due the end of the first week in April

Successfully complete a public oral examination of the honors thesis before the end of the third week of April

The Philosophy minor:

- 20 Credits
- Required Courses
  - Philosophy 201 or 202
- Other notes
  - No courses may be taken PDF

Courses in Analytic, Continental, and Ethics Philosophy

Analytic:

- Philosophy 107 Critical Reasoning
- Philosophy 117 Problems in Philosophy
- Philosophy 125 Philosophy of Science Fiction
- Philosophy 137 Skepticism, Relativism, and Truth
- Philosophy 210 Epistemology
- Philosophy 235 Philosophy of Feminism
- Philosophy 261 Philosophy of Science
- Philosophy 262 Animals and Philosophy
- Philosophy 270 The Nature of Persons

Continental:

- Philosophy 215 Ethics after Auschwitz
- Philosophy 216 Cosmopolitanism, Citizenship, and Belonging
- Philosophy 318 Hannah Arendt as Political Thinker
- Philosophy 319 Frankfurt School Critical Thinking

Ethics:

- Philosophy 110 East Asian Philosophies and the Good Life
- Philosophy 115 Philosophy of Education
- Philosophy 120 Environmental Ethics
- Philosophy 127 Ethics
- Philosophy 141 Punishment and Responsibility
- Philosophy 151 Philosophy and Literature
- Philosophy 215 Ethics after Auschwitz
- Philosophy 216 Cosmopolitanism, Citizenship, and Belonging
- Philosophy 217 Bioethics
- Philosophy 218 Restorative Justice
- Philosophy 219 Case Studies in Applied Ethics
- Philosophy 220 Liberation Pedagogies

- Philosophy 320 Contemporary Pragmatism
- Philosophy 329 Wittgenstein
- Philosophy 332 Reproduction
- Philosophy 336 Language and Meaning
- Philosophy 337 Philosophy of Mind
- Philosophy 356 Contemporary Philosophy of Science
- Philosophy 488 Symbolic Logic

- Philosophy 321 Changing the Subject: Judith Butler and Philosophy
- Philosophy 331 Nietzsche and Heidegger
- Philosophy 410 Special Topics in Continental Philosophy
- Philosophy 422 Heidegger’s “Being and Time”

- Philosophy 227 Concepts of Nature in Modern European Philosophy
- Philosophy 251 Chinese Philosophy and Contemporary Issues
- Philosophy 262 Animals and Philosophy
- Philosophy 311 Plato
- Philosophy 312 Aristotle
- Philosophy 315 Happiness
- Philosophy 322 Kant’s Moral Philosophy
- Philosophy 332 Reproduction
- Philosophy 360 Asian Philosophy
- Philosophy 461 Global Health Ethics
Some Special/Variable Topics courses may be applied to the above categories. Any Special/Variable Topics courses applied to the above will be noted in the course descriptions.

**107 Critical Reasoning**  
Not offered 2022-23  
4 credits  
Focuses on principles and standards applicable to thinking critically on any topic. Arguments and their analyses, the nature and use of evidence, fallacies both formal and informal, are included in the matters addressed in the course. Intended for first-year students and sophomores; open to juniors and seniors by consent only.

**110 East Asian Philosophies and the Good Life**  
Spring  
Zhao  
4 credits  
This course aims at providing a gateway for you to engage with prominent philosophers in three major East Asian traditions, namely Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism. Such engagement takes the format of philosophical dialogues around questions that are important for us to live “a good life.” Upon completion of the course, you are going to learn about key ideas and arguments in the tradition, how to read philosophy out of historical texts situated in another cultural tradition, and ways of developing your own personal philosophy in conversations with the East Asian thinkers.

**115 Philosophy of Education**  
Not offered 2022-23  
4 credits  
This course examines a variety of issues in the philosophy of education, ranging from the general nature and proper aims of education to a variety of specific issues in contemporary educational philosophy and policy such as the role and nature of diversity in education, moral education, testing and assessment, and the role of technology in education. We start with a historical survey of some central approaches to the philosophy of education from ancient Greece and China through modern Europe and then turn primarily to contemporary thinkers debating key issues. We end the course by engaging with the thought of one of the most important progressive educational thinkers of the twentieth century, the Brazilian philosopher Paolo Freire. Students will be required to participate in class discussion, to lead at least one debate over the course of the semester, and to write several short papers.

**117 Problems in Philosophy**  
Fall  
Hanrahan  
4 credits  
An introductory study of some of the major problems of philosophy. Among those general problems considered will be the nature of philosophy; problems of knowledge; metaphysical questions concerning materialism, idealism, and naturalism; and questions of ethics. Other problems may be considered as time permits. This course is intended for first-year students and sophomores; open to juniors and seniors by consent only.

**120 Environmental Ethics**  
Not offered 2022-23  
4 credits  
Does the nonhuman world have any intrinsic value or is it valuable only because of its relation to human interests? That is, does anything besides humanity have “moral standing”? If so, what is its basis? Should we, for instance accord rights to all those creatures that are sentient? If we do, will we have gone far enough, morally speaking? What about those creatures that lack sentience? What about the environment in which all creatures, human and nonhuman, live? Does it have moral standing? In answering these questions, we will consider the works of Aldo Leopold, Peter Singer, Karen Warren, Arne Naess, and Julian Simon, among others. This course is intended for first-year students and sophomores; open to juniors and seniors by consent only.

**125 Philosophy of Science Fiction**  
Not offered 2022-23  
4 credits  
Science fiction as a genre invites us to explore distinctly philosophical questions, including questions about the nature of existence, the nature of time, what it means to be a person, the possibility of free will, and our obligations toward others. In this course, we will engage with these sorts of questions, drawing both from philosophical texts...
and from science fiction short stories, novels, and movies. This course is intended for first-year students and sophomores; open to juniors and seniors by consent only. Fulfills the Analytic category requirement for the major. May be taken for credit toward the Film and Media Studies major or minor.

127 Ethics
Fall           Jenkins          4 credits
Consists of the careful reading and discussion of several classical texts of moral philosophy. This course is intended for first-year students and sophomores; juniors by consent only; not open to seniors.

137 Skepticism, Relativism, and Truth
Not offered 2022-23   4 credits
The existence of objective truth is hotly debated, both within popular culture and in academic circles. Whether it exists at all, and about which topics, seems to make a significant difference personally, politically, and intellectually. In this course, we will begin by looking at skeptical and relativistic challenges to the existence and attainability of objective truth in general. Then, we will examine a series of more specific challenges regarding the ability of science to reveal deeper objective truths about how the world works, regarding the possibility for genuine understanding and evaluation across languages and cultures, and regarding the existence of objective moral values. We will end by considering the potential value of truth itself, and the relationship between truth and genuine happiness. This course is intended for first-year students and sophomores; open to juniors by consent; not open to seniors. Applies to the Analytic requirement for the philosophy major.

141 Punishment & Responsibility
Fall           Clearfield        4 credits
Nationwide, over two million people are now in prison, including over 2,000 at the Washington State Penitentiary here in Walla Walla. Yet as a society, there is no clear consensus regarding the goal(s) or purpose(s) of sending someone to prison. How can it be right intentionally to cause someone suffering? What is the connection between having done wrong and being justifiably made to suffer? What kind of suffering can be justified, and under what circumstances? In this course we will critically examine some of the ultimate philosophical justifications of punishment, such as deterrence, incapacitation, retribution, and rehabilitation. We also will examine importantly related questions about personal responsibility and the conditions necessary for punishment to be appropriate. Finally, we will consider the relevance and impact of excuses and mitigating factors like mental illness, age, addiction, and socioeconomic status. This course is intended for first-year students and sophomores; juniors by consent; not open to seniors.

148 Philosophy of Religion
Not offered 2022-23   4 credits
An introduction to some of the central arguments in the philosophy of religion, focusing on proofs for and against the existence of God and discussions of the nature of religious belief. This course is intended for first-year students and sophomores; open to juniors and seniors by consent only.

151 Philosophy in Literature
Not offered 2022-23   4 credits
This course serves as an introduction to philosophy via literature. Students will read a selection of both literature (novels and/or short stories) and philosophy that is structured around a set of philosophically rich questions and issues. Authors read may include Philip K. Dick, Kobo Abe, Fyodor Dostoyevsky, Julian Barnes, Franz Kafka, and Milan Kundera. Open to first-year and sophomores; juniors and seniors by consent only.

177 Special Topics: Contemporary Problems for Thought
4 credits
How is philosophy a necessary resource for responding to the most complex personal and social problems facing us today? The temptation, most especially for “pragmatic” Americans, is to see philosophy as a mildly interesting but ultimately abstract self-indulgence, and certainly not to see it as a necessary resource for, first, understanding, and
then adequately addressing the most important problems we face. This course will explore the philosophical response to one such problem. Any current offerings follow.

**200 Symbolic Logic**  
**Not offered 2022-23**  
4 credits  
Symbolic logic attempts to capture certain features of human language and reasoning in a precise, systematic way. Logic is used in some branches of philosophy, as well as in linguistics, computer science, mathematics and statistics, and other fields. In this course, we will develop techniques for working with a logical “language,” translating between that language and ordinary English, and constructing formal proofs within that language following specified rules from premises to conclusions. We will cover both propositional logic and first-order quantificational logic, as well as the basic concepts of set theory.

**201 Ancient Greek and Roman Philosophy**  
**Fall, Spring**  
Jenkins  
4 credits  
This course is a survey of some of the central figures and texts in the ancient western philosophical tradition. Readings may include texts from Plato and Aristotle, from the Presocratic philosophers, the later Hellenistic schools (which include the Stoics, Epicureans, and Skeptics), and other Greek intellectuals (playwrights, historians, orators). May be elected as Classics 201.

**202 Modern European Philosophy**  
**Fall**  
Frierson  
4 credits  
A survey of key 17th and 18th century European philosophers and texts, from Descartes’ *Meditations* through key works by Hume and Kant.

**205-207 Special Topics in Philosophy**  
A course which examines special topics in Philosophy. Any current offerings follow.

**205 ST: Climate Change: The Dystopian Present in Black and Indigenous Thought**  
**Fall**  
Edusei  
4 credits  
This course examines climate change and the Anthropocene from the perspectives of Black and Indigenous peoples. Scientific, political, economic, and environmentalist discourses on climate change often describe future catastrophes that will befall the planet. Similarly, the Anthropocene is often used as a concept that describes future worlds dominated by human caused disasters and environmental degradation. Discourses on climate change and the Anthropocene often seek to create alarm at the peril of a dystopian future. However, for many Black and Indigenous peoples, there are no future dystopias. The dystopias are now. This course interrogates Black and Indigenous humanistic, artistic, and philosophical traditions that offer alternatives to dominant conceptions of climate change and the Anthropocene. The course will focus on how such traditions describe experiences of time in ways that reframe the very topic of environmental change itself. Black and Indigenous traditions around time have important significance for understanding the field of climate justice. The significance includes topics such as envisioning just and equitable futures and the assessment of unequal burdens of climate change impacts borne by Black and Indigenous peoples in the U.S. and throughout the world. Drawing on Black, Indigenous, and other scholars of color in academic and non-academic mediums, students will engage with the lived realities and often obscured intellectual traditions that are already confronting climate catastrophes of dystopian futures. Applies to the Underrepresented Paradigms or former Foundations requirement in Environmental Humanities. May be taken for credit toward the Race and Ethnic Studies major or minor. Applies to the Ethics or elective requirement for the Philosophy major or minor. May be elected as Environmental Studies 202A. Distribution area: cultural pluralism or humanities.

**206 ST: Justice and Traditions of Environmental Ethics**  
**Fall**  
Edusei  
4 credits  
This course examines climate change and the Anthropocene from the perspectives of Black and Indigenous peoples. Scientific, political, economic, and environmentalist discourses on climate change often describe future catastrophes that will befall the planet. Similarly, the Anthropocene is often used as a concept that describes future worlds dominated by human caused disasters and environmental degradation. Discourses on climate change and the Anthropocene often seek to create alarm at the peril of a dystopian future. However, for many Black and Indigenous peoples, there are no future dystopias. The dystopias are now. This course interrogates Black and Indigenous humanistic, artistic, and philosophical traditions that offer alternatives to dominant conceptions of climate change and the Anthropocene. The course will focus on how such traditions describe experiences of time in ways that reframe the very topic of environmental change itself. Black and Indigenous traditions around time have important significance for understanding the field of climate justice. The significance includes topics such as envisioning just and equitable futures and the assessment of unequal burdens of climate change impacts borne by Black and Indigenous peoples in the U.S. and throughout the world. Drawing on Black, Indigenous, and other scholars of color in academic and non-academic mediums, students will engage with the lived realities and often obscured intellectual traditions that are already confronting climate catastrophes of dystopian futures. Applies to the Underrepresented Paradigms or former Foundations requirement in Environmental Humanities. May be taken for credit toward the Race and Ethnic Studies major or minor. Applies to the Ethics or elective requirement for the Philosophy major or minor. May be elected as Environmental Studies 202A. Distribution area: cultural pluralism or humanities.
This course will introduce the concept of environmental ethics, focusing on ethical traditions of Black, Indigenous, and other scholars of color. This course will open up to students the diverse traditions of environmental ethics with important connections to global environmental justice. Such traditions include different multi-cultural meanings of justice and equality, and the uses of these concepts in practice. In addition to learning about the environmental ethics of diverse peoples, this course will center how these ethical frameworks challenge capitalist, industrial, patriarchal, ableist, and colonial systems of disempowerment. Drawing on a range of disciplines, students will think critically through how these ethical frameworks inform the different ideas and practices for how to develop and sustain human, non-human, and environmental relationships. Applies to the Ethics, or former Critical Thinking requirement in Environmental Humanities. May be taken for credit toward the Race and Ethnic Studies major or minor. Applies to the Ethics or elective requirement for the Philosophy major or minor. May be elected as Environmental Studies 202B. Distribution area: cultural pluralism or humanities.

207 ST: Food Justice & Food Sovereignty
Spring Edusei
4 credits
Food justice and food sovereignty are movements that are at the forefront of transforming food systems throughout the world to be equitable, safe, healthy, and sustainable. The course will focus on students’ learning the histories of peoples and communities that created these significant social movements, both in the U.S. and other places. The histories of food justice and food sovereignty movements are important vectors for understanding the aspirations of Black, Brown, Indigenous, people of color, and global south peoples for ending oppression in the food system. Food system oppression refers to the numerous forms of labor exploitation, insecurity, intercorporeal violence, forced migration, cultural deprivation, and ecological degradation that characterize food consumption and supply chains today. Food justice and food sovereignty movements advocate for a new future food system free from oppression, disempowerment, and exploitation. The movements are diverse in scope, ranging from Indigenous restoration of traditional foods to agroecology. They are diverse in scale, ranging from the very local, to regional and international networks. Students in the course will gain knowledge to support further academic work and civic engagement in the food justice and food sovereignty movements. Students will develop an understanding of food systems and food policies that contribute to food systems oppression. Key to understanding oppression is the examination of diverse peoples’ food systems that existed prior to colonialism and capitalism. Drawing on a range of interdisciplinary literature and case studies, this course will both deconstruct the problems of dominant food systems and construct new visions for just, equitable, and locally-determined food systems. Applies to the Underrepresented Paradigms requirement in Environmental Humanities. May be taken for credit toward the Race and Ethnic Studies major or minor. Applies to the Ethics or elective requirements in the Philosophy major or minor. May be elected as Environmental Studies 203, but must be elected as Environmental Studies 203 to satisfy the interdisciplinary course requirement in environmental studies.. Distribution area: cultural pluralism or humanities.

210 Epistemology
Spring Hanrahan
4 credits
Epistemology is the branch of philosophy that examines the nature of knowledge and justification. We will consider questions such as: What is knowledge? How is knowledge different from mere opinion? Can we really know anything at all? What should we believe? How can our beliefs be justified? In the process, we will also consider how these kinds of epistemological questions relate to questions in other areas of philosophy and to scientific inquiry.

215 Ethics after Auschwitz
Fall Ireland
4 credits
This course examines the moral challenge of what it means to be ethical after Auschwitz. Using Hannah Arendt’s analysis of the concentration camp as a touchstone, it includes texts by Primo Levi, Victor Klemperer, Kant, Giorgio
Agamben, Karl Jaspers, and Emmanuel Levinas, as well as poems by Nelly Sachs and Paul Celan, and the film Son of Saul. Course taught in English. May be elected as German Studies 215 for students with intermediate or advanced German language skills. Students electing to take the German Studies section will complete some reading in the original German and may complete some writing, and discussion assignments in German. Open to Seniors by consent of instructor only.

216 Cosmopolitanism, Citizenship, and Belonging
Not offered 2022-23 4 credits
With the recent resurgence of nativism across the globe, the concept of “world citizenship” has received renewed attention by philosophers and critical theorists. On the one hand, the notion of world citizenship has been invoked to combat nationalism and xenophobia; at the same time, however, it remains a site of contestation over what “world” itself means as a universal idea and self-evident image of commonality or belonging. The aim of this course is to examine how philosophers and contemporary theorists have understood world citizenship, cosmopolitanism, and belonging against the backdrop of current political crises. Readings draw from contemporary and canonical figures, and include Appiah, Kant, Arendt, Derrida, Benhabib and Judith Butler. The course is writing and discussion intensive; the final integrative essay applies conceptual resources to a current political event, e.g. immigration, the status of asylum cities.

217 Bioethics
Spring Zhao 4 credits
This course introduces students to a selection of current debates in bioethics, including topics such as artificial reproductive technology, abortion, health care resource allocation, disability accommodation, genetic testing, end-of-life care, physician-assisted suicide, and clinical research. In the context of discussing these issues, we will consider various ethical theories, including theories that emphasize the primacy of character, rights, consequences, and care for others. The class will be discussion focused with an emphasis on philosophical argumentation and writing.

218 Restorative Justice
Spring Clearfield 4 credits
Restorative justice views wrongdoing as a breach of personal and/or communal relationships, and proposes that the proper response to wrongdoing is to make efforts to repair those relationships. In this course, we will examine both the theory and practice of varying forms of restorative justice, both within the U.S. and in other countries. In a final project, groups of students will propose ways that our society could implement ideas of restorative justice -- within, alongside, or in place of our current criminal justice system. Note: If possible, almost all course meetings will occur at the Washington State Penitentiary, and the class will be composed of incarcerated and non-incarcerated students. Students must follow all rules and guidelines of the Penitentiary. Consent of the instructor is required, and students must also submit to, and pass, a criminal background check conducted by the Penitentiary. All semester, the course's meeting time will be 5:00-8:30 p.m. Interested students should contact the instructor as soon as possible. Prerequisite: consent of instructor.

219 Case Studies in Applied Ethics
Fall Clearfield 4 credits
The course will begin with a brief introduction to different ethical theories and frameworks. Then for the bulk of the semester, students will work in teams to develop and support proposed resolutions to specific case-studies that the class as a whole will select. The culmination of the semester will be a public exhibition where teams will present their competing resolutions. Students will also submit individually-written position papers about the cases. Note: Almost all course meetings will occur at the Washington State Penitentiary, and teams will consist of combinations of incarcerated and non-incarcerated individuals. Students must follow all rules and guidelines of the Penitentiary on these visits. All students in the course must submit to, and pass, a criminal background check in order to participate in the course. All semester, this course’s meeting time will be 5:00-8:15pm. May be repeated for a maximum of eight credits. Previous coursework in Philosophy is not expected, but consent of the instructor is required. Interested
students are invited to contact the instructor prior to the beginning of the pre-registration period. Prerequisite: consent of instructor.

222 Liberatory Pedagogies
Spring Frierson 4 credits
Human interactions, particularly those that involve educational or caregiving relationships, can be dehumanizing and oppressive. Such interactions are also essential for becoming human, and they can truly be liberatory. How can one respect the humanity of all participants in educational relationships while also cultivating, through education, various forms of personal and social liberation? The course seeks to answer this question as it applies to “students” ranging from infants through adults, with a focus on texts by Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Maria Montessori, Paolo Freire, and bell hooks.

227 Concepts of Nature in Modern European Philosophy
Not offered 2022-23 4 credits
This course explores a variety of philosophical conceptions of nature and the natural world in Modern European philosophy, from Francis Bacon to 20th century thinkers such as Heidegger. May be elected as Environmental Studies 227.

235 Philosophy of Feminism
Not offered 2022-23 4 credits
This course will introduce students to some of the questions explored within the philosophy of feminism, questions such as: What is it to be a woman? Are women oppressed? How do institutions of motherhood, marriage, and sex shape the lives of women? To answer these questions, we will read works by Marilyn Frye, bell hooks, Andrea Dworkin, Susan Bordo, and Christina Hoff-Summers.

251 Chinese Philosophy and Contemporary Issues
Not offered 2022-23 4 credits
This course explores major schools in Chinese philosophy and how they can be applied to think about contemporary issues. Part One surveys the fundamental concepts of the three main schools in the Chinese tradition, namely Confucianism, Daoism, and Chinese Buddhism. Part Two focuses on the theoretical and practical relevance of Chinese philosophy to contemporary issues. Part Two is divided into three themes: the self and family, community and extending care, and ideal governance. May be taken for credit toward the South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies major.

261 Philosophy of Science
Not offered 2022-23 4 credits
This course focuses on philosophical issues that arise in the context of modern science. We will start with problems related to science in general, such as the difference between science and pseudoscience, the problem of induction, the nature of scientific objectivity, feminist critiques of science, and the role of values in science. We will then focus on philosophical problems arising within particular sciences, with a special focus on the philosophy of biology.

262 Animals and Philosophy
Not offered 2022-23 4 credits
Our lives are intertwined with the lives of animals. We eat them, wear them, and experiment on them, and yet we also consider them family members. What are animals such that they can serve all of these purposes? We will engage this question through two interrelated pathways. We will try to understand the mental lives of non-human animals. And we will try to define the moral dimensions of our relationship to animals. Formerly Philosophy 345-may not be taken for credit if completed 345.
270 The Nature of Persons
Not offered 2022-23
4 credits
This course will examine some key questions about the nature of persons, such as: What, if anything, binds a person together as a unified thing at any one time? What does it take for someone to remain the same person over time, and what kinds of changes would be equivalent to death? What would it take for a person to act freely and be responsible for their actions? Are human beings ever actually able to do that? We will approach those questions from both first-person and third-person perspectives, drawing on both philosophical reflection and scientific findings.

311 Variable Topics in Plato
4 credits
Students will engage in an in-depth examination of one or more of Plato’s dialogues. This examination may center on a particular dialogue, a particular question or set of questions, or a particular theme as it develops throughout the Platonic corpus. Students are encouraged to contact the professor for more information about the particular topic of the current iteration of the course. May be elected as Classics 311. Any current offerings follow.

311 VT: Plato’s Republic
Fall
Jenkins
4 credits
The Republic is one of Plato’s most famous and influential dialogues. Standing near the heart of the Platonic corpus, the Republic is wide-ranging, addressing questions of ethics, moral psychology, education, political philosophy, literary theory, metaphysics, and epistemology. In this seminar, we will engage in a sustained and careful reading of the Republic and associated scholarship about the Republic with the aim of understanding Plato’s arguments and the vision of the just and happy life that he presents within the text. May be elected as Classics 311. Distribution area: humanities.

312 Variable Topics in Aristotle
4 credits
Students will engage in an in-depth examination of one or more of Aristotle’s texts. This examination may center on a particular text, a particular question or set of questions, or a particular theme as it develops throughout the Aristotelian corpus. Students are encouraged to contact the professor for more information about the particular topic of the current iteration of the course. May be elected as Classics 312. Any current offerings follow.

315 Happiness
Not offered 2022-23
4 credits
This course is a focused exploration of the nature of happiness. In the course, we will look at the nature of happiness as it is articulated in both historical and contemporary contexts. In the first half of the course, we will look at ancient conceptions of happiness, focusing on the accounts offered in Aristotle’s Nicomachean Ethics and Cicero’s On Moral Ends. In the second half of the course, we will turn our attention to contemporary accounts of happiness, looking at treatments of happiness in both psychology and philosophy. Distribution area: humanities.

318 Hannah Arendt as Political Thinker
Not offered 2022-23
4 credits
Hannah Arendt disavowed the title of philosopher, instead describing herself as a “political thinker.” This seminar will investigate what Arendt means by this description, focusing in particular on the notions of “world,” “natality,” and what she terms the vita activa. Texts will include selections from Origins of Totalitarianism, The Human Condition, and Eichmann in Jerusalem as well as essays from Arendt’s work on cultural theory. Course taught in English. May be elected as German Studies 318 for students with intermediate or advanced German language skills. Students electing to take the German Studies section will complete some reading in the original German and may complete some writing, and discussion assignments in German.

319 Frankfurt School Critical Theory
Fall
Ireland
4 credits
This course introduces Frankfurt School Critical Theory through the writings of Benjamin, Horkheimer, Adorno, Marcuse and Habermas. Proceeding from Marx, it poses such questions as, What is ideology? How can one distinguish between ideological and non-ideological forms of consciousness? What is the Frankfurt School's notion of "critique"? The course seeks to engage the diverse answers Marxist and post-Marxist thinkers have given to these questions, considering what remains at stake in questions of ideology today. Course requirements include regular short papers, presentations, and a longer seminar paper. May be elected as German 319.

320 Contemporary Pragmatism
Not offered 2022-23 4 credits
Contemporary pragmatism largely defines itself in opposition to modern Western philosophy, which it sees as wrongly trying to establish a foundation for indubitable truth about a mind-independent and language-independent external world. This course will work through the views of some of the most important contemporary pragmatists, with particular focus on the writings of Richard Rorty.

321 Changing the Subject: Judith Butler and Philosophy
Not offered 2022-23 4 credits
This course will examine the writings of contemporary philosopher and queer theorist Judith Butler in response to seminal texts from the European philosophical tradition. These texts will include selections from Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit*, the “Second Essay” from Nietzsche’s *Genealogy of Morals,* Kant’s “What is Enlightenment?” as well as Foucault’s reply to that essay, and Levinas’ “Peace and Proximity.” The seminar will focus on, first, the close reading of the primary source philosophical texts, placing those texts into dialogue with Butler’s critical interpretation of them. Thematically, it will engage such themes as the constitution of the subject, critique, and the relationship to the Other; methodologically, it will explore Butler’s deconstructive and rhetorical style of reading, using it as an exemplar for the theoretical appropriation of traditional philosophical texts. ClassBi-weekly seminar presentation papers will be required, as well a final presentation and researched paper. The seminar is writing intensive, and emphasizes structured peer feedback. May be elected as Rhetoric, Writing and Public Discourse 321. Prerequisite: Philosophy 201, Rhetoric, Writing and Public Discourse 230, or consent of instructor.

322 Kant’s Moral Philosophy
Not offered 2022-23 4 credits
This course explores Kant’s moral theory and recent appropriations of that moral theory in contemporary neo-Kantian ethics. Prerequisite: Philosophy 127 or Philosophy 202 or consent of instructor.

329 Wittgenstein
Not offered 2022-23 4 credits
Ludwig Wittgenstein was not one but two of the most important and original philosophers of the 20th century. Throughout his life, he emphasized the importance of understanding the nature of language, through which he addressed issues including logic, epistemology, metaphysics, philosophy of mind, and ethics. However, he did so in two radically different ways early and late in his career. In this course, we will work carefully through works from both periods, supplemented by relevant secondary sources.

332 Reproduction
Not offered 2022-23 4 credits
In this class, we will explore the ethical and metaphysical questions associated with reproduction. So, for example, do we have a right to have a child? If we do, is there ever a situation when we should forego acting on that right? What obligations do we have to our offspring? Do those obligations change as our offspring grows? What relationship should heterosexual sex have to reproduction? Does this relationship shape when and whether two people engage in this activity? Finally, how does reproduction impact our understanding of our genders?
336 Language and Meaning
Not offered 2022-23  
4 credits
This course is an introduction to the philosophy of language. The focus will be on the nature of linguistic meaning and the relationship between words and the world. We also will consider some of the implications of those issues on the nature of cognition and on our understanding of reality through language.

337 Philosophy of Mind
Not offered 2022-23  
4 credits
A study of the nature and function of mind and consciousness and their place in the world of physical stuff. Readings will include classical as well as recent and contemporary work.

338-339 Special Topics: Philosophers and Philosophical Movements
4 credits
An examination of a philosopher or philosophical movement. Any current offerings follow.

340 Special Topics: Philosophical Problems
4 credits
An examination of a philosophical problem. Any current offerings follow.

340 ST: Embodied Cognition
Spring  
Frierson  
4 credits
How does your body affect who you are? Are you your body? How much of your body are you? Is your mind instantiated or located entirely in your brain, or are non-neuronal features of your body also partly constitutive of your mind? To what extent would you still be you in a different body? What features of the body are central for social recognition? How far does the “body” extend? Are your tattoos more a part of your body than your hair or your clothes? Is your cell phone part of your body? How does the body inhabit, perform, and/or limit your possible identities (gendered, racialized, disabled, and so on)? This course focuses on the relationship between the non-neuronal body and perception, cognition, and self-hood through engagement with contemporary philosophers such as Alva Noë, Evan Thompson, and Judith Butler, and scientists such as Esther Thelen and Eleanor Rosch. Applies to the Analytic requirement for the philosophy major. Distribution area: humanities.

356 Contemporary Philosophy of Science
Not offered 2022-23  
4 credits
This course offers an advanced reading of several of the most important papers in contemporary philosophy of science, dealing with issues such as the nature of scientific “rationality,” whether scientific theories contribute to understanding what is real, the nature of scientific evidence and scientific laws, and specific philosophical issues in contemporary physics and biology. Prerequisite: one philosophy course or consent of instructor.

360 Asian Philosophy of Women, Gender, and Sexuality
Not offered 2022-23  
4 credits
This seminar course explores key systems of thinking about women, gender, and sexuality in Asian traditions. Can one be a Confucian feminist? What about a Daoist feminist? How do we evaluate these culturally situated views? And most importantly, how can Asian philosophies help us understand the following dualities: sex/gender, nature/nurture, and biological/constructed? Drawing upon studies in social anthropology, psychology, and neuroscience, this seminar course critically engages with gender issues in Asian philosophy. May be taken for credit toward the South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies major.

365 Confucius’ Analects
Spring  
Zhao  
4 credits
This course is a close reading of the Analects, a seminal text in the Confucian tradition. As a class, we will explore the philosophy of the Analects and ways of reading the Analects as philosophy. We will also practice writing one’s
own philosophical commentary for the Analects following examples of historic Chinese philosophers. May be elected as AMES 365.

410 Special Topics in Continental Philosophy  
4 credits  
An examination of a text or problem from the Continental philosophical tradition. Any current offerings follow.

422 Heidegger’s Being and Time  
Spring  
Ireland  
4 credits  
Martin Heidegger’s Being and Time (1927) is arguably one of the most groundbreaking works of philosophy published in the 20th century. This seminar is an intensive exploration of Heidegger’s most important conceptual innovations in that work. These innovations include the relationship between Dasein, care, and world; the analysis of being-toward-death, anxiety, and the call of conscience; and the “destructuring” of the Western philosophical tradition. The seminar will be focused on the close reading of Being and Time supplemented by other primary and secondary sources intended to facilitate the understanding of basic terms and concepts. Course taught in English. May be elected as German Studies 422 for students with intermediate or advanced German language skills. Students electing to take the German Studies section will complete some reading in the original German and may complete some writing, and discussion assignments in German. Prerequisite: one philosophy course at the 200-level or above or consent of instructor.

461 Global Health Ethics  
Not offered 2022-23  
4 credits  
This seminar course discusses normative concepts, questions, and principles surrounding global health care from an interdisciplinary perspective. Drawing upon studies of health care policy, social psychology, and medical anthropology, this course critically engages with ethical issues such as the social epistemology of health, fair distribution of health care resources, and cultural challenges to universal health care principles.

483, 484 Independent Study  
Fall, Spring  
Staff  
1-4 credits  
Study of selected philosophies or philosophic problems. Prerequisite: consent of and arrangement with instructor.

488 Tutorial in Symbolic Logic  
Fall, Spring  
Staff  
4 credits  
An introduction to the methods of symbolic logic, including the propositional calculus, quantification theory, and the logic of relations. Recommended for, and restricted to, advanced students who are considering graduate work in philosophy. Prerequisite: consent of instructor.

498 Honors Thesis  
Fall, Spring  
Staff  
4 credits  
A course designed to further independent research or projects resulting in the preparation of an undergraduate honors thesis and including an oral defense of the central issues of the thesis to be taken during the second term of the student’s senior year. Required of and limited to senior honors candidates in philosophy. Prerequisite: admission to honors candidacy.