

Philosophy Course Offerings Summer 2020

Summer I: 5/4 – 6/22

Philosophy 100: Introduction to Philosophy
Professor Jeremy Proulx
Online

This course is a historical introduction to some major philosophical themes and thinkers. Through a reading of primary sources we will consider questions of the nature of truth, knowledge, reality, responsibility, human nature, and the meaning of human existence. The objective of the course is to furnish you with the basic philosophical-historical contexts in which the discipline of philosophy has developed and thrived. We will explore the ways in which the concerns and issues that dominated a particular period in history gave momentum the thought of some of history's most celebrated philosophical luminaries. Readings are selected from thinkers like Parmenides, Plato, Aristotle, Mengzi, Xunzi, Epictetus, Anselm, Aquinas, Hobbes, Kant, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Bergson, and James. Rather than on mastery of the course content, the emphasis in the course will be on meaningful engagement with the texts and guided discussion between students.

PHIL 100 fulfills the General Education requirement for Area IV: Knowledge of the Disciplines in the Humanities.

PHIL 120: Introduction to Critical Reasoning
Professor Brian Bruya
Online

An introduction to the techniques of identifying and evaluating arguments. The emphasis will be on the enhancement of reasoning skills through the study of arguments in their natural setting in newspapers, political speeches, advertising, etc. The course also may include such

related topics as fallacies, inductive reasoning, and the logic of explanation in the social sciences.

PHIL 120 fulfills the General Education requirement for Area IV: Knowledge of the Disciplines in the Humanities.

PHIL 120 fulfills the Logic and Reasoning requirement in the Philosophy Program

PHIL 221 Business Ethics
Professor Jill Dieterle
Online

This course deals with the interaction between ethics and business. What is the role of morality in the context of business? Should the only objective of businesses be to make money while staying within the law? Should corporations have rights? What rights and obligations should employees have? How far may one's employer justifiably intrude into one's personal life? We will examine these and other questions in PHIL 221 Business Ethics.

PHIL 221 fulfills the General Education requirement for Area IV: Knowledge of the Disciplines in the Humanities.

PHIL 221 fulfills the Ethics and Value Theory requirement in the Philosophy Program

PHIL 223 Medical Ethics
Professor Jill Dieterle
Online

This course is an examination of ethical issues in medicine and health care.

For example:

In Fall 2018, a scientist in China announced that he had edited the genes of two embryos. The two embryos were implanted via IVF, and, eventually twin girls were born. Is gene editing morally permissible? What values underwrite such processes? What values warn against them? How do we assess this situation?

In PHIL 223 Medical Ethics, we'll talk about the ethical issues involved in genetic manipulation. We'll also talk about cases where patient autonomy and provider rights of conscience conflict. We'll discuss the just allocation of scarce medical resources, the ethical status of surrogate motherhood and in vitro fertilization, and whether having children, in and of itself, could be immoral. We'll end the semester with a discussion of end of life care and physician assisted suicide.

PHIL 223 fulfills the General Education requirement for Area IV: Knowledge of the Disciplines in the Humanities.

PHIL 223 fulfills the Ethics and Value Theory requirement in the Philosophy Program

PHIL 226 Feminist Theory
Professor Laura McMahon
Online

This course engages in a philosophical study of the situation of women in the contemporary world—a situation that is in deep and pervasive respects a situation of inequality and oppression. In order to carry out this study, we will engage with major philosophical insights that are of interest to human experience generally, and that are also highly relevant to feminist analyses and practices devoted to understanding and transforming situations of oppression for women as well as for other disadvantaged groups. Through studies of work from authors such as Simone de Beauvoir, Iris Marion Young, Angela Davis, Judith Butler, Gloria Anzaldúa, Evelyn Fox Keller, Susan Moller Okin, and Uma Narayan, we will explore questions concerning i) the specific nature of oppression and possibilities for resistance; ii) the embodied, intersectional, and performative nature of identity; (iii) feminist approaches to science and other forms of collective knowledge; and (iv) challenges and new possibilities that arise in opposing the oppression of women in postcolonial, global contexts.

PHIL 226 fulfills the General Education requirement for either Area IV: Knowledge of the Disciplines in the Humanities or Global Awareness.

PHIL 226 fulfills the Eastern and Global requirement in the Philosophy Program.

Summer II: 6/23 – 8/10

PHIL 100 Introduction to Philosophy Professor Brian Coffey Online

This course will introduce students to the study of Philosophy by exploring the tools and techniques of philosophical inquiry, and utilizing those tools to evaluate answers to the ‘big’ philosophical questions. Topics for discussion might include: What do we know, and how do we know it? Do we have free will? Does God exist? What is the relation of our minds and bodies? How ought we to live? What if anything, is ‘the meaning of life’? Our discussion of these issues will be inspired and informed by both classical and contemporary writings that we will read carefully and critically. We will not be passively learning about philosophy—we will be *doing philosophy*.

PHIL 100 fulfills the General Education requirement for Area IV: Knowledge of the Disciplines in the Humanities.

PHIL 110 Philosophies of Life Professor Jeremy Proulx Online

In this course we will explore different philosophical accounts of life, meaning in life, and the value of life. What does it mean to be alive? Can a machine be alive? Is life inherently meaningful or is the constitution of meaning in life up to us? What is the value of life, for humans and more generally? How do we find meaning in life? Can the value of life even be responsibly assessed, especially by the living? To address questions like this, we will read selections from thinkers like Aristotle, Epictetus, Nietzsche, and Camus. We will also consider more recent philosophical debates about meaning in life found in thinkers like Nagel, Blackburn, and Quinn. Rather than on mastery of the course content, the emphasis in the course will be on meaningful engagement with the texts and guided discussion between students.

PHIL 110 fulfills the General Education requirement for Area IV: Knowledge of the Disciplines in the Humanities.

PHIL 220 Ethics
Professor Brian Coffey
Online

This course will introduce students to the philosophical study of Ethics by exploring the tools and techniques of philosophical inquiry, and utilizing those tools to evaluate several important moral theories. Topics for discussion might include: Is anything really right or wrong, or is it all ‘subjective’? What is the relation of ethics to law? What is its relation to religion, or society? What, if anything, is truly valuable? Which features matter most when judging the ethics of a situation? Is there one best moral theory or do several theories reveal important insights into what we ought to do? etc. We will carefully and critically read both classical and contemporary writings in ethics with the goal of not only understanding what others have written before us, but also how we can use their insights to help us deliberate about ethical choices in our own lives. We will not be passively learning about ethics—we will be *putting our ethical expertise into practice*.

PHIL 220 fulfills the General Education requirement for Area IV: Knowledge of the Disciplines in the Humanities.

PHIL 220 fulfills the Ethics and Value Theory requirement in the Philosophy Program

PHIL 226 Feminist Theory
Professor Peter Higgins
Online

Feminist theory is an area of thought that seeks to expose, analyze and critically assess the justice of gender inequalities present in our society, in other societies, and globally. This course focuses on six sets of questions:

- What is feminism?
- What is gender? Is gender “natural”? Are norms of gender unjust?

- What is sexism? Why is sexism unjust?
- How is contemporary American society sexist, if at all? Are women oppressed? Are men oppressed?
- How should feminists reason about apparently sexist practices occurring outside of their own society?
- What are the ultimate goals of feminism? What would a gender-just society look like?

This is a foundational course for Philosophy majors and minors interested in social justice.

PHIL 226 fulfills the General Education requirement for either Area IV: Knowledge of the Disciplines in the Humanities or Global Awareness.

PHIL 226 fulfills the Eastern and Global requirement in the Philosophy Program.
