**Philosophy and Religion Course Descriptions**

**Summer and Fall 2022**

**PHI 151**

**Introduction to Philosophy**

**Dr. Paula Smithka**

**ONLINE, course # 2130, H080**

**ONLINE, course # 2131, H081**

Aristotle says, “For it is owing to their wonder that people both now begin and at first began to philosophize”.

Philosophy begins in wonder. It’s about asking fundamental questions—questions like, “Does God exist?”; “What is the nature of reality?”; “Is what I perceive really the way things are?”; “When I say ‘I have a mind’, is the mind the same thing as a brain?”; “Is consciousness physical?”; “What makes an action morally right?”

Study philosophy and unlock your mind!

**Fall 2022**

**PHI 151**

**Introduction to Philosophy**

**Dr. Paula Smithka**

**MW 11-12:15 course # 1155**

Aristotle says, “For it is owing to their wonder that people both now begin and at first began to philosophize”.

Philosophy begins in wonder. It’s about asking fundamental questions—questions like, “Does God exist?”; “What is the nature of reality?”; “Is what I perceive really the way things are?”; “When I say ‘I have a mind’, is the mind the same thing as a brain?”; “Is consciousness physical?”; “What makes an action morally right?”

Study philosophy and unlock your mind!

**PHI 171**
**Ethics and Good Living**
**Dr. Ian Dunkle**
**H001 T/Th 1:00-2:15**

**H080 Online**

What is it to live well? This is one of the oldest and most foundational questions in philosophy, and for good reason: what could be more important than understanding how to live well?—Maybe, actually living well!—Granted. But how can we hope to live well unless we have at least some idea of what that is?
Answering this question is hard, though, for several reasons, including these: First, it seems to be ambiguous (to live uprightly? to maximize self-interest?). Second, common answers are ambiguous; there are different senses in which something might be good for you. Third, popular opinions on the good life contradict one another (consider what your parents tell you about the importance and non-importance of pursuing a lucrative career). But where else can we get a footing on the question except in popular opinions?
This course explores the central philosophical puzzles and controversies regarding the good life and introduces students to major accounts offered in both the history of philosophy and in contemporary value-theory. Throughout the course students will also develop skills of critical thinking and argument analysis.

**PHI 351**

**Critical Thinking**

**Dr. Samuel Bruton**

**MW 9:30 – 10:45**

This class introduces students to skills for becoming a more effective thinker and a better reasoner, including various techniques for avoiding common reasoning pitfalls and for critiquing the flawed reasoning of others. From interpreting political debates to careful evaluation of scientific evidence, good critical reasoning skills are invaluable in most aspects of life. Some class time is set aside to practice the kinds of questions commonly found on the LSAT, GRE, and other standardized tests. This course is required for the Philosophy Pre-Law emphasis track.

**PHI 452**

**Health Care Ethics**

**Dr. Ian Dunkle**

**H001 T/TH 9:30-10:45**

**H080 Online Chat**

This course introduces students to the dominant theory for making ethical decisions in medical ethics—Principlism. We will begin by considering (1) what Principlism is. Then we will take each of the four core ethical principles—namely, Beneficence, Non-Maleficence, Respect for Patient Autonomy, and Justice—and consider both (2) their philosophical support and (3) the conceptual and practical issues that emerge in applying these principles in medicine. Issues we will consider include:
What is it to be happy? What is it to be healthy? What is the relation of disability to health and wellbeing?
When does rationing health care bring undue harm to individual patients?
What is death? Is death bad for the one who dies? Why is it wrong to kill someone? Is there a moral difference between killing and letting die?
What does it mean to respect individual autonomy? Why is it important to respect autonomy even at the expense of wellbeing? What is informed consent? How do policies of informed consent affect trans teens?
Are the categories of race and sex in medical practice justified? Do they lead to unjust practices?

**REL 345**

**Magic and the Occult**

**Dr. Amy Slagle**

**T/Th 1:00-2:15**

Often maligned and misunderstood, magical practices and occult thinking have exercised a powerful influence on religious traditions around the world. Magicians and occultists attempt to contact and establish control over spiritual forces, whether demons, angels, the dead, or the latent forces of their own mind. To understand the historical significance of such pursuits, we will explore a variety of magical and occult practices and movements within their appropriate intellectual and social contexts. We will also ask why magic and the occult continue to thrive in our 21st-century world and what everyday purposes they play. In the course of our studies, we'll examine alchemy, astrology, ceremonial magic, secret societies, Satanism, and witchcraft in their various guises from Antiquity to today.

**HUM 201**
**Medieval Times!**
**Dr. Courtney Luckhardt, Dr. Leah Parker, Dr. Paula Smithka**
**T/Th 1:00-2:15**

Course fulfills GEC 03 requirement. In this course, we examine two distinct global cultures of enduring significance from the perspective of history, literature, philosophy, and religion. Since the material available to us is so vast, we will focus on themes in two distinct global (Western and nonWestern) cultural contexts. The two cultures to be focused on this semester are medieval Europe and the medieval Middle East, ca. 400-1500 CE. The three themes are:

1) politics and power structures
2) science and technology
3) ethics and beliefs

To focus on these themes, we will be reading primary sources – that is, texts produced in the Middle Ages. Students will read and interpret these primary sources, critically reflect on them, and compare and contrast these two societies and their norms with each other and with contemporary American culture.