

# PHILOSOPHY COURSE OFFERINGS

## – SPRING 2025 –

### *200-level Courses (Tier Two)*

PHIL 272W : Metaphysics (WI) |

“To be is to be perceived or perceive something”, “I am not fictional in any sense”, “I have a specific gender independently of what other people think”, and “Sherlock Holmes does not exist”. These claims may seem obvious. This course will challenge these “obvious” claims. Metaphysics is the study of the most general features of reality: for example, existence, identity, modality (necessity or contingency). This course is divided into three parts. First, we will review the most fundamental concepts: idealism, realism, nominalism, internal questions vs. external questions, ontological commitment, and Meinongianism, the view that there are things that do not exist! Second, we will move to the metaphysics of gender and sex. We will attempt to apply some of the methods, ideas, and tools, e.g., ontological commitment, naturalization, internal vs. external ontological questions, and grounding, introduced in the first part, to the

## PHIL 279: Judgment and Decision-Making (Online) |

Our everyday conceptions of the way we think, make choices, and act often assume we exercise significant control and awareness. Many philosophical accounts of action and character make similar assumptions. But, current work in social psychology suggests we are prone to many cognitive biases and that our behavior is often influenced by minor situational factors rather than our conscious choices or character. These findings raise important questions pertaining to human agency as well as moral responsibility for action and character.

## PHIL 284W: Health Care Ethics (WI) |

Philosophy 284 is designed to provide you with an introduction to the philosophical approach to problems in health care ethics. You will be taught to recognize and critically apply various ethical theories and principles with a view to solving moral problems in a rationally defensible manner. We will consider different ethical theories such as utilitarianism, Kantian ethics, Catholic bioethics, and the four principles of healthcare ethics (justice, autonomy, beneficence, and non-maleficence). We will then address more recent approaches offered by feminist, disability, queer, and Black bioethicists. A number of problematic issues in health care will be covered, including abortion, end of life care, social media and medicine, and the doctor/patient relationship.

## PHIL 284: Health Care Ethics |

This ethics course emphasizes the importance of using philosophical tools (concepts, values, theories, forms of argumentation, and so on) that illuminate, analyze, and evaluate the practice and domain of health care. The course aims to enable students to become better moral reasoners; that is, to improve one's ability to recognize, think through, assess, and articulate moral views as well as to understand, contribute to, and critique the views of others. The first part examines some of the key ethical theories that will be applied to the health care industry: Aristotelian ethics, Kantian deontology, and utilitarianism. In part two, we will investigate moral foundations such as moral norms, character, and status. The third and fourth parts address four principles that form a framework for medical ethics: autonomy, nonmaleficence, beneficence, and justice. The required textbook is: *Principles of Biomedical Ethics*, 7th edition, Oxford University Press, by Tom L. Beauchamp and James F. Childress.

## PHIL 287: Environmental Ethics |

This course introduces students to ethical reasoning and to various topics in environmental ethics. Topics include pollution, animal rights, and natural resources. The course will look at various philosophical and



*300-level Courses (Upper-Division Courses for Philosophy Majors and Minors)*

PHIL 304W: History of Ancient Philosophy (WI) |

## PHIL 322: Philosophical Perspectives on Women: Identities and Solidarities |

This course provides an overview of feminist philosophy beginning with Enlightenment liberal feminism and addressing a variety of topics feminist philosophy has explored up through the present. It will focus on the complicated place of "women" in what we now call "identity politics." What those words in quotes even mean is unsettled and worth exploring philosophically, and we'll do that. How have sex and gender been created and defined as social, economic, and political constructions? How is that construction complicated by race, social class and other contested constructions? What difference do bodies make? How are women's (contested, plural) identities as women potentially sources of liberation, oppression, solidarity and/or antagonism?

## PHIL 323/459\*: Philosophy of Law |

Welcome to Philosophy of Law (Phil. 323-001). This course will be cross-listed with Phil. 459-001, a graduate course in Philosophy of Laws. Although most of the content will be the same, the requirements for undergraduate student completion are quite different and will be spelled out in the syllabus. The course will examine the principles that establish and justify societies' laws, especially those attempting to afford answers to such questions as: what law is, must law be related to morality, are there any human rights, and what are the rights and responsibilities of a society in relation to its own members. Among the latter issues will be discussions about how courts decide cases, what is international law, how to respond to terrorism and is torture ever justified. Additionally, the course will tackle concerns over the protection of free speech, equality, constitutional privacy, distributive justice (including marriage equality and protections for LGBTQ+ communities) and what kinds of affirmative action may still be allowed. We will also devote part of the second half of the course to private law matters including what role corrective justice plays in addressing tort liability; does promising provide a complete foundation for contract law; how are utilitarian and rights-based justifications implicated in property law; and what justifies punishment in the criminal law along with whether capital punishment is ever justified. While much of the course after the Midterm will focus on American legal doctrines, the doctrines themselves should be considered in the broader context of serving human rights generally. As such, the course offers a basis for critiquing legal systems generally and the American legal system in particular. Expect that you will be doing a fair amount of reading throughout the course and that undergrads will be completing an online midterm and submitting a seven-page final seminar paper, details about the paper and course participation to be spelled out in the syllabus. \*

## PHIL 342W: Platonism and Christianity (WI) |

The course is an introduction to the interaction between Platonism and the Catholic tradition. The selection of texts we will study, ranging from Plato to twenty-first century philosophers, aims to show how ancient Platonism both influenced and was creatively transformed and partially integrated within Christianity. Thematically, the course focuses on the respective metaphysics and anthropology of the two traditions; more precisely, their multi-layered and hierarchically ordered metaphysics and anthropology. Both in the Platonic and in the Christian worldview, neither reality as a whole nor the human being are unqualifiedly simple entities but rather complex networks of hierarchically organized and mutually irreducible aspects or levels, which simultaneously spring from a transcendent source and are directed to the same source as their fulfillment. Our main goal is to understand how Catholic thinkers from the early centuries to the present

