

Φ The Department of Philosophy

336 ten Hoor Hall • 348-5942 • philosophy.ua.edu

SPRING 2016 COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

PHL 100.001 **INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY**
INSTRUCTOR: **DR. TIMOTHY BUTZER**

Not open to anyone who has taken PHL 106 or PHL 191 (Honors Introduction to Philosophy).

Course Description: This course is intended to be a first introduction to the discipline of philosophy, and will give the student an opportunity to examine some perennial philosophical questions, such as: What is it possible to know? What makes a belief rational or justified? What is a person? Do we have free will? Does God exist? Can we even know whether God exists? Is the mind different from the brain? Is there any ultimate meaning of life? The purpose of the course is, in part, to get acquainted with different positions on these issues and some of the central arguments used to support these positions, but even more importantly it is to introduce students into what taking a philosophical approach to a question amounts to, and the point and value of doing so.

Prerequisites: None

Tentative Course Requirements: Two short (expository) papers, two exams

Core Curriculum: This course carries an *HU* designation.

PHL 100.002 & 003: **INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY**
INSTRUCTOR: **DR. ADAM ARICO**

Not open to anyone who has taken PHL 106 or 191 (Honors Introduction to Philosophy).

Course Description: The course offers an introduction to philosophical methodology by way of studying five classic philosophical problems: (1) Is any form of government justified, or should we be anarchists? (2) Are there objective facts about right and wrong, or is the moral standing of homosexuality or abortion merely a matter of opinion? (3) Do you have free will, or are your actions all causally determined by your genetic predisposition, biochemistry, and various environmental stimuli? (4) What sort of thinking thing are *you*? Are you a soul that inhabits your body? Or, are you identical with brain? (5) Does the existence of God explain why there exists something rather than nothing or why there exist complex life forms? Or, is the existence of evil compelling evidence that a perfectly good God does *not* exist?

Prerequisites: None

Tentative Course Requirements: Four multiple-choice/short-answer examinations.

Core Curriculum: This course carries an *HU* designation.

PHL 100.004 **INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY**
INSTRUCTOR: **DR. TIMOTHY BUTZER**

Not open to anyone who has taken PHL 106 or PHL 191 (Honors Introduction to Philosophy).

Course Description: This course examines a range of traditional philosophical questions including but not limited to the question of whether knowledge is possible, the question of God's existence, the nature of right and wrong, justice, and the legitimacy (or illegitimacy) of government.

Prerequisites: None

Tentative Course Requirements: Careful reading, attendance, discussion questions and participation, four T/F, multiple choice, short extended-answer exams.

Core Curriculum: This course carries an *HU* designation.

PHL 100.005: **INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY**
INSTRUCTOR: **DR. JUSTIN KLOCKSIEG**

Not open to anyone who has taken PHL 106 or 191 (Honors Introduction to Philosophy).

Course Description: This course provides an introduction to philosophy by way of a discussion of three central philosophical problems—the problem of free will and determinism; the problem of the existence and nature of God; and the “mind-body problem”. Along the way, other important topics in philosophy will be discussed.

In each case, the focus is on careful formulation of doctrines and arguments. The goals are (i) to understand the doctrines and arguments; (ii) to develop the ability to evaluate the doctrines and arguments; and (iii) to begin to develop the ability to extract well-formulated, interesting arguments from philosophical texts.

Prerequisites: None.

Core Curriculum: This course carries an *HU* designation.

PHL 100.006: **INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY**
INSTRUCTOR: **DR. TIMOTHY BUTZER**

Not open to anyone who has taken PHL 106 or PHL 191 (Honors Introduction to Philosophy).

Course Description: This course examines a range of traditional philosophical questions including but not limited to the question of whether knowledge is possible, the question of God's existence, the nature of right and wrong, justice, and the legitimacy (or illegitimacy) of government.

Prerequisites: None

Tentative Course Requirements: Careful reading, attendance, discussion questions and participation, four T/F, multiple choice, short extended-answer exams.

Core Curriculum: This course carries an *HU* designation.

PHL 100.900 & 990: INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY - ONLINE
INSTRUCTOR: DR. TORIN ALTER

Not open to anyone who has taken PHL 106 or PHL 191 (Honors Introduction to Philosophy).

Course Description: This course examines a range of traditional philosophical questions including but not limited to the question of whether knowledge is possible, the question of God's existence, the nature of right and wrong, justice, and the legitimacy (or illegitimacy) of government.

Prerequisites: None

Tentative Course Requirements: Careful reading, attendance, discussion questions and participation, four T/F, multiple choice, short extended-answer exams.

Core Curriculum: This course carries an *HU* designation.

PHL 104.001 CRITICAL THINKING
INSTRUCTOR: DR. ADAM ARICO

Course Description: Deciding what to believe is never as easy as it first seems. The number of relevant factors may make choosing well seem almost impossible. This course helps to develop the skills needed to examine critically and systematically everything from the claims of science to claims in the political arena.

This course aims to hone critical thinking skills generally, but it also pays special attention to identifying and avoiding common argument fallacies, scientific reasoning, and thinking about moral issues. Along the way, we will be considering arguments as they occur in everyday life.

Prerequisites: None

Course Requirements: (a) three in-class exams; (b) homework and writing assignments (d) a course participation grade.

Core Curriculum: This course carries an *HU* designation.

*This course is included in the **Philosophy and Medicine** specialization and meets requirements for the **Jurisprudence Specialized Minor**.*

PHL 106.001: HONORS INTRODUCTION TO DEDUCTIVE LOGIC
INSTRUCTOR: DR. TORIN ALTER

Open to Honors students only. Not open to anyone who has taken PHL 195 (Introduction to Deductive Logic).

Course Description: What is the difference between a good argument and a bad one? This course examines some of the formal techniques developed by philosophers and mathematicians to answer that question. It will also cover more advanced topics (but not meta-logic). It is a self-paced course using both computer-aided learning techniques and one-on-one guidance from the instructor and the teaching assistants.

Prerequisites: Admission to UA Honors or 28 ACT, and a C or better in Math 100 or the equivalent.

Course Requirements: Attendance is mandatory, but students take tests when they feel they have mastered the material the tests cover. Final grades are determined by the number of tests passed and the number of test attempts made.

Core Curriculum: None

*This course is included in the **Mind and Brain** specialization and meets requirements for the **Jurisprudence Specialized Major and Minor**.*

PHL 195.001: INTRODUCTION TO DEDUCTIVE LOGIC
INSTRUCTOR: DR. TORIN ALTER

Not open to anyone who has taken PHL 106 (Honors Introduction to Logic).

Course Description: What is the difference between a good argument and a bad one? This course examines some of the formal techniques developed by philosophers and mathematicians to answer that question. It is a self-paced course using both computer-aided learning techniques and one-on-one guidance from the instructor and the teaching assistants.

Prerequisites: A grade of C or above in Math 100 or equivalent.

Course Requirements: Attendance is mandatory, but students take tests when they feel they have mastered the material the tests cover. Final grades are determined by the number of tests passed and the number of test attempts made.

Core Curriculum: None

*This course is included in the **Mind and Brain** specialization and meets requirements for the **Jurisprudence Specialized Major and Minor**.*

PHL 195.900: INTRODUCTION TO DEDUCTIVE LOGIC - ONLINE
INSTRUCTOR: DR. CHASE WRENN

Not open to anyone who has taken PHL 106 (Honors Introduction to Logic).

Course Description: What is the difference between a good argument and a bad one? This course examines some of the formal techniques developed by philosophers and mathematicians to answer that question. It is a self-paced course using both computer-aided learning techniques and one-on-one guidance from the instructor and the teaching assistants.

Prerequisites: A grade of C or above in Math 100 or equivalent.

Course Requirements: Attendance is mandatory, but students take tests when they feel they have mastered the material the tests cover. Final grades are determined by the number of tests passed and the number of test attempts made.

Core Curriculum: None

*This course is included in the **Mind and Brain** specialization and meets requirements for the **Jurisprudence Specialized Major and Minor**.*

PHL 212.001: EARLY MODERN PHILOSOPHY
INSTRUCTOR: DR. S. SETH BORDNER

Course Description: This course will look at the main figures and intellectual developments of the early Modern period of philosophy. We will proceed chronologically, starting with Descartes's seminal *Meditations on First Philosophy* and tracing two very different branches of influence from there to what are often called the Rationalist and Empiricist schools. Other figures of note will be Locke, Leibniz, Berkeley, Hume, and Kant.

Course Requirements: three exams, in-class quizzes

Prerequisites: None, but one philosophy course at the 100-level is recommended.

Core Curriculum: This course carries an *HU* designation.

PHL 223.001: MEDICAL ETHICS
INSTRUCTOR: DR. STUART RACHELS

Course Description: This course is an introduction to some of the ethical issues involved in medicine. Topics include: physician-assisted dying; the allocation of organs and other scarce resources; abortion; stem cell research; and patient autonomy. Our main text will be Lewis Vaughn, *Bioethics: Principles, Issues, and Cases*, 2nd ed. (Oxford University Press, 2013).

Schedule: This is a large lecture course that meets three days per week.

Prerequisites: None

Course Requirements: There will be three exams. Students will be required to attend every class meeting.

Core Curriculum: This course carries an *HU* designation.

*This course is required for the **Philosophy and Medicine** specialization.*

PHL 223.900: MEDICAL ETHICS - ONLINE
INSTRUCTOR: DR. JUSTIN KLOCKSIEG

Course Description: This course is an introduction to some of the ethical issues involved in medicine. Topics include: physician-assisted dying; the allocation of organs and other scarce resources; abortion; stem cell research; and patient autonomy. Our main text will be Lewis Vaughn, *Bioethics: Principles, Issues, and Cases*, 2nd ed. (Oxford University Press, 2013).

Schedule: This is a large lecture course that meets three days per week.

Prerequisites: None

Course Requirements: There will be three exams. Students will be required to attend every class meeting.

Core Curriculum: This course carries an *HU* designation.

*This course is required for the **Philosophy and Medicine** specialization.*

PHL 230.001 & .002: POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY
INSTRUCTOR: DR. REKHA NATH

Course description: What does justice require in our society today? With a focus on contemporary social and political issues, we seek to answer this question by looking at different dimensions of justice. We start out by examining the problem of political authority: What, if anything, can give the government legitimate authority over citizens? We then consider how the ideals of democracy, freedom, rights, and equality inform our understanding of a just society.

Prerequisites: None

Tentative course requirements: Exams and class participation

Core Curriculum: This course carries an *HU* designation.

*This course is included in the **Jurisprudence and Philosophy and Medicine** specializations.*

PHL 234.001 SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY
INSTRUCTOR: DR. REKHA NATH

Course description: The government intrudes in the lives of citizens in many ways, and some of these intrusions seem legitimate while others do not. We will consider some of the following issues concerning the legitimacy of government interference. Should citizens have an unrestricted right to bear arms, or are some gun control policies imposed by society justified? Should society ban or heavily regulate the use of drugs and other addictive substances? Should consenting adults be permitted to freely enter into prostitution and commercial surrogacy arrangements? What role if any should the government play in defining who may legally marry whom? A different topic we will investigate is whether citizens, in virtue of participating in social practices, incur obligations that go above and beyond that which is legally required of them. In particular, we will consider what responsibilities individuals might have concerning what they eat and how they affect the natural environment. In addressing a range of controversial social and political issues, our focus in this course is normative. Through the careful consideration of different philosophical frameworks, our aim is to make progress in arriving at well-reasoned positions about how our society ought to be organized as well as what it means for individuals to live ethical lives.

Prerequisites: None. This course is not open to students who have taken PHL 222

Tentative course requirements: Exams and class participation

Core Curriculum: This course carries an *HU* designation.

*This course is included in the **Jurisprudence and Philosophy and Medicine** specializations.*

PHL 240.001: PHILOSOPHY AND THE LAW
INSTRUCTOR: DR. KENNETH EHRENBERG

Course Description: This course is a survey of major issues in the philosophy of law including the main theories of general jurisprudence, the relation of legal obligation to moral obligation, the nature and limits of legal responsibility, adjudication and legal reasoning, constitutions, and issues in legal interpretation.

Prerequisites: None

Tentative Course Requirements: Participation, reading quizzes, two examinations

Core Curriculum: This course carries an *HU* designation.

*This course is included in the **Jurisprudence** Specialization.*

PHL 256.001: PHILOSOPHY OF SPORT

INSTRUCTOR: DR. S. SETH BORDNER

Course Description: Sports command more of our attention (and money) than almost any other part of our culture, except for maybe religion. Sports are important to our culture, and interesting to watch. They're also interesting to think about. This course provides an introduction to the burgeoning field of Philosophy of Sport. We will look at the nature of sports (and games more generally), sportsmanship and fairness, the role of officials, gender equity, racism, and issues surrounding the use of performance-enhancing drugs. This course is reading intensive. Prior exposure to philosophy is welcome but not required.

Prerequisites: None

Course Requirements: three exams, 3-5 short writing assignments

Core Curriculum: This course carries an *HU* designation.

*This course is included in the **Jurisprudence** specialization.*

PHL 260.001: MIND AND NATURE

INSTRUCTOR: DR. CHASE WRENN

Course Description: This course examines a range of questions about the nature of mind, perception, and knowledge including but not limited to the following. What is a mind made of? Are minds physical or immaterial? Are all mental states conscious? What do minds do? Presumably, one thing minds do is process information, such that their subjects might "know" things about the world. How is knowledge possible? How might perceptual experience provide knowledge of mind independent objects? What is knowledge in the first place?

Prerequisites: None

Tentative Course Requirements: Careful reading, attendance, discussion questions and participation, four T/F, multiple choice, short extended-answer exams.

Core Curriculum: This course carries an *HU* designation.

*This course is part of the **Mind & Brain** and **Philosophy and Medicine** specializations.*

PHL 291.001: AESTHETICS

INSTRUCTOR: DR. RICHARD RICHARDS

Course Description: The arts are important to us. We listen to music, watch movies, see plays, attend dance concerts and go to art museums. But unless some controversy about art engages us, we rarely think about the nature of art. In this course, we will be introduced to some of the most fundamental concerns about art: What is distinctive, if anything, about the experience of artworks? Why do we identify anything as a work of art? How do we, or should we interpret an artwork? On what grounds can we criticize an artwork?

Prerequisites: None

Course Requirements: Four exams. Attendance and participation in discussion will be expected.

Core Curriculum: This course carries an *FA* (Fine Arts) designation.

PHL 292.001 **INTRODUCTION TO ETHICS**
INSTRUCTOR: **DR. JUSTIN KLOCKSIEG**

Not open to anyone who has taken PHL 221 (Honors Introduction to Ethics).

Course Description: This course is intended to introduce students to the basic elements of ethics. In the first part of the course we will consider some historic and contemporary ethical theories: (1) Consequentialism, (2) Deontology, and (3) Virtue Ethics. We will also explore topics in ethics from a naturalized and descriptive perspective. In the second part of the course, we will then investigate a number of topics in applied ethics (abortion, moral status of animals, human starvation and poverty), often through the lens of the ethical theories we have previously covered. The third section of the course will focus on a particular set of “hot topics” in applied ethics, those that fall under the umbrella of neuroethics. Here we will look at questions like the following: What restrictions, if any, should we put on the use of advancements in neuroscience? Are we morally obligated to enhance our cognitive abilities if the benefits of doing so far outweigh the costs? What bearing do advancements in neuroscience have on ethical concepts, such as moral responsibility?

Tentative Course Requirements: 2 3-page papers, 2 exams, reading quizzes, and a few brief presentations

Prerequisites: None

Core Curriculum: This course carries an *HU* designation.

*This course is included in the **Jurisprudence** and **Philosophy and Medicine** specializations.*

PHL 292.002 **INTRODUCTION TO ETHICS**
INSTRUCTOR: **DR. S. SETH BORDNER**

Not open to anyone who has taken PHL 221 (Honors Introduction to Ethics).

Course Description: This course is intended to introduce students to the basic elements of ethics. In the first part of the course we will consider some historic and contemporary ethical theories: (1) Consequentialism, (2) Deontology, and (3) Virtue Ethics. We will also explore topics in ethics from a naturalized and descriptive perspective. In the second part of the course, we will then investigate a number of topics in applied ethics (abortion, moral status of animals, human starvation and poverty), often through the lens of the ethical theories we have previously covered. The third section of the course will focus on a particular set of “hot topics” in applied ethics, those that fall under the umbrella of neuroethics. Here we will look at questions like the following: What restrictions, if any, should we put on the use of advancements in neuroscience? Are we morally obligated to enhance our cognitive abilities if the benefits of doing so far outweigh the costs? What bearing do advancements in neuroscience have on ethical concepts, such as moral responsibility?

Tentative Course Requirements: 2 3-page papers, 2 exams, reading quizzes, and a few brief presentations

Prerequisites: None

Core Curriculum: This course carries an *HU* designation.

*This course is included in the **Jurisprudence** and **Philosophy and Medicine** specializations.*

PHL 292.003 & 004 INTRODUCTION TO ETHICS
INSTRUCTOR: DR. JUSTIN KLOCKSIEG

Not open to anyone who has taken PHL 221 (Honors Introduction to Ethics).

Course Description: This course is an introduction to contemporary moral issues. Students will be introduced to basic methods and principles for moral reasoning, and various theories of what morality is and what the fundamental principles of ethical conduct may be, as well as some common challenges to these positions. Part of the course will also be devoted to applying this background to some of the most difficult and controversial issues in our society, for example abortion, same-sex marriage, euthanasia, and affirmative action. Which topics we cover will be partially up to the students, and the discussions are meant to train the student in the application of moral theory and enable them to extend these analytic and critical skills to other relevant moral issues as well.

Prerequisites: None

Tentative Course Requirements: Two short (expository) paper, a final discussion paper, one midterm exam

Core Curriculum: This course carries an *HU* designation.

*This course is included in the **Jurisprudence** and **Philosophy and Medicine** specializations.*

PHL 292.005 INTRODUCTION TO ETHICS
INSTRUCTOR: DR. TIMOTHY BUTZER

Not open to anyone who has taken PHL 202 or 221 (Honors Introduction to Ethics).

Course Description: This course is an introduction to contemporary moral issues. Students will be introduced to basic methods and principles for moral reasoning, and various theories of what morality is and what the fundamental principles of ethical conduct may be, as well as some common challenges to these positions. Part of the course will also be devoted to applying this background to some of the most difficult and controversial issues in our society, for example abortion, same-sex marriage, euthanasia, and affirmative action. Which topics we cover will be partially up to the students, and the discussions are meant to train the student in the application of moral theory and enable them to extend these analytic and critical skills to other relevant moral issues as well.

Prerequisites: None

Tentative Course Requirements: Two short (expository) paper, a final discussion paper, one midterm exam

Core Curriculum: This course carries an *HU* designation.

*This course is included in the **Jurisprudence** and **Philosophy and Medicine** specializations.*

PHL 341.001 LAW AND MORALITY
INSTRUCTOR: DR. KENNETH EHRENBERG

Course Description: This course will cover a number of debates on the relationship between law and morality, including questions like whether an unjust law can still be legally valid, whether an inherently evil political system can still have a legal system, and whether the law is simply a system of rules or what (if any)

role there is for principles. We will be writing two philosophical papers based on primary source material, mostly from mid to late 20th century analytic legal philosophy. Writing proficiency within this discipline is required for a passing grade in this course.

Prerequisites: One prior PHL class with a B or better.

Requirements: TBA

Core Curriculum: This course carries a *W* designation.

*This course is included in the **Jurisprudence** Specialization.*

PHL 349.001: LEGAL REASONING
INSTRUCTOR: DR. KENNETH EHRENBERG

Course description: This course will prepare you for law school by covering the various methods of reasoning and argumentation that are tested on the LSAT, developed in law school, and used by lawyers and judges. It will also cover philosophical issues relating to rule following, interpretation, and using authorities.

Prerequisites: a B in at least one other PHL class.

Tentative course requirements: a research presentation and paper.

Core Curriculum: None

*This course is included in the **Jurisprudence** specialization.*

PHL 370.001: Epistemology
INSTRUCTOR: DR. CHASE WRENN

Course Description: This course surveys some fundamental issues in the philosophy of knowledge. We begin by considering skepticism the possibility of knowledge: can we really know anything about the external world at all? We then turn to the question of the structure of knowledge and the question of what, if anything, grounds or justifies our beliefs about the world. Finally, we look at competing accounts of justified belief itself: what makes the difference between believing something with justification and believing without justification?

Prerequisites: PHL 195 or 106 and any other PHL class

Course Requirements: Three papers, two tests, and class participation.

Core Curriculum: This course carries a *W* designation.

*This course is included in the **Mind & Brain** Specialization; and this course will fulfill requirements for the **Jurisprudence** specialized major.*

PHL 387.001: PHILOSOPHY AND EVOLUTION
INSTRUCTOR: DR. RICHARD RICHARDS

Course Description: The “Darwinian Revolution” – the acceptance and development of evolutionary theory - is one of the most significant intellectual events in recent human history. It is significant partly because it has changed

the way we understand the world, and the processes that operate within it. It has implications for our conception of human nature, how human psychological, social, cultural and conceptual processes work, and the implications for our understanding of knowledge, ethics and the arts.

Prerequisites: None, although previous courses in philosophy or fields associated with evolution will be helpful.

Tentative Course Requirements: Two papers, reading quizzes, a final, and possibly a few brief presentations

Core Requirements: Two exams (30% each), two 5-7 page papers (15% each), and attendance and participation (10%). Makeup exams will be offered only at the discretion of the instructor, and for exceptional circumstances. There will be a 1/3 grade deduction per day for late papers.

Core Curriculum: This course carries a *W* designation.

PHL 392.001: SPECIAL TOPICS (WRITING): THE NEURAL BASIS OF CONSCIOUSNESS

INSTRUCTOR: DR. BENJAMIN KOZUCH

Course description: Consciousness is one of the last great mysteries. Recent years have seen the use of neuroscientific methods in trying to understand consciousness, the hope being that this approach succeeds where others have failed. This course surveys current neuroscientific and philosophical approaches to studying consciousness, the goal being to find a unified methodology for locating the neural basis of consciousness. Topics covered will include eliminative inference as a scientific method, the use of brain lesions in consciousness research, and the relationship between consciousness and self-consciousness.

Prerequisites: Two previous PHL courses or permission from the instructor. Interested students studying psychology or other cognitive science-related fields are encouraged to seek admittance to the class.

Course Requirements: Anticipated requirements include two tests, two term papers, class participation and attendance.

Core Curriculum: This course carries a *W* designation.

*This course is part of the **Mind & Brain** specialization.*
