PHI 151

Introduction to Philosophy

Dr. Michael Dearmey

Online

PHI 151 Is an introduction to the questions and problems concerning the nature of reality and the human condition. Classical and Modern philosophers will be discussed.

PHI 151

Introduction to Philosophy

Dr. Sam Bruton

Online

What is real? What is it to know something? What makes me me? Do I have free will? What’s the difference between right and wrong? These are some of the classic philosophical puzzles to be explored in this class. Learn how great philosophers from the past and the best contemporary minds have answered these questions, and find out how their answers apply to real world issues we all confront daily. The class will be taught in an engaging and interactive way, and it fulfills GEC requirements.

PHI 151

Introduction to Philosophy

Dr. Paula Smithka

M/W 2:30-3:45

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?”; “What is the nature of mind? Is it just brain activity?”; “Is what I perceive really the way things are?”; “What is a Self?”; “Am I the same person over time?”; “What makes an action morally right?” “What is justice?”
Study philosophy and unlock your mind!

PHI 171

Ethics and Good Living

Dr. Ian Dunkle

T/TH 1:00 – 2:15

T/TH 2:30 – 3:45

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 253

Logic

Dr. Paula Smithka

M/W 11:00-12:15

Developing good critical thinking skills is useful for clarity of reasoning and evaluating the views of others both in philosophical studies and everyday life. In Logic, you will learn the importance of having evidence or reasons to support one’s views, how to evaluate arguments for their strength and cogency, and how to construct good arguments. In addition, you will not only learn what constitutes a good/strong argument but we will examine common mistakes in reasoning. The reasoning skills that you begin to develop by taking a logic course will aid you in whatever academic or professional directions you choose to take. This course will make you a detail person! “Logic is the beginning of wisdom, not the end.”—Spock

PHI 356

Ethics

Dr. Sam Bruton

Online

Come explore what great philosophers have thought about the difference between right and wrong, virtue and vice. This class will introduce students to the timeless philosophical theories of Aristotle, the Utilitarians, and Kant, and we will consider the strengths and weaknesses of these theories by applying them to a wide range of contemporary moral issues and ethical dilemmas. This class is required for philosophy majors.

PHI 410/510

Classical Philosophy

Dr. Michael Dearmey

Online

PHI 410/510 is an introduction to classical philosophy. Philosophy began in ancient Greece about 600 B.C.E. How it began; the PreSocratic philosophers, Socrates and Plato, Aristotle, and the post-Aristotelian schools of philosophy. Insights into various aspects of Greece culture (such as the Olympic games) are included in the course.

HUM 301

Leaders and Heroes

Dr. Sam Bruton

Online

Explore some of the greatest heroes and legends from history, literature and religion, and reflect on their ethical significance.

PHI 436

Aesthetics

Dr. Ian Dunkle

T/TH 11:00 – 12:15

I appreciate bad movies—there I said it. I love watching Point Break 1991, Troll 2 1990, anything by Ed Wood. I’m still rewatching old Mystery Science Theater 3000 episodes. And I’m not alone. A recent group of philosophers of art have come out in defense of (some) bad movies. But this appreciation poses a philosophical puzzle: If, ordinarily, one appreciates films for their positive aesthetic qualities, how is it possible to appreciate bad movies—movies that lack those positive aesthetic qualities. This puzzle goes deeper when you consider that these bad movies are often appreciated for their bad aesthetic qualities: some movies (not all) are so bad, they’re good! How can this be? What does it mean to appreciate what have come to be called good-bad movies?
In this course we will watch movies, read philosophy, and have aesthetic discussions in order to explore this puzzle and more traditional aesthetic questions surrounding it. Those further questions include:
• How to distinguish artistic and aesthetic value;
• What artistic value consists in, and how it relates to artistic success, achievement, and virtue;
• What it means to appreciate art in general;
• How Good-Bad art differs from failed art, Camp, Kitsch, and film maudit;
• Whether ridicule can sometimes enhance our appreciation of art; and
• What role art-appreciation has in the life well-lived.

REL 131

Comparative Religion

Multiple sections:

M/W 9:30 – 10:45

M/W 11:00 – 12:15

T/TH 9:30 – 10:45

Online

How can we talk about what matters most to people? How can we think about what is sacred to us? How can we encounter strangers in space and time on their own terms? For centuries, the term “religion” has been used to include ideas of what is sacred, what is forbidden, what is out of this world, and what is everyday, and the stories and ideas that inspire us to think these ways. This is a class for everyone curious about religion. We will be encountering religions on their own terms, their sacred books, their holy images, their reverent art and practice. We will be thinking about how these ideas and traditions are similar and different from each other. Doing this is what religious studies is all about, and we will be learning a little about how scholars in this field approach sources such as ours to the extent that they help us make sense of religion in its human complexity.

REL 334

The New Testament

Dr. Amy Slagle

Online

REL 350

Religion and Violence

Dr. Timothy Gutmann

M/W 2:30 – 3:45

Is religion a force for good or evil in the world? What is the relationship between religious ideas and identities and violence? This course begins by asking some of the most controversial questions that people in history and today have asked. Together we will read sacred scriptures of multiple religious traditions, encounter the body of religious thought focused on questions of justified war in the Middle Ages, and think about the role of religion in the conquest of the Americas and the conflicts over slavery. We will read and discuss authors from the European Enlightenment, whose concerns about religion and violence have shaped politics and society in recent centuries, and we will look thoughtfully at what is often called “terrorism” and “cults” through the analysis of modern scholars.