

Fall 2018
Philosophy
Graduate Course Descriptions

PHIL 525: Theories of Justice
Professor J. Michael Scoville
TR 3:30-4:45 p.m.

This course on theories of justice will be largely focused on climate justice. Our investigations will involve, in part, grappling with some general philosophical issues that arise for any serious theorizing about justice. The issues I have in mind include: puzzles and complexities relating to intergenerational justice; the value and limitations of ideal versus nonideal theorizing about justice; how to conceptualize responsibility (individual, collective, institutional) for causing and redressing injustice; and the nature and scope of justice-based claims and obligations, and how these relate to other values, claims, and obligations.

In addition to considering the issues just mentioned, we will explore a number of challenges and questions that are specific to climate change and climate justice. These include: climate change and the creation of new kinds of vulnerability, risk, and harm; determining fair burden sharing with respect to mitigating and adapting to climate change; determining fair allocations of the remaining atmospheric capacity to absorb anthropogenic emissions; the relation of climate justice to other justice-based aims, notably, the alleviation of global poverty and inequality; collective action problems and motivational gaps in addressing climate change; institutional barriers to addressing climate change; and consideration of the environmental values and goods most threatened by climate change.

PHIL 529: Topics in Environmental Philosophy: Non-Human Animals
Professor Jill Dieterle
TR 12:30-1:45 p.m.

This instance of PHIL 429W focuses on non-human animals. We will begin with an examination of moral behavior in non-human animals. Current research demonstrates that many exhibit behavior that is consistent with having the capacities of empathy, altruism, and cooperation. There is evidence that at least some non-human animals have a sense of fairness. We will examine this research and the assumptions behind it. For example, Bekoff & Pierce (2009) argue that many non-human animals are moral *agents*. But what do they mean by “morality”? And what do they mean by “agent”? Rowlands (2012) defends the view that (at least some) non-human animals are moral *subjects* in that they have the ability to act for moral reasons, but since they are not *reflective* about those reasons, they are not moral agents. And so on. We will also look at some work on non-human animal cognition and emotion. Finally, we will talk about the moral status of non-human animals. Do the

findings of current research on animal moral behavior and animal cognition have implications for our duties toward them?

PHIL 575: Contemporary Philosophical Practices
Professor Kate Mehuron
MW 2:00-3:15 p.m.

We will examine the viewpoint that philosophical expertise can be put to practical use in a variety of life settings, using a variety of philosophical methods to do so. The rise of contemporary philosophical practices has produced a global renaissance of philosophy as a discipline of practical import. PHIL 575 studies the ways in which philosophical methods are applicable in a global, applied context, and the concomitant theoretical critiques that inform these methods.

Specific themes in this seminar will include: philosophical foundations of psychotherapy; philosophical counseling practice and the critique of bio-medical mental health industries; philosophical practice in health care contexts with critical surveys of the use of case studies in bioethics practice and the “recovered memory” debates in feminism, philosophy, and psychiatry.

PHIL 580: Philosophy of Science
Professor W. John Koolage
TR 2-3:15 p.m.

In this iteration of PHIL 480/580, we will explore three contemporary issues in the General Philosophy of Science. First, we will read and think about scientific epistemology. Here will focus on the ideas of induction, explanation, confirmation, evidence, and falsification. We will read some of the “heavy hitters” in scientific epistemology, including, but not limited to, Deborah Mayo, Elliott Sober, Thomas Kuhn, Karl Popper, Gilbert Harman, Philip Kitcher, Helen Longino, Rudolf Carnap and W.V.O. Quine. Second, we will explore an older (1990s) discussion regarding scientific realism (the view that the sciences offer us true or approximately true descriptions of the world) and a newer (2010s) discussion regarding selective realism. The selective realism dispute has become quite ‘heated,’ with a half dozen journal articles on the topic in the last two years. Finally, we will take on a recent dispute about the plausibility of scientific realism in light of scientific pluralism (the view that the sciences cannot – or will not – be resolved into a single grand unified theory). To this end, we will read *Scientific Pluralism Reconsidered* by Stephanie Ruphy or *The Routledge Handbook of Scientific Realism* by Juha Saatsi.

PHIL 601: First-Year Seminar in Philosophy
Professor Laura McMahon
M 3:30-6:10 p.m.

The first-year seminar in Philosophy will be devoted to two things:

- Professionalization as advanced students of Philosophy, through practice with researching, writing and revising original work, presenting at conferences, teaching classes, and more
- Collective study of a major philosophical topic or text

PHIL 601 is a requirement for first-year students in the Philosophy MA program. It is limited to first-year students in the Philosophy MA program.
