Philosophy

The Department of Philosophy offers programs and courses at the undergraduate and graduate levels. The courses cover major periods in the history of Western philosophy and many of the main topics of systematic investigation: epistemology, metaphysics, ethics, aesthetics, philosophy of language, mathematical logic, and philosophy of science.

The undergraduate courses are designed to introduce students to the history of philosophy and its place in Western civilization, to teach them how to read philosophical texts, and to help them think about philosophical problems, including those that arise in other disciplines. Students may major in philosophy or use it as a concentration for an area major in Humanistic Studies. They may also study philosophy along with another subject, either by constructing a double major or by taking courses designed to help them develop philosophical perspectives on their own fields of interest.

The graduate program is intended primarily for those planning to teach philosophy and make their own contributions to it. While the acquisition of a broad background in the history and different systematic fields of philosophy is required, students will have ample opportunity to develop their own special interests.

The Department of Philosophy encourages its students to take advantage of the rich resources of other departments at Johns Hopkins University. As a look at their offerings will show, numerous philosophically important courses are offered by such departments as Political Science (political philosophy), History of Science and Technology (philosophy of science), the Humanities Center (hermeneutic, interpretive, and literary theory), and Cognitive Science.

(See also General Requirements for Departmental Majors (http://e-catalog.jhu.edu/archive/2013-14/undergrad-students/academic-policies/requirements-for-a-bachelors-degree).

Philosophy is a discipline of the mind as well as a cluster of closely related subjects. It is an excellent preparation for professional studies such as law and medicine; it provides perspective on other disciplines such as psychology, mathematics, literature, political science, and physics; and it centers on a set of questions that thinking people cannot avoid. At Hopkins it can be studied in a variety of ways.

A number of our courses are designed to provide broad introductions to the subject. Both AS.150.111 Philosophic Classics and AS.150.112 Philosophical Problems cover a wide range of topics, the former through the study of some of the major texts of Western thought, the latter by more systematic examination of representative issues. Either one will show a student a variety of approaches to philosophical problems. The courses AS.150.201 and AS.150.205 offer historically oriented introductions to the subject, giving the student a basic grasp of the development of philosophy in two of its major periods. Other courses, such as AS.150.118 Introduction to Formal Logic, and AS.150.220 Introduction to Moral Philosophy, are designed for students with an interest in the particular areas they cover. All of these courses are readily available without prior study of philosophy.

The 400-level courses are open to graduate students as well as to undergraduates. Some require no previous course in philosophy. Others presuppose some familiarity with philosophy, such as would be provided by one of the introductory courses. Still others require more specific preparation. A student with questions about whether he/she has the background for a particular 400-level course should consult either the instructor or the departmental undergraduate advisor.

A student who wants to study an area of philosophy not provided for in the regular curriculum or to undertake a special project of writing and research should consult with a faculty member about taking AS.150.511 Directed Study-AS.150.512 Directed Study. An undergraduate who has the proper background may enroll in a graduate seminar if the instructor approves.

Requirements for the B.A. Degree

Philosophy majors must take 11 departmental courses.

A minimum of six courses must be at the 300-level or higher. Of the two general introductory courses, AS.150.111 Philosophic Classics and AS.150.112 Philosophical Problems, only one may count toward the major, and only two 100-level courses may count toward the major.

Majors are required to take the “Undergraduate Seminar”, preferably in the junior year.

Other courses must be distributed by taking at least one course in each of the five following categories:

- Ancient philosophy
- Modern philosophy
- Logic, philosophy of science, or philosophy of mathematics
- Philosophy of mind, theory of knowledge, philosophy of language, or metaphysics
- Ethics, aesthetics, or political philosophy

The first two categories are normally satisfied by taking Introduction to Greek Philosophy and Introduction to the History of Modern Philosophy.

The student thus has four or five further electives after satisfying the distribution requirements. Well-qualified majors may be admitted to a graduate seminar during the senior year. They should consult their major advisor. Courses in which a grade of D is received may not count toward the major, nor may courses taken pass/fail.

Double Majors

The department encourages linking the study of philosophy with the study of other disciplines. For example, the subject matter and course requirements of the Philosophy and Psychological and Brain Sciences departments are such as to make a double major both practical and intriguing. Similarly, knowledge of literature or the history of art is pertinent to the study of aesthetics; a solid understanding of science is valuable for those interested in the philosophy of science; and students of ethics benefit considerably by combining their work with study of political theory and of the political realities amidst which morality must function. Members of the department will be happy to assist students in planning double majors particularly suited to their interests.

Honors Program in Philosophy

Students with an overall GPA of 3.0 and a Philosophy GPA of 3.5 or higher (or outstanding recommendations from three department members) are eligible for the Senior Honors Thesis Program. In addition to the 10 courses required for the major, successful applicants take AS.150.551 Honors Project, to write a thesis of about 50 pages under the supervision of a faculty member. The thesis must be completed...
prior to spring vacation of senior year. If the student withdraws prior to completion of a thesis, a satisfactory/unsatisfactory grade will be awarded.

The grade for the thesis will depend on the thesis itself and an oral examination about it, conducted by the thesis advisor and two other faculty members. Graduation Honors will be awarded to those whose work receives an A- or better. For more information about the Honors Program, consult the departmental major advisor.

Minor in Philosophy

Philosophy minors must take seven departmental courses, which should include the following:

- At least one course in the history of philosophy, either ancient or modern.
- At least one course in two of the following areas:
  - Logic, philosophy of science, or philosophy of mathematics
  - Ethics, aesthetics, or political philosophy
  - Systematic studies of problems central to the tradition arising from the work of Frege, Russell, Moore, Tarski, Carnap, and Wittgenstein
- Either AS.150.111 Philosophic Classics or AS.150.112 Philosophical Problems, but not both, may count as one of the seven courses. Neither is a required course.

The Bioethics Program offers an interdisciplinary minor in which philosophy plays a large role. See Bioethics Program (http://e-catalog.jhu.edu/archive/2013-14/departments-program-requirements-and-courses/arts-sciences/bioethics) for more details.

When The Johns Hopkins University was founded in 1876, it was the first university in the United States designed as a center for research and doctoral education. Among its earliest graduate students were Josiah Royce and John Dewey; C. S. Peirce was an early faculty member. The department today continues this tradition, devoting a major part of its effort to preparing graduate students to make original contributions to the field and to pursue careers in college and university teaching.

The department’s purpose is to provide opportunities for students to develop special interests within a program that also ensures breadth of knowledge. We offer classes, seminars, and directed study in the history of ancient, modern, and contemporary Western philosophy, and in the systematic areas of epistemology, metaphysics, ethics, philosophy of science, philosophy of physics, philosophy of biology, philosophy of language, philosophy of mind, philosophy of mathematics, mathematical logic, and aesthetics. Philosophy courses are frequently offered in other departments, such as Political Science, German and Romance Languages and Literatures, and Classics, and students are encouraged to take advantage of these opportunities.

The department offers the M.A. and the Ph.D. degrees. The graduate program is designed primarily for those seeking the Ph.D., but under exceptional circumstances students aiming at the M.A. may be admitted.

For full details on the requirements for the Ph.D. program, see the department website at philosophy.jhu.edu.

Program in the History and Philosophy of Science

Graduate students with an interest in the history and philosophy of science receive their Ph.D. from either the Department of Philosophy or the Department of the History of Science and Technology, in accordance with each department’s requirements. Students in both departments, however, may apply to enroll in a special program of studies in history and philosophy of science coordinated by the Johns Hopkins Center for the History and Philosophy of Science. Students who fulfill the requirements will be certified by the center as having completed this special program. Further information can be obtained by writing to Professor Peter Achinstein, of the Department of Philosophy.

Program in Political and Moral Thought

Currently inactive except for year-long colloquia series.

Financial Aid

All students admitted to the program receive financial assistance. Support is guaranteed for five years provided that a student continues to make satisfactory progress toward completion of the Ph.D. degree. Department fellowships cover tuition and pay a stipend. Outstanding applicants may be nominated for a George Owen Fellowship, which also covers tuition and for which the stipend is higher. All students receive fellowship support for the first two years; no teaching is required. Third- and fourth-year students are supported by teaching assistantships, which carry full tuition and a stipend. Fifth-year students are generally supported through teaching assistantships, though fellowship support may also be available. In practice, the department is often able to offer teaching assistantships to students beyond their fifth year, though this support is not guaranteed. In addition, a generous bequest by a former member of the department, David Sachs, has established the Sachs Fellowship Fund. Sachs Fellowships are dissertation-year fellowships awarded on a competitive basis to outstanding students who are making substantial progress toward completing their dissertations.

Leon Gilbert Barnhart Memorial Fellowship

A fellowship in memory of Leon Gilbert Barnhart, B.A. ‘67, currently set at $3,000, may be awarded annually to support a student working on a dissertation on one of the topics which most interested Leon Barnhart himself: German philosophy, up to and including current German philosophy, and the history of philosophy more generally.
William Miller Essay Prize

The William Miller Essay Prize is awarded annually for a self-contained essay of outstanding quality in any field of philosophy. The monetary award is open to students in philosophy at the pre-dissertation stage of their graduate work. Submissions should be no longer than 10,000 words. Students may submit only one essay per year. Details are available from the Philosophy Department office.

For current faculty and contact information go to http://philosophy.jhu.edu/people/

Faculty

Chair
Richard Bett
Professor (Chair): ancient Greek philosophy, ethics.

Professors

Peter Achinstein
philosophy of science, analytic philosophy.

Eckart Förster
metaphysics, history of philosophy, Kant and German idealism.

Robert Rynasiewicz
logic, philosophy of science, history and philosophy of physics.

Meredith Williams
philosophy of mind, philosophy of psychology, Wittgenstein.

Michael Williams
Krieger-Eisenhower Professor: theory of knowledge, philosophy of language, history of modern philosophy, epistemology.

Associate Professors

Hilary Bok
Henry R. Luce Professor in Bioethics and Moral and Political Theory: moral philosophy, bioethics, freedom of the will Kant.

Steven Gross
philosophy of language, philosophy of mind, metaphysics.

Yitzhak Melamed
Early Modern Philosophy, German idealism, metaphysics.

Dean Moyar
German idealism, social and political philosophy, ethics.

Assistant Professors

Justin Bledin
logic, epistemology, philosophy of language.

L. Nandi Theunissen
Peterson Assistant Professor in: ethics.

Emeriti

Stephen Barker
Jerome B. Schneewind

Joint/Adjunct Appointments

Jeffrey Bub

Professor (Philosophy, University of Maryland, College Park): philosophy of quantum mechanics.

Paola Marrati
Professor (Humanities Center): contemporary French thought.

Maria Merritt
Assistant Professor (Bloomberg School of Public Health): bioethics.

Lawrence Principe
Professor (History of Science and Technology): history and philosophy of science.

Andrew Siegel
Core Faculty (Berman Institute of Bioethics).

Hent de Vries
Professor (Humanities Center): modern European thought.

For current course information and registration go to https://isis.jhu.edu/classes/

Courses

AS.150.105. Introduction to Eastern Philosophy. 3 Credits.
What is the nature of reality? What is the mind? What is the meaning of life? How ought we to live? In this course, we will explore how some of the better known philosophical systems of India, China and Japan have attempted to answer these most central philosophical questions. We will focus on the following systems: Nyaya, Samkhya-Yoga, Vedanta, Buddhism, Carvaka, Confucianism, Taoism, and Zen.
Instructor(s): B. Miller
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.107. Introduction to Moral Philosophy. 3 Credits.
This course will introduce students to some topics in the areas of normative ethics (What should we do?) and moral psychology (Where do moral judgments come from?) through discussion of classic texts in the Western philosophical tradition. We will also look at contemporary approaches to both moral theory and moral psychology.
Instructor(s): J. Gilmore
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.111. Philosphic Classics. 3 Credits.
The course introduces students to philosophy by critically examining selected texts in the Western philosophical tradition. Philosophers whose ideas will be examined include Plato, Descartes, Kant and Nietzsche.
Instructor(s): D. Moyar
Area: Humanities
Writing Intensive.

AS.150.112. Philosophical Problems. 3 Credits.
An introduction to philosophy through several central problems. Topics might include the nature and limits of human knowledge, reason and religion, freedom of the will, and the objectivity of moral standards.
Instructor(s): S. Gross
Area: Humanities.
AS.150.113. Objectivity. 3 Credits.
This course examines the notion of objectivity and challenges to it. Its topics include the status of objective facts and beliefs, the structure of social reality, and rational disagreement. Dean's Prize Teaching Fellowship course. Freshmen Only.
Instructor(s): N. Goldberg
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.114. Philosophy of Medicine. 3 Credits.
Dean's Teaching Prize Fellowship course.

AS.150.118. Introduction to Formal Logic. 3 Credits.
The fundamentals of symbolic logic, including truth-functions, quantification theory, and identity; probability and decision theory. Co-listed with AS.150.632
Instructor(s): P. Achinstein
Area: Humanities, Quantitative and Mathematical Sciences.

AS.150.119. Existentialism. 3 Credits.
Existentialism is a philosophical movement that made a dramatic entry into the 20th century intellectual scene and had a profound and long lasting influence on it. The central themes developed by existentialist thinkers transgressed the boundaries of academic philosophy and found their expression in plays, novels, cinema, poetry, political tracts, etc.
Through close reading of the seminal texts by Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Heidegger, Sartre, and Merleau-Ponty, we will explore the core tenets of the existentialist legacy. The philosophical texts will be supplemented by related works of fiction and films. Freshmen Only.
Instructor(s): G. Lebanidze
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.125. Introduction to Modern Philosophy. 3 Credits.
The course will examine four major figures of early modern philosophy: Descartes, Leibniz, Hume, and Kant. Although the most recent of these thinkers died more than 200 years ago, we still refer to them as “modern” philosophers, revealing their great influence on the way we think about ourselves and our place in the world. The course will look at what these philosophers thought about questions such as: What kind of beings are we and how are we related to the world around us? Is knowledge of the world possible and if so what are its sources? Can we answer the question of God’s existence? Is order something we find in the world or impose on it? etc.
Instructor(s): G. Lebanidze
Area: Humanities
Writing Intensive.

AS.150.126. Relativism. 3 Credits.
More than any other modern philosophical doctrine, relativism has found currency outside of the academy. Talk of “equally valid” points of view has become a commonplace, even when the matter under discussion is a straightforwardly factual. We will examine many different relativistic doctrines, including the views that people coming from very different backgrounds or with very different beliefs do not have the grounds to criticize one another, and that such individuals cannot so much as understand one another. In the first two-thirds of the course we will evaluate arguments for and against views such as these. Towards the end of the semester we will explore what the fall-out for our everyday lives would be (or should be) if some kind of relativism were true.
Freshmen only.
Instructor(s): N. Tebben
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.127. Realism and Antirealism in the Philosophy of Science. 3 Credits.
Are our best scientific theories approximately true, or useful but false? Does science converge on the truth over time? This course addresses such questions by surveying the scientific realism debate. Dean’s Prize Teaching Fellowship course. Freshmen Only.
Instructor(s): J. Hricko
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.128. Cognitive Science & Political Philosophy. 3 Credits.
Cognitive Science & Political Philosophy: Is a person born a republican, or are they raised that way? Are democrats Democrats because they have emotional personalities? Is politics the product of evolution, or of culture? Should the brain sciences determine public policy and law? In this course we will consider these questions and many more like them by looking at recent work in philosophy and the brain sciences.
Instructor(s): J. Waterman
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.129. The Theory of Knowledge: Classic and Contemporary Questions. 3 Credits.
How do we learn about things like Knowledge or Reason when they don’t have physical properties? Can there be a science of them if we can’t directly observe them? In this course we’ll investigate these questions and others by examining classic and contemporary philosophical works, from Plato to modern cognitive science. Freshmen only. Formerly Introduction to Philosophical Reasoning
Instructor(s): J. Waterman
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.131. Introduction to Social Philosophy. 3 Credits.
An introduction to social philosophy through critical reading of selected texts of two major figures: Adam Smith and Karl Marx. These two thinkers offered opposing theories of capitalism, which continue to shape our basic understanding of the world. We will address the method and foundations of their theories, as well as the normative concepts that inform their thought (e.g. freedom, human flourishing, alienation, exploitation, etc).
Instructor(s): A. Abazari
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences.

AS.150.191. Freshman Seminar: Ethical Topics in Plato. 3 Credits.
The class takes a problem-oriented approach to select dialogues in Plato. Central questions will include: the nature of motivation, and in particular, whether it is true that everyone desires the good; and the role of knowledge in leading a good life, in particular, whether it is true that that virtue is knowledge. We will focus on Ion, Apology, Euthyphro, the Meno, and the ethical books of the Republic.
Instructor(s): L. Theunissen
Area: Humanities
Writing Intensive.

AS.150.192. Freshman Seminar: Self and Self-Knowledge. 3 Credits.
The class takes a problem-oriented approach to select dialogues in Plato. Central questions will include: the nature of motivation, and in particular, whether it is true that everyone desires the good; and the role of knowledge in leading a good life, in particular, whether it is true that that virtue is knowledge. We will focus on Ion, Apology, Euthyphro, the Meno, and the ethical books of the Republic.
Instructor(s): M. Williams
Area: Humanities.
AS.150.193. Philosophy of Language Seminar: Proper Names and Definite Descriptions. 3 Credits.
In talking with each other, we often use proper names like 'Juliet' and definite descriptions like 'The most beautiful fresco in Italy' to pick out persons and objects in our world. But what do these expressions mean exactly? In this seminar, we'll slowly and carefully work through some classic philosophical texts that address this issue. These texts will provide an introduction to the philosophy of language, and to analytic philosophy in general.
Instructor(s): J. Bledin
Area: Humanities
Writing Intensive.

AS.150.201. Introduction to Greek Philosophy. 3 Credits.
A survey of the earlier phase of Greek philosophy. Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle will be discussed, as well as two groups of thinkers who preceded them, usually known as the pre-Socratics and the Sophists.
Instructor(s): R. Bett
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.202. Philosophy of Medicine. 3 Credits.
This course explores philosophical issues that are of central importance to medicine. Topics to be covered include: history of medicine, relationship between medicine and science, distinction between health and disease. Recommended Course Background: At least one philosophy course or permission from the instructor.
Instructor(s): B. Miller
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.203. Contemporary Metaphysics. 3 Credits.
This course will provide students with a survey of major topics in contemporary metaphysics, including such issues as the identity of objects through change and the metaphysical status of persons. Dean's Teaching Fellowship course.
Instructor(s): J. Brandau
Area: Humanities
Writing Intensive.

AS.150.205. Introduction to the History of Modern Philosophy. 3 Credits.
An introduction to early modern philosophy, examining Descartes' Meditations on First Philosophy, Locke's Essay Concerning Human Understanding, Hume's Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding, and selections from Kant's Critique of Pure Reason. We will consider such topics as the relation between philosophy and science, the nature and scope of human knowledge, the nature of the human mind, and the nature of human freedom. Gilman course in the Humanities.
Instructor(s): Y. Melamed
Area: Humanities
Writing Intensive.

AS.150.217. Neuroethics. 3 Credits.
Neuroethics: Can electroencephalography show that we lack free will? Can modern neuroimaging show that someone will commit a crime in the future? Is it ethical to use this Promethean knowledge to put them in jail before they even commit a crime? In Neuroethics, we'll consider these and other pressing questions emerging at the frontiers of neuroscience and modern moral theory. Freshman/Sophomore-level section of AS.150.472. The course will be taught by the same instructor and will run as a concurrent section meeting on the same days/times/locations as the upper-level class. In lieu of two research papers, students will be evaluated by midterm and final exam.
Prerequisites: This course is equivalent to AS.150.472
Instructor(s): P. Stojanovic
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.218. Introduction To Symbolic Logic. 3 Credits.
An introduction to the basic concepts and techniques of symbolic logic, with considerable emphasis on translating from English into formal languages, constructing formal proofs, and understanding semantic criteria for validity.
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.219. Introduction to Bioethics. 3 Credits.
Introduction to a wide range of moral issues arising in the biomedical fields, e.g. physician-assisted suicide, human cloning, abortion, surrogacy, and human subjects research. Cross listed with Public Health Studies.
Instructor(s): H. Bok
Area: Humanities
Writing Intensive.

AS.150.220. Introduction to Moral Philosophy. 3 Credits.
The class serves as an introduction to ethics. We consider select topics in meta-ethics (on the nature of reason and value), and we survey three prominent theories within normative ethics (utilitarianism, Kant's moral theory, and virtue theory). We will read classic works from the history of philosophy, and important contemporary papers.
Instructor(s): L. Theunissen
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.227. Introduction to Asian Philosophy. 3 Credits.
What is the nature of reality? What is the mind? What is the meaning of life? How ought we to live? In this course, we will explore how some of the better known philosophical systems of India, China and Japan have attempted to answer these most central philosophical questions. We will focus on the following systems: Nyaya, Samkhya-Yoga, Vedanta, Buddhism, Carvaka, Confucianism, Taoism, and Zen.
Instructor(s): B. Miller
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.228. Introduction to the Foundations of Logic, Mathematics and Computation. 4 Credits.
This course replaces 150.218 Introduction to Symbolic Logic and 150.420 Intermediate Symbol Logic. These courses were based on the sort of basic logic course that has been standardly taught by Philosophy departments for at least fifty years. But much has happened since then, and it is high time to begin introducing students to the more exciting developments earlier on so that they can get a sense for where the action is. Since the 1950's there have been major developments in the areas of lambda calculus and category theory and results such as the Curry-Howard isomorphism showing how these are related to logic. For example, conclusions of arguments correspond to the existence of data types and proofs correspond to programs. In general, the course explores fundamental formal systems and their formal interpretations. Apart from covering basic systems of logic, we will look at different manners of interpreting basic mathematical concepts such as those of set, element, number, ordered pair, function, and mapping. Students enrolled at the 420 level will attend the same lectures and sections as 228 students but will investigate the material at a deeper level through more penetrating homework assignments.
Instructor(s): R. Rynasiewicz
Area: Quantitative and Mathematical Sciences.
AS.150.229. Religion and/or Science?. 3 Credits.
Are Religion and Science necessarily in conflict, can they coexist, or do they in fact require each other’s existence? Is scientific method so different from religious thinking? Can science discredit God? Is it possible to be rational and remain religious? In this course, we will explore these and other related questions and examine possible answers. In the process, we will read the texts of both classical and contemporary philosophers and scientists who tackled with these problems.
Instructor(s): P. Stojanovic
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.235. Philosophy of Religion. 3 Credits.
Philosophical arguments for and against religious belief; rational and anti-rational conceptions of faith; the will to believe and the ethics of belief; evil and omnipotence; myth and the miracles.
Instructor(s): S. Gross
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.237. Foundations of Modern Political Philosophy. 3 Credits.
This course is an introduction to modern political philosophy through an intensive study of the classic texts. The focus will be on the nature and limits of political authority under modern social conditions. Authors included are Machiavelli, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau and Mill.
Instructor(s): D. Moyar
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.245. Introduction to Philosophy of Mind. 3 Credits.
This is an introduction to the central problems of philosophy of mind: the mind-body problem and the problem of self-knowledge. Of particular interest in contemporary work is the relation of mind and brain and whether, or how, we acquire self-knowledge.
Instructor(s): M. Williams
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.300. Prometheus Editorial Workshop. 1 Credit.
Prometheus is an international undergraduate philosophy journal published by students at Johns Hopkins University. The purpose of the journal is to promote philosophic discourse of the highest standard by offering students an opportunity to engage in open discussion, participate in the production and publication of an academic journal, and establish a community of aspiring philosophers. Students enrolled in this workshop will act as the staff readers for the journal. For more information, please visit www.prometheus-journal.com.
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.301. Undergraduate Seminar: Ethics. 3 Credits.
This course will focus on contemporary ethical theory. While the details of the course are still being worked out, possible topics include: What makes life meaningful or worth living? Should ethical theory tell us what makes life good, or simply what our obligations to others are? Can ethical theory help us find happiness?
Instructor(s): L. Papish
Area: Humanities
Writing Intensive.

AS.150.302. Topics in Bioethics: Bioethics and the Human Genome. 3 Credits.
Instructor(s): M. Lewis
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.303. Heidegger: Being and Time. 3 Credits.
This course will be a close reading of Heidegger’s 1927 masterwork Being and Time. From his attempt to provide a new beginning for Western metaphysics, to his analysis of “being towards death,” Heidegger offers an unparalleled synthesis of theoretical and practical concerns. In addition to examining the arguments in detail, the course will also consider the historical sources of Heidegger’s claims and the influence of his writings on subsequent philosophy.
Instructor(s): D. Moyar
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.304. The Ethics of Human Experimentation. 3 Credits.
This course will explore ethical theory, key historical events, and operational requirements of research involving human beings. Weekly discussions will focus on seminal literature and case studies that highlight conceptual and practical challenges related to informed consent; research ethics review; risk/benefit analysis; justice/fairness; globalization of research; participation of vulnerable populations; clinical equipoise; obligations to research participants and communities during studies and after research is completed; and deception in psychological and behavioral research. The course will also explore the emergence and development of the rules governing the protection of human subject research.
Instructor(s): J. Ali
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.305. Global Health & Human Rights: Theoretical Foundations & Practical Implications. 3 Credits.
This course systematically examines the human right to health. Topics will include the theoretical foundation(s) of human rights; how human rights compare and contrast to other dominant views of global justice (including Rawlsian versions, cosmopolitanism, and capabilities, among others); and whether (or under what circumstances) health can be properly called a “right”. Special scrutiny will be given to access to essential medicines as a recent example of the invocation of a right to health.
Instructor(s): M. DeCamp
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.306. The Epicurians, the Stoics, & the Skeptics on How to Live. 3 Credits.
The question “How to live?” is eternal. The Epicureans said that pleasure is the goal of life that is to be pursued, thus paving the way to modern Utilitarianism. The Stoics argued that the goal of life is virtue, which consists in living in agreement with nature; in this, they anticipated contemporary virtue ethics. Both schools thought that although we live in a material and causally determined universe, our moral actions and characters are nevertheless “up to us” and that we have moral freedom and responsibility. The Skeptics, on the other hand, tried to demonstrate that no moral principles have sufficient rational justification and that, because of this, the only option is some kind of moral relativism and the pursuit of freedom from emotional disturbance. In this, they anticipated moral relativism and moral nihilism. By examining of the arguments of the Epicureans, the Stoics, and the Skeptics in this course, you will not only learn about them, but also have an opportunity to do philosophy yourself, and perhaps clarify how you should live your own life.
Instructor(s): P. Stojanovic
Area: Humanities.
AS.150.308. What is Philosophy?. 3 Credits.
What is philosophy? Is it purely theoretical inquiry, or does it spill over into the way we live our lives? How is it different from other academic disciplines or from religion? The course will examine what some of the most influential contemporary philosophers think about these questions. But in addition to this, we will trace the story of the emergence of philosophy in the ancient Greece and its development up to present day. We will read the works of Plato, Kant, and Nietzsche as well as such prominent contemporary philosophers as Rorty, Foucault, and Taylor. Area: Humanities.

AS.150.309. Introduction to Philosophy of Physics. 3 Credits.
In this course, we will sample philosophical issues surrounding quantum and relativity theories. We will begin by looking at the measurement problem in quantum mechanics, assess various proposed solutions to it, and the frailties to which they are prone. We will then focus on the concept of non-locality which stems from the notion of entanglement in quantum systems. The second part of this course is meant as an introduction to the philosophy of relativity physics. Our goal will be to understand the nature of space-time theories and various fundamental aspects of relativistic physics such as the conventionality of simultaneity thesis and the speed of light postulate from a philosophical perspective. No previous background in physics will be required as the necessary formalisms will be developed as we go. Instructor(s): G. Guralp Area: Humanities, Natural Sciences.

AS.150.311. Undergraduate Seminar: Philosophy of Ludwig Wittgenstein. 3 Credits.
We will read Wittgenstein’s two great works: Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus (1921) and Philosophical Investigations (1953). If you have previously taken AS.150.442 you may not register for AS.150.311. Prerequisites: If you have previously taken AS.150.442 you may not register for AS.150.311.
Instructor(s): M. Williams Area: Humanities.

AS.150.312. Philosophy and Complexity. 3 Credits.
This course aims to engage with philosophical problems that stem from sciences of complexity in an interdisciplinary way. We will pose questions concerning how disciplines such as biology, economics, neuroscience, astrophysics etc. deal with the problem of complexity, and we will look at the basic problems philosophers of science single out in this context. After introducing the general problematic of the course, we will have two main parts under which we examine the philosophy of complex systems. The first part will be devoted to the epistemological aspects of the problem such as models, laws, explanation and evidence, and the second part will examine the metaphysical aspects of emergence and reduction.
Instructor(s): G. Guralp Area: Humanities.

AS.150.313. Philosophy of Race and Gender. 3 Credits.
TBA
Instructor(s): L. Papish Area: Humanities.

AS.150.330. Decisions, Games & Social Choice. 3 Credits.
This course is an introduction to decision theory, game theory, and social choice theory with an emphasis on their philosophical underpinnings and philosophical applications. Topics covered include the Prisoner’s Dilemma, Newcomb’s Problem, convention and social contracts, risk, and Arrow’s Theorem.
Instructor(s): J. Bledin Area: Humanities.

AS.150.400. Realism & Antirealism in the Philosophy of Science. 3 Credits.
Are our best scientific theories approximately true, or useful but false? Does science converge on the truth over time? This course addresses such questions by surveying the scientific realism debate.
Instructor(s): J. Hricko Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences.

AS.150.401. Greek Philosophy: Plato and His Predecessors. 3 Credits.
A study of pre-Socratic philosophers, especially those to whom Plato reacted; also an examination of major dialogues of Plato with emphasis upon his principal theses and characteristic methods.Cross-listed with Classics.
Instructor(s): R. Bett Area: Humanities Writing Intensive.

AS.150.402. Aristotle. 3 Credits.
A study of major selected texts of Aristotle.
Instructor(s): R. Bett Area: Humanities Writing Intensive.

AS.150.403. Hellenistic Philosophy. 3 Credits.
A study of later Greek philosophy, stretching roughly from the death of Aristotle to the Roman imperial period. Epicureans, Stoics, and Skeptics will be the main philosophical schools examined.
Instructor(s): R. Bett Area: Humanities Writing Intensive.

AS.150.404. Ethics and History of Body Modification. 3 Credits.
This course examines the ethical, historical and political issues surrounding body modifications. It explores the ways in which medical technologies have intersected with cultural constructions of gender, age, sexuality and race to produce ways of altering the human corporeal form. The course looks at a myriad of difference body modifications, concentrating mostly upon the Twentieth Century, but reaching as far back as the early modern period. Topics include: cosmetic surgery, transsexuality, bodybuilding, sports doping, dieting, anorexia, piercing, tattooing, fashion, make-up, and mythic modifications, such as vampires and werewolves. The course looks at the ways in which these modifications have been used variously to conform to, subvert and expose social norms about bodily appearance, as well as interrogating the means by which medicine and science are implicit in the cultural construction of those norms.
Instructor(s): D. O’Connor Area: Humanities Writing Intensive.

AS.150.405. Alienation. 3 Credits.
In this course we will study the topic of alienation both historically and systematically. We will examine the concept’s historical roots at the turn of the 19th century and engage with contemporary discussions by authors working in philosophy of mind, ethics and political philosophy.
Instructor(s): D. Moyar Area: Humanities Writing Intensive.
**AS.150.406. Can Science Explain Everything?. 3 Credits.**
What is scientific explanation? We will examine various theories about this in order to determine whether and how science can explain everything physical and everything mental (including consciousness, emotions, purposes, and values). In addition to science are non-scientific theories, for example, religious ones, necessary? Do they compete with or complement scientific ones?
Instructor(s): P. Achinstein
Area: Humanities.

**AS.150.409. Classics of Analytic Philosophy. 3 Credits.**
A reading of some of the classic philosophical works in 20th Century Analytic Philosophy, beginning with G. Frege and ending with V.O. Quine.
Instructor(s): M. Williams
Area: Humanities.

**AS.150.410. American Philosophy. 3 Credits.**
Studies of major figures in the history of American Philosophy beginning with the 19th century. The course focuses on the development of pragmatism in the work of Peirce, James and Dewey. Other philosophers, such as Royce and Mead, may also be studied.
Instructor(s): D. Moyar
Area: Humanities.

**AS.150.412. Kant’s Critique of Practical Reason. 3 Credits.**
A historical and systematic study of Kant’s ethics and philosophy of religion, with special attention to his Critique of Practical Reason.
Instructor(s): E. Forster
Area: Humanities.

**AS.150.414. Topics in Political Philosophy: Liberalism. 3 Credits.**
This course will examine recent liberal political philosophy, with particular emphasis on the work of John Rawls and Jürgen Habermas.
Instructor(s): D. Moyar
Area: Humanities.

**AS.150.417. Kant’s ‘Critique Of Pure Reason’. 3 Credits.**
An examination of the philosophy of Immanuel Kant, with emphasis on The Critique of Pure Reason.
Instructor(s): E. Forster
Area: Humanities.

**AS.150.418. Hermeneutics and Critical Theory. 3 Credits.**
An introduction to two of the most important and influential schools in twentieth-century German philosophy. This course examines the works of four leading representatives of these schools, i.e. Heidegger, Gadamer, Horkheimer, and Habermas.
Instructor(s): E. Forster
Area: Humanities.

**AS.150.419. Kant’s Critique/Judgment. 3 Credits.**
Instructor(s): E. Forster
Area: Humanities.

**AS.150.420. Mathematical Logic I. 3 Credits.**
This is the first semester of a two semester course in mathematical logic. The first semester covers the syntax and semantics of sentential and predicate logic, proof, entailment, completeness. Course formerly listed as Symbolic Logic.
Prerequisites: If you have completed AS.150.421 you may not register for AS.150.420.
Instructor(s): R. Rynasiewicz
Area: Humanities.

**AS.150.421. Mathematical Logic II. 3 Credits.**
Gödel’s two incompleteness theorems regarding, first the unaxiomatizability of arithmetic and, second, the impossibility of proving the consistency of arithmetic using arithmetic methods (unless arithmetic is inconsistent). Computability and Church’s Thesis.
Prerequisites: Prereq: AS.150.420 or equivalent
Instructor(s): R. Rynasiewicz
Area: Humanities, Quantitative and Mathematical Sciences.

**AS.150.422. Axiomatic Set Theory. 3 Credits.**
Axiomatic development of set theory, including the theory of transfinites and cardinals. Relative consistency proofs. Independence of the axiom of choice, and of the continuum hypothesis. Implications for the foundations of mathematics.
Prerequisites: AS.150.421
Instructor(s): R. Rynasiewicz
Area: Humanities, Quantitative and Mathematical Sciences.

**AS.150.424. Foundations of Probability & Induction. 3 Credits.**
An examination of various interpretations of probability, including classical and priori, frequency, propensity, subjective, and logical. Also, we will study views about evidence as well as paradoxes of inductive reasoning, including Hume’s skepticism, and the grue and raven paradoxes. No previous knowledge of probability is required.
Instructor(s): P. Achinstein
Area: Humanities, Quantitative and Mathematical Sciences.

**AS.150.425. The Nominalism/Realism Debate II: The Modern Debate. 3 Credits.**
A study of four exemplary modern thinkers with respect to their theories of universals: Locke, Kant (Nominalism), Goether, Hegel (Realism).
Area: Humanities.

**AS.150.426. Kant’s Transcendental Philosophy. 3 Credits.**
This course will focus on how Kant understands his philosophical method, how he takes it to be different from that of his predecessors, and why he thinks it can solve outstanding philosophical problems. The greatest part of the course will be spent on excerpts from the Critique of Pure Reason, though we will also cover the Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals and several short works.

**AS.150.427. Relativism. 3 Credits.**
The central questions of this class are: (1) what is epistemic relativism? and (2) is it true? The focus of this class will be exclusively on epistemic (not moral) relativism. We will draw on work from analytic philosophy and the history of science. Topics to be discussed include: conceptual schemes (are there any?), non-representational views of language, and cognitive pluralism."
Instructor(s): N. Tebben
Area: Humanities.

**AS.150.428. Spinoza’s Theological Political Treatise. 3 Credits.**
The course is an in-depth study of Spinoza’s Theological-Political Treatise. Among the topics to be discussed are: Spinoza’s Bible criticism, the nature of religion, truth and obedience, the nature of the Hebrew State, Spinoza’s Theory of the State, the freedom to philosophize, the metaphysics of Spinoza’s Theological-Political Treatise, and finally, the reception of the TTP. Cross-listed with Jewish Studies
Instructor(s): Y. Melamed.
**AS.150.429. Topics in Logic: Ontology and Knowledge Representation. 3 Credits.**

Knowledge representation deals with the possible structures by which the content of what is known can be formally represented in such a way that queries can be posed and inferences drawn. Ontology concerns the hierarchical classification of entities from given domains of knowledge together with the relations between various classes, subclasses, or individuals. The main framework in which we will work is that of description logics, which are decidable fragments of varying degrees of first order predicate logic. In ontology development we will examine RDF (Resource Description Framework), its extension to RDFS, and OWL (Web Ontology Language), and use the software Protégé for specific applications. Finally, we will take a look at query languages such as SPARQL (SPARQL Protocol and RDF Query Language).

Instructor(s): R. Rynasiewicz
Area: Humanities.

**AS.150.430. Hegel’s Phenomenology of Spirit. 3 Credits.**

An in-depth study of Hegel’s masterpiece, the Phenomenology of Spirit. We will be concentrating on the first half of the text.

Instructor(s): E. Forster.

**AS.150.431. Introduction to Philosophy of Science. 3 Credits.**

This course introduces students to some major philosophical problems about science, including these three: (1) Is there a universal set of rules constituting the “scientific method” that scientists must always follow in order to be rational? (2) Can science provide knowledge of an “unobservable” world underlying our experiences, and if so how? Or is science confined to speaking about the world of observation? (3) Are there important differences between philosophy and science? We will consider disputes between rationalists (e.g., Descartes) and empiricists (e.g., Newton) on scientific method, historical and contemporary debates between scientific realists and instrumentalists about the reach of science, as well as different viewpoints concerning the relationship between philosophy and science. No particular science or philosophy background is presupposed.

Instructor(s): P. Achinstein
Area: Humanities.

**AS.150.432. Morality & Rules. 3 Credits.**

This course will consider some of the primary approaches in contemporary moral philosophy, including consequentialism, Kantianism, non-Kantian deontology, virtue theory, and particularism. An important (though not the exclusive) focus of our coverage will be the role that these approaches assign to rules and rule-following. The course will also address some topics in the philosophy of practical reasoning. Students should have taken a prior course in philosophy.

Instructor(s): T. Rosenkoetter.

**AS.150.433. Philos/Space & Time. 3 Credits.**

Beginning with Poincaré, there has been an influential school of thought maintaining that there is no fact of the matter as to whether the geometry of space is Euclidean or, instead, some form of non-Euclidean geometry – rather, one can arbitrarily choose a metric geometry and then modify the physics in order to fit the empirical facts. This claim has been extended to affine geometry (inertial structure of spacetime) and distant simultaneity (in relative theory). We will critically examine this tradition, beginning with a careful examination of the relation of non-Euclidean to Euclidean geometry.

Instructor(s): R. Rynasiewicz
Area: Humanities, Natural Sciences.

**AS.150.434. History and Philosophy of Quantum Physics I. 3 Credits.**

Planck, Einstein, Bohr model, “old quantum theory,” correspondence principle, dispersion, BKS theory, Heisenberg’s Umdeutung (1925 invention of matrix mechanics) and its development.

Instructor(s): R. Rynasiewicz
Area: Humanities, Natural Sciences.

**AS.150.435. The Philosophy and Theology of Maimonides. 3 Credits.**

This course will examine the philosophic and theological thought of Judaism’s most renowned philosopher, Moses Maimonides (1138-1204). After a brief overview of Maimonides’ multifaceted life as philosopher, scientist, physician, Talmudic scholar, rabbi, and communal leader; we will consider Maimonides’ philosophic and religious background and, in particular, the ancient Greek and medieval Islamic philosophic works that influenced him. The course will delve into his views on topics such as the relation between faith and reason, the existence of God, creation/eternity of the world, free will/determinism, the nature of prophecy, the purpose of law, human happiness, ultimate perfection, and the Afterlife. Special attention will be given to Maimonides’ method of philosophic writing and the tension in his life between the vita activa and the vita contemplativa. The course will also trace the impact of Maimonides’ Guide of the Perplexed upon later Jewish thought and upon Western philosophy and theology from Thomas Aquinas to Leibniz.

Instructor(s): S. Harvey
Area: Humanities.

**AS.150.436. Philosophy of Psychology. 3 Credits.**

This will be a critical examination of Chomsky’s and Fodor’s conception of language. Our approach will be genealogical. We want to understand the theoretical changes each undergoes and why.

Instructor(s): M. Williams
Area: Humanities.

**AS.150.438. Spinoza’s The Ethics. 3 Credits.**

The seminar is an in depth study of Spinoza’s major work, The Ethics.

Instructor(s): Y. Melamed
Area: Humanities.

**AS.150.439. Epistemology. 3 Credits.**

Is knowledge (or even strong evidence) required, or possible, in science and in philosophy? We will focus on whether standard forms of nondemonstrative reasoning are justified, how if at all one can gain knowledge of the observable and unobservable world, whether and how theories in philosophy can be established, and what to do in science and philosophy when you can’t prove or get strong evidence for your theory.

Instructor(s): P. Achinstein
Area: Humanities.

**AS.150.442. The Philosophy of Ludwig Wittgenstein. 3 Credits.**

We will read Wittgenstein’s two great works: Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus (1921) and Philosophical Investigations (1953).

Instructor(s): M. Williams
Area: Humanities.

**AS.150.447. Law and Philosophy. 3 Credits.**

In this course we will examine major issue in the philosophy of law, including the relation of law to moral theory, the role of democratic political institutions in legal decisions, and the justification of punishment. No previous knowledge of law or philosophy is required.

Instructor(s): D. Moyar
Area: Humanities.
AS.150.452. Freedom of Will & Moral Responsibility. 3 Credits.
What are freedom of the will and moral responsibility? Are they compatible with determinism or naturalism? This course will examine various philosophers' answers to these questions.
Instructor(s): H. Bok
Area: Humanities
Writing Intensive.

AS.150.453. Contemp Moral Philosophy: Responses to Wrongdoing. 3 Credits.
Instructor(s): L. Papish
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.454. The Value of Humanity. 3 Credits.
This is an upper-level undergraduate course on the value of human beings. Are human beings distinctively valuable? What makes us valuable? And how should we respond to the value of human beings? The course is divided into three parts. The first part takes up metaphysical questions about the basis and explanation of human value. We consider various proposals, including Kant's, on the valuable feature or capacity of human beings. Are we valuable in virtue of having a good will, in virtue of being agents, in virtue of being valuers, or something further? And we consider various accounts of how the proposed basis makes us valuable: does it make us valuable in ourselves, or simpliciter? Or does it make us valuable-for something or someone? The second part of the course takes up normative questions about the appropriate mode of responding to human beings. We consider whether it makes sense to say that human beings are 'ends-in-themselves', and what it would mean to treat a person as an end-in-itself. We also consider various accounts of respect. A guiding question is whether human beings are the only appropriate objects of respect, or whether we can respect other beings, and even artifacts. The third section of the course turns to more applied philosophical questions. We ask about the relationship between humans and animals, and consider the claim that to accord human beings special value amounts to speciesism—prejudicial favoring of our own kind.
Instructor(s): L. Theunissen
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.455. Ethics And Animals. 3 Credits.
Instructor(s): H. Bok
Area: Humanities
Writing Intensive.

AS.150.459. Theory Of Knowledge. 3 Credits.
An advanced introduction to the central problems, concepts and theories of contemporary philosophical epistemology (theory of knowledge). Topics to be explored will include: what is knowledge (and why do we want it?); theories of justification (foundationalism, the coherence theory, etc.); externalism and internalism in epistemology; skepticism, relativism and how to avoid them. Readings from contemporary sources.
Instructor(s): M. Williams
Area: Humanities
Writing Intensive.

AS.150.463. Theories of Rationality. 3 Credits.
Foundations of Rationality: How should we reason about reasoning? Understanding the nature of our ability to reason is among the most important parts of understanding who we are as human beings. This course will investigate the foundations of rationality through an examination of philosophical texts and contemporary empirical research.
Instructor(s): J. Waterman
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.464. Objectivity. 3 Credits.
This course examines the notion of objectivity and challenges to it. Its topics include the status of objective facts and beliefs, the structure of social reality, and rational disagreement.
Instructor(s): N. Goldberg
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.465. Genetics, Genomics and Society. 3 Credits.
This course will examine the ethical, legal and social implications (ELSI) of human genetics through the lens of significant and field-defining periods and events in the history of the field. We will study the ELSI issues raised by those events, and how the events have shaped and defined the current state of the science and emerging scientific, ethical, policy and public health issues. Juniors and Seniors only.
Instructor(s): D. Mathews
Area: Humanities, Natural Sciences, Social and Behavioral Sciences.

AS.150.466. Spinoza and Deleuze. 3 Credits.
The seminar is an in depth study of Spinoza’s major work, the Ethics, and of Deleuze’s interpretation of the Ethics. Discussion will focus on the following topics: the style and structure of the book, the definition of attribute, the substance-mode relation, infinity, duration and eternity, Spinoza’s proof of substance-monism, infinite modes, necessitarianism, parallelism, individuals and their limits, the nature of bodies. Special attention will be given to the principle of sufficient reason and to the priority of the infinite over the finite as the two metaphysical principles that motivate many of Spinoza’s claims. We will current analytic scholarship on Spinoza’s metaphysics, side by side with Deleuze’s major book on Spinoza. Course open to graduate and undergraduate seniors only.

AS.150.469. Spinoza and German Idealism. 3 Credits.
Instructor(s): E. Forster; Y. Melamed.

AS.150.470. Spinoza and the Pantheism Debate. 3 Credits.
In this course we will examine the philosophical significance of the so-called Pantheism Debate which shook Germany at the end of the 18th century after it was revealed that Lessing, the main representative of the German Enlightenment, was a Spinozist. Readings will be drawn from Spinoza, Jacobi, Mendelssohn, Herder, Goethe, and Kant.
Instructor(s): E. Forster; Y. Melamed
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.472. Neuroethics. 3 Credits.
Neuroethics: Can electroencephalography show that we lack free will? Can modern neuroimaging show that someone will commit a crime in the future? Is it ethical to use this Prometheus knowledge to put them in jail before they even commit a crime? In Neuroethics, we’ll consider these and other pressing questions emerging at the frontiers of neuroscience and modern moral theory.
Instructor(s): P. Stojanovic
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.473. Classics of Analytic Philosophy. 3 Credits.
This will be an examination of the classic articles of 20th Century Anglo-American philosophy. Included are Frege, Russell, Wittgenstein, Austen, Carnap, Quine.
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.474. Justice and Health. 3 Credits.
Course will consider the bearing of theories of justice on health care. Topics will include national health insurance, rationing and cost containment, and what justice requires of researchers in developing countries.
Instructor(s): H. Bok
Area: Humanities.
AS.150.475. Addiction, Depression, and the Self. 3 Credits.
An examination of the moral implications and effects of addiction, depression and Pharmacological treatments for depression on our conception of our own agency. Recommended Course Background: AS.150.219, AS.150.220, or permission required.
Instructor(s): H. Bok
Area: Humanities
Writing Intensive.

AS.150.476. Philosophy and Cognitive Science. 3 Credits.
This year's topic is "cognitive penetrability." What is the relationship between thought and perception? We will address this question through contemporary readings in both psychology and philosophy. Included among the specific questions to be addressed: do the terms, 'perception' and 'cognition' designate functionally distinct parts of the mind? To what extent is conscious experience (for example, how things look) influenced by changes in belief, expectations, and motivation? To what extent are we capable of observation that is independent of belief, and what is the role of perceptual evidence in scientific theorizing? Is there a level of visual processing that is encapsulated from higher cognition? What role does language play in how we see? What role does/can attention play in mediating between cognition and perception? Readings from Fodor, Pylyshyn, Siegel, Churchland, Bargh, Balketis, and others. [Note: This course meets concurrently with AS.200.316 and AS.200.616.] Instructor permission required.
Instructor(s): J. Flombaum; S. Gross
Area: Humanities
Writing Intensive.

AS.150.477. Existentialism. 3 Credits.
Through a close reading of the seminal texts by Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Heidegger, Sartre, and Merleau-Ponty the course will examine one of the most influential philosophical movements of the last century.
Instructor(s): G. Lebanidze
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.480. Philosophy and Geometry in History: Episodes from the Early Modern Period. 3 Credits.
Area: Humanities
Writing Intensive.

AS.150.481. Philosophical Implications of Clinical Neuroscience. 3 Credits.
The intersection of philosophy and neuroscience has become a popular topic of late. Research in this area, what some have termed 'neuroethics', has, among other things, motivated a reassessment of some of the metaphysical, epistemological, and moral assumptions at the heart of common philosophical theories. This course will critically survey some of these 'reassessments' using cases in clinical neurology as a starting point.

AS.150.482. The Ethics of Food. 3 Credits.
Eating is an essential human activity: we need to eat to survive. But alas, we need not eat well to survive, and many of us don't. This course is about eating well—eating in a way that's morally responsible, aesthetically pleasing, healthy, and that gives meaning to our lives. We'll consider these ethical questions: Is it morally wrong to make animals suffer and to kill them in order to eat them? Does it depend upon the animal (e.g. cows vs. clams)? What are the environmental and social consequences of various eating habits (e.g. vegetarianism, veganism, eating locally, eating organic)? Do these environmental and social consequences generate moral obligations to adopt (or to abandon) the relevant eating habits? Should we eat in ways that express and honor our humanity, our cultures, our religions, and our family traditions—or is this comparatively unimportant? We'll also consider government policies that affect our food choices: How can government policy shape our food choices? Given the individual and collective costs of certain food choices, should government policy aim to shape our food choices, or is that unacceptably paternalistic? Does the government have different responsibilities to shape children's food choices than adults' food choices?
Instructor(s): A. Barnhill
Writing Intensive.

AS.150.483. Topics in Jewish Philosophy: Heresy. 3 Credits.
This course will study the history and transformations of the Jewish concept of 'Apikorsut' – a unique kind of heresy that refers to a rabbinic scholar turned into a heretic, while maintaining a tense dialogue with mainstream Rabbinic culture and community. We will particularly interested in the following questions: What makes a dissenter into an Apikors? How does the Apikors defer from the apostate? Why was philosophy as a whole considered (since the Late Middle Ages) as a discipline of Apikorsut?
Instructor(s): Y. Melamed.

AS.150.484. Is Knowledge Possible: Epistemic Problems, Puzzles & Paradox. 3 Credits.
How is knowledge possible in view of various intractable problems and paradoxes, including the problem of justifying induction, the realism-anti-realism dispute, and the grue and ravens paradoxes about evidence? Are philosophical claims knowable? A study of contemporary views about evidence, probability, inference, and philosophy.
Instructor(s): P. Achinstein
Area: Humanities.
AS.150.485. Introductions to the Foundations of Logic, Mathematics and Computation. 4 Credits.
This course replaces 150.218 Introduction to Logic and 150.420 Intermediate Symbol Logic. These courses were based on the sort of basic logic course that has been standardly taught by Philosophy departments for at least fifty years. But much has happened since then, and it is high time to begin introducing students to the more exciting developments earlier on so that they can get a sense for where the action is. Since the 1950’s there have been major developments in the areas of lambda calculus and category theory and results such as the Curry-Howard isomorphism showing how these are related to logic. For example, conclusions of arguments correspond to the existence of data types and proofs correspond to programs. In general, the course explores fundamental formal systems and their formal interpretations. Apart from covering basic systems of logic, we will look at different manners of interpreting basic mathematical concepts such as those of set, element, number, ordered pair, function, and mapping. Students enrolled at the 420 level will attend the same lectures and sections as 228 students but will investigate the material at a deeper level through more penetrating homework assignments.
Instructor(s): R. Rynasiewicz
Area: Quantitative and Mathematical Sciences.

AS.150.486. Philosophy of Religion from Plato to Nietzsche. 3 Credits.
How should one understand the relation between reason and religious faith? Are there rationally compelling arguments for belief in the existence of God? If not, are the ethical demands of religious faith problematic? And if religious faith is not founded on reason, what is the best explanation for it? We will examine these and related questions via influential writings from Plato, Augustine, Anselm, Aquinas, Descartes, Hume, Kant, Kierkegaard, Marx, and Nietzsche.
Instructor(s): P. Leland.

AS.150.487. Experimental Ethics. 3 Credits.
Can ethical truths be uncovered through experimental methods? In this course we look at research in the psychology of moral judgment and its impact on how we ought to act.
Instructor(s): J. Maynes
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.488. Enlightenment Moral and Political Theory. 3 Credits.
Instructor(s): H. Bok
Area: Humanities
Writing Intensive.

AS.150.489. Spinoza’s Metaphysics. 3 Credits.
The seminar is an in depth study of Spinoza’s major work, the Ethics. We will concentrate on Parts II-IV of the Ethics, though we will try to cover the entire book. Among the topics to be discussed are: the style and structure of the book, the meaning of being and the question of ontology in Spinoza, the nature of Spinoza’s attributes, necessitarianism, teleology, the nature of ideas, parallelism, individuals and their limits, the nature of bodies, the three kinds of knowledge, the conatus and the affects, Spinoza’s view of good and evil, blessedness and divine intellectual love.
Instructor(s): Y. Melamed
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.490. Animal Minds. 3 Credits.
An examination of some of the scientific and philosophical literature on the nature of animal minds and the way(s) in which they differ from the human mind. The most important of these apparent differences are the use of language, the exercise of concepts, and instrumental reasoning, including the use of instruments. Co-listed 300.411
Instructor(s): M. Williams
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.491. Kant and Newton on the Foundations of Science. 3 Credits.
Kant attempted to provide a philosophical foundation for Newtonian science. In this class we will read Kant’s work “Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science,” and philosophical and foundational parts of Newton’s “Principia,” and we will critically compare and evaluate both. No particular scientific background is presupposed.
Instructor(s): E. Forster; P. Achinstein
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.493. Introduction to Scientific Methods. 3 Credits.
Are there universal methods that make scientific inquiry superior to any other? We will study methods proposed by Descartes, Newton, Mill, Popper, and others; and critiques of these methods by Kuhn and Feyerabend.
Instructor(s): P. Achinstein
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.494. Descartes. 3 Credits.
The course is an introduction to the philosophy of Rene Descartes. We will read most of his main philosophical works, and part of his correspondence. The class is open to both undergraduate and graduate students.
Instructor(s): Y. Melamed
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.495. Sex, Drugs, and Bioethics: Medicine and Morality in Modern America. 3 Credits.
Alongside rock n’ roll, sex and drugs have classically been seen as sites of moral or ethical transgression, particularly in post-war America. Unlike rock n’ roll, however, sex and drugs have always been bound up with the practice of medicine. This course explores the interaction of medical science with the moral and ethical issues which surround i) reproduction, sexual pleasure, and gender roles and ii) the use of drugs, both therapeutic, enhancing and recreational. Bridging these two sides of the course is the question of medicalisation, and how medical science is used to construct socially normative ideals about sexuality, behavior, emotion and physical capacity, and how in turn those moral norms are used to justify or argue for the development of particular medical practices. The aim of the course is to illuminate the mutually constitutive interplay of medicine and morality in modern America. Topics covered include: abortion, contraception, IVF, sex-selection, gene selection, adolescent sexualities, prostitution, STD surveillance, medicalisation of sexual dysfunction, medicalisation of emotion and behavior, ‘moral enhancement’, ADHD, Performance Enhancing Drugs, cosmetic surgery, neuroenhancement, recreational drugs, the war on drugs, the purpose of medicine.
Instructor(s): D. O’Connor
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences
Writing Intensive.
AS.150.496. Topics in the Theory of Value. 3 Credits.
We ask a basic question in value theory: what is it for something to be good, or of value? Is it for something to instantiate the simple value property 'good'? Can goodness be identified with some natural property, perhaps, the property 'pleasant', or some dispositional property, perhaps, 'what we desire to desire'? Is goodness a relation between some object, state of affairs, or activity and a subject, so that the good is benefit? On the other hand, are reasons and not values primitive in value theory, so that we should theorize about the good in terms of appropriate responses to it? We will read classic works by G. E. Moore, Peter Geach, Judith Jarvis Thomson, Connie Rosati, Nicholas Sturgeon, Richard Kraut, Donald Regan, T. M. Scanlon, and others.
Instructor(s): L. Theunissen
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.497. Kant and the Early Moderns. 3 Credits.
A critical examination of Kant's dialogue with his Early Modern predecessors (Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz, Locke, Berkeley, Hume), and of their own respective positions. Instructor(s): E. Forster; Y. Melamed
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.498. Modal Logic and Its Applications. 3 Credits.
In the first part of the course, we'll investigate the theory of modal logic, considering its syntax, semantics, and proof theory. We'll then turn to some of its philosophical applications: epistemic logic, counterfactuals, deontic logic, intuitionistic logic, and the metaphysics of time. Instructor(s): J. Bledin
Area: Humanities, Quantitative and Mathematical Sciences.

AS.150.511. Directed Study. 3 Credits.
Individual study of special topics, under regular supervision of a faculty member. Special permission is required.
Instructor(s): Staff
Writing Intensive.

AS.150.512. Directed Study. NULL Credits.
Instructor(s): Staff.

AS.150.551. Honors Project. 3 Credits.
See departmental major adviser.
Instructor(s): Staff.

AS.150.552. Honors Project. NULL Credits.
Instructor(s): Staff.

AS.150.598. Internship. 1 Credit.
Instructor(s): D. Moyar; M. Tumulty.

AS.150.600. Rules and Rule Following.
A close critical examination of the rule-following issues that arise from Wittgenstein's Philosophical Investigation.

AS.150.601. Graduate Seminar: Topics in the Theory.
Graduate students from non-Philosophy departments need instructor permission. We ask a very basic question in value theory: what is it for something to be good, or of value? Is it for something to instantiate the simple value property 'good'? Can goodness be identified with some natural property, perhaps, the property 'pleasant', or some dispositional property, perhaps, 'what we desire to desire'? Is goodness a relation between some object, state of affairs, or activity and a subject, so that the good is benefit? On the other hand, are reasons and not values primitive in value theory, so that we should theorize about the good in terms of appropriate responses to it? We will read classic works by G. E. Moore, Peter Geach, Judith Jarvis Thomson, Connie Rosati, Nicholas Sturgeon, Michael Smith, Richard Kraut, Donald Regan, T. M. Scanlon, and others.
Instructor(s): L. Theunissen
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.602. Causation and Exploration.

AS.150.604. Probability and Evidence.
Leading theories about the meaning of probability, and about the concept of evidence. No previous course in probability is necessary.
Instructor(s): P. Achinstein
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.605. Foundations of Ethics.
The seminar will serve as an advanced, topical introduction to normative theories in ethics, and will include some meta-ethics. Our central question is: what is the foundation, or motivational basis, of ethics? Is it the individual asking what she wants for her life? Is it the determination of rational requirements on action? We think about the relationship between reason, reasons, and motivation. We consider the debate over internalism and externalism about reasons. We work through the distinction between agent-neutral and agent-relative reasons and values. Among others, we will read Thomas Nagel, Phillipa Foot, Shelly Kagan, Samuel Scheffler, Derek Parfit, G. E. M. Anscombe, and Bernard Williams.
Instructor(s): L. Theunissen
Area: Humanities.

Course will focus on ancient skepticism as a way of life, and on the role of epistemological argument in skepticism so conceived. The seminar will end with a brief look at early modern reactions to ancient skepticism.
Instructor(s): M. Williams; R. Bett.

AS.150.608. Topics in Contemporary Axiology and Moral Theory.
This course will examine, first, alternative conceptions of how value is normative for agents. Should we promote value and increase its amount? Or should we honor and respect instances of value? We will also devote attention to some of the fundamental questions of axiology, focusing on the question of which ontological types have value, states of affairs or persons? This has been a contentious issue between two groups of philosophers, who tend to regard either Moore or Kant as a hero. There will be some attention to Moore and Kant themselves, though the bulk of the reading will be drawn from contemporary authors such as Anderson, Bradley, Chisholm, Darwall, Feldman, Hurka, Kagan, Lemos, Parfit, Raz, Scanlon, Sumner, Velleman, and Zimmerman.

AS.150.609. Graduate Seminar - Philosophy.
An examination of Derek Parfit's “On What Matters”.
Instructor(s): H. Bok
Area: Humanities.
AS.150.610. Graduate Seminar: Virtue Ethics.
A study of recent work in virtue ethics.
Instructor(s): H. Bok.

AS.150.611. Topics in Metaphysics: Mereology.
Mereology, the study of the relationship between parts and whole, has recently become a major subfield in contemporary metaphysics. In the seminar we will read classical as well as recent literature on the subject. Topics to be discussed include: the univocity of the term ‘part’, priority relations between parts and whole, universal composition, the nature of simples, boundaries, mereology and set theory, spatial parts, temporal parts, metaphysical monism and nihilism. For an introductory survey of the field, please see: Varzi, Achille. "Mereology", The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Spring 2011 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <a href="http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2011/entries/mereology/">http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2011/entries/mereology/</a>
Instructor(s): Y. Melamed.

Schelling’s Philosophical Investigations into the Nature of Human Freedom counts among his most important works – Heidegger called it “one of the deepest works of Western philosophy.” It is also one of the most enigmatic ones. In this course, we will contrast it with Schelling’s philosophy of nature and investigate the extent to which his theory of freedom is necessitated by problems in his philosophy of nature.
Instructor(s): E. Forster
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.619. Topics in Hegel’s Philosophy: Morality and Right.
In this course we will examine Hegel’s attempt to reconcile the normative domains of morality and right or law. Central topics include Hegel’s criticism of social contract theory, his phenomenological history of Spirit, and his conception of Ethical Life.
Instructor(s): D. Moyar.

AS.150.621. Seminar in Hegel’s Phenomenology of Spirit.
The course will consist of close reading of Hegel’s text along with readings from the extensive secondary literature. Particular attention will be given to Hegel’s methodology, his uses of recognition, and the various treatments of agency.
Instructor(s): D. Moyar.

AS.150.625. Fichte’s Theory of Self-Consciousness.
An in-depth study of Fichte’s 1794 Science of Knowledge together with his “Outline of the Distinctive Character of the Wissenschaftslehre with respect to the Theoretical Faculty.
Instructor(s): E. Forster.

AS.150.629. Graduate Seminar: Knowledge, Meaning, and Necessity: Themes from Wilfrid Sellars.
Instructor(s): M. Williams.

AS.150.630. Seminar In Metaphysics: Mind and Cosmos.
We will begin by reading Thomas Nagel’s new book: Mind and Cosmos. This will be followed by other works to be selected in class.
Instructor(s): P. Achinstein.

AS.150.632. Formal Logic.
Co-listed with AS.150.118
Instructor(s): P. Achinstein
Area: Humanities, Quantitative and Mathematical Sciences.

AS.150.633. Kant’s Opus Postumum.
This research seminar examines the reasons that led Kant to revise his transcendental philosophy late in life. Special attention to problems in the Metaphysics of Nature and the Metaphysics of Morals. Students should be familiar with Kant’s theoretical and practical philosophy.
Instructor(s): E. Forster.

AS.150.634. Seminar in Philosophy of German Idealism: Explanation or Construction? The Question of Method in the Philosophy of Nature.
“We must do away with all explanation, and description alone must take its place.” This sentence, although written over a century later and in a different context, could serve as a motto for what is perhaps the most important debate about the proper method of Naturphilosophie in German Idealism. In this seminar we will examine the philosophical significance of this debate over the role of explanation in our knowledge of nature. Readings will come from Jacobi, Goethe, Schiller, Kant, Schelling, Hegel, as well as from Pascal, Spinoza, and Newton.
Instructor(s): E. Forster
Area: Humanities.

This seminar will be an examination of Wittgenstein’s On Certainty. We will be concerned with detailed readings of the passages as well as more general interpretative claims.

This seminar will focus on the ethical system of the Stoics. Stoic ethics is notorious for a number of apparently extreme assertions, such as “Virtue is the only good”, “Virtue is sufficient for happiness”, and “The wise man is happy on the rack”. Yet the system has a wide following, over several centuries, in both Greek and Roman worlds; and it devotees (including at least one Roman emperor) were certainly not all fanatics. We will attempt to make sense of this ethical outlook, with particular focus on the relations among virtue, wisdom and happiness. This will involve some examination of other aspects of Stoic philosophy, especially their epistemology and their “physics” (that is, their conception of the nature of the world); it will also involve some examination of antecedents to Stoic ethical positions in earlier Greek philosophy, especially Plato. Finally, the Stoics have often been assimilated – particularly on account of their ethical views – to certain figures in modern philosophy, especially Kant and Spinoza; we will discuss these connections, real or imagined, to the extent that time permits and student interests dictate.

AS.150.648. The Identity of Indiscernibles.
Can two things (such as bodies, events, moments, thoughts, possible worlds) have precisely the same qualities? If so, what makes them different from each other? In this course we will study various theories of individuation in the early modern period and in contemporary metaphysics. Readings will include texts by Aristotle, Thomas, Spinoza, Locke, Leibniz, Clarke, Kant, Maimon, Russell, Max Black, Ayer, Ian Hacking, Saul Kripke, Robert Adams, and Michael Della Rocca.

AS.150.649. Graduate Seminar: Kant’s Moral Theory.
A study of Kant’s major works in moral philosophy.
Instructor(s): H. Bok.

AS.150.652. Seminar in the Philosophy of Science.
Recent developments in the realism-antirealism debate. Constructivism, structuralism, and suppositionism.
Instructor(s): R. Rynasiewicz.
AS.150.653. Seminar: Philosophy - Physics.
Philosophical problems in space-time physics.
Instructor(s): R. Rynasiewicz
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.658. Topics in the Philosophy of Language.
An examination of recent work in the philosophy of language and/or related work in the philosophy of mind.
Instructor(s): S. Gross
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.659. Graduate Seminar: Topics in Formal Semantics.
After an introduction to both static and dynamic semantics, we home in on two issues: the content of epistemic modal claims, and the logic and semantics of interrogative sentences.
Instructor(s): J. Bledin
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.661. Topics in the History & Foundations of Special & General Relativity.
Readings from Hertz, Lorentz, Poincaré, Einstein, Minkowski, Abraham, Laue, Weyl, Pauli, and others, tracing the evolution in the foundations of physics, from classical dynamics to the electromagnetic world view and then on through relativistic continuum mechanics / field theory. Special emphasis on how fields and matter couple to the space-time metric. Other problems considered include the hole argument, absolute vs. relational conceptions of space-time, separation of empirical from conventional components of theory (especially as regards simultaneity), the Minkowski-Abraham controversy and the recent development of “premetric” electrodynamics. Of special interest for graduate students in the history of science and for undergraduate and graduate students in physics, as well as for philosophy graduate students interested in natural philosophy.
Instructor(s): T. Rosenkoetter.

AS.150.662. Topics in Ethics: Kantian Ethics.
This course will ask the question “What makes an ethics Kantian?” It will look both to Kant’s texts and to various contemporary ethicists who understand their projects to be Kantian. Students will have the option to write on topics in the history of philosophy or on topics in contemporary moral theory.
Instructor(s): T. Rosenkoetter.

AS.150.663. “Self-Consciousness, Recognition, and Right”.
This course will involve a close reading of J.G. Fichte’s Foundations of Natural Right and G.W.F. Hegel’s Philosophy of Right. The focus will be on how these authors ground the category of right and its applicability in claims about self-consciousness and mutual recognition.
Instructor(s): D. Moyar.

AS.150.664. What is Naturphilosophe?
In recent year, there has been a resurgence of interest in idealist philosophy of nature (Naturphilosophe). In this research seminar, we will study some of the recent literature on this topic, together with the classic texts from Plato to Hegel.
Instructor(s): E. Forster.

AS.150.665. Philosophy of Psychology.
Instructor(s): M. Williams.

AS.150.810. Independent Study.
Instructor(s): Staff.

AS.150.811. Directed Study.
Please see AS.150.810 for section numbers to use when registering.
Instructor(s): Staff.

AS.150.812. Directed Study.
Please see AS.150.810 for section number to use when registering.
Instructor(s): Staff.

AS.150.821. Research Seminar in Language and Mind.
A workshop for current departmental research in language and mind.
Permission required.
Instructor(s): S. Gross
Area: Humanities.

Cross Listed Courses

Cognitive Science

AS.050.303. Mind, Brain and Beauty. 3 Credits.
What underlies our aesthetic response to art, music, and other facets of human experience? Do identifiable properties of objects and events evoke consistent aesthetic responses, or is beauty mostly in the eye of the beholder? Examining such questions from cognitive science, neuroscience, and philosophical perspectives, this course explores relevant research and theory in the visual, auditory, and tactile domains. Several researchers will discuss their ongoing studies with the class, and students will also have the opportunity to participate in demonstration experiments that illustrate phenomena under discussion. (Same as AS.050.603) Recommended Course Background: One or more courses in one of these: Cognitive Science, Neuroscience, Philosophy, or Psychology or permission of instructor.
Instructor(s): M. McCloskey
Area: Natural Sciences, Social and Behavioral Sciences.

English

AS.060.282. Moral Philosophy and the Novel in Nineteenth-Century England. 3 Credits.
Can novels ask philosophical questions? What do literary narratives and moral arguments have to do with each other? Everyone who has read a novel recognizes that it is in part an expression of ideas: characters, narrators, authors, and so forth say and do things that express a way of thinking. In this course we’ll examine the connections between moral philosophy and literature in nineteenth-century England in a series of four units, each of which pairs a novelist and a philosopher. The novelists will be Jane Austen, Charles Dickens, George Eliot, and E.M. Forster; the major philosophers will include Edmund Burke, John Stuart Mill, Immanuel Kant, and G.E. Moore, and we’ll read excerpts from Jeremy Bentham, Ludwig Feuerbach, F.H. Bradley, and Henry Sigwic.
Assignments will include reading quizzes, response papers, and a final essay with a research component. Dean’s Teaching Fellowship course.
Pre 1800 course.
Instructor(s): P. Fessenbecker
Area: Humanities
Writing Intensive.

Psychological Brain Sciences

AS.200.206. Foundations of Mind. 4 Credits.
An interdisciplinary investigation into the innateness of concepts: perception, number, language, and morality, physics discussed. Evidence from animals, infants, patients, brains. Students collect data in sections investigating claims from the readings. Cross-listed with Cognitive Science and Philosophy.
Area: Social and Behavioral Sciences.
German Romance Languages Literatures

**AS.213.235. Panorama of German Thought I. 3 Credits.**
Taught in English. German thought is a broad intellectual tradition that encompasses works in an astonishing number of fields including philosophy, aesthetics, sociology, epistemology, psychology, anthropology, history, religious studies, and cultural analysis. The most prominent representatives of this tradition are Luther, Kant, Humboldt, Hegel, Nietzsche, Marx, Warburg, Freud, Benjamin, Kracauer, Weber, Simmel, Cassirer, Auerbach, Adorno, Arendt, Heidegger, and Luhmann. Indeed the study of cultural, historical, and social phenomena as well as literary and artistic forms would not have been possible without the German intellectual tradition which, beginning with the Enlightenment, emphasized the role of the subject in constituting objects of knowledge and experience. This two-semester survey course will highlight important topics of German Thought, e.g. the subject, consciousness and unconsciousness, Bildung and the idea of the university, the sublime and the uncanny, irony, hermeneutics and translation, the desire for knowledge, tragedy and repetition, civilization, symbolic forms and medial reproduction, memory, and authority in a historical scope. While the first semester (Fall) covers until 1850 (from Luther to Hegel/Kierkegaard), the second (Spring) focuses on Modern German Thought after 1850 (from Marx to Luhmann). Meets with AS.213.235
Instructor(s): E. Strowick
Area: Humanities.

**AS.211.236. Panorama of German Thought II. 3 Credits.**
Panorama of German Thought from Nietzsche to Habermas. Course will examine major thinkers in nineteenth and twentieth-century German thought with emphasis on the response to Enlightenment philosophy, the critique of reason, the questions about the autonomy of the subject and the search for new individual and collective identities. Reading will include traditional philosophical texts (Nietzsche, Cassirer, Heidegger, Adorno, Habermas) as well as works in anthropology (Gehlen, Scheler), sociology (Simmel, Weber), psychology (Mach, Freud), political theory (Marx, Schmitt) and aesthetics (Benjamin, Warburg, Panofsky). This course is a continuation of Panorama of German Thought I, though the first semester is not a prerequisite for the second. Taught in English.
Instructor(s): R. Tobias
Area: Humanities.

**AS.213.309. Walter Benjamin and His World. 3 Credits.**
All readings and class discussions in English. This course will provide an introduction to the thought, writing, and world of Walter Benjamin—one of the most interesting and influential German writers of the early 20th century. Although he died in exile having published only a single book in his lifetime, in the past three decades his ideas and preoccupations have changed the way we think about Cultural Studies, Media Studies, Literary Studies, German thought, Jewish mysticism, and the philosophy of history. We will be examining some of his major writings in tandem with precursors such as Charles Baudelaire and Louis Aragon; contemporaries such as Theodor Adorno and Gershom Scholem; and the legacy of his work among contemporary theorists, critics, and artists.
Instructor(s): M. Caplan
Area: Humanities.
AS.213.368. German Political Thought. 3 Credits.
This course will introduce students to major figures in German political thought from Martin Luther to Karl Marx and Immanuel Kant to Carl Schmitt. The class will explore such issues as the notion of sovereignty, the relationship between church and state, the theory of parliamentary democracy, and the political and economic ramifications of liberalism. Reading and discussion in English.
Instructor(s): R. Tobias
Area: Humanities.

The course analyzes the transformations of the relationship between form – life – aesthetics with regard to Goethe’s morphological writings as well as the complex history of the reception in the philosophy of life (Spengler, Klages), in literary Modernism (Rilke, Einstein, Benn, Kafka) and in the early cultural studies of the 20th century (Simmel, Cassirer, Blumenberg). The “doctrine of the shape of formation (Bildung) and transformation (Umbildung) of organic bodies,” Goethe’s morphology considers shape (Gestalt) not as something static but in constant change, taking particular interest in the movable (“das Bewegliche”), ie, processes of transformation in their temporality: “Observing all shapes, particularly organic ones, nowhere do we find something established, something inactive, but rather everything oscillates in constant movement. Hence our language uses the word Bildung for both, the emerged as well as the emerging.” A nexus between life and form, Bildung raises the problem of representation: A force towards representation, it itself escapes representation. It is by way of metamorphosis and dynamization of representation that the relationship between life and form is arranged anew, again and again – imposing questions of Bildung, representability (Bildlichkeit), morphological methods and poetics on modern literature and the humanities. Taught in German. Recommended Course Background: AS.210.311-AS.210.312 or instructor permission.
Instructor(s): E. Strowick
Area: Humanities.

AS.213.604. Small Forms.
Small forms cover the broad field from aphorism, epigram, fable and riddle to anecdote, short story, novella, ... and treatise. In each of those ‘compositional arts’ the smallness unfolds in different and historically specific ways. Spanning a period from 1770 to 1940 and focusing (not exclusively) on aphorisms, the seminar will explore the manifold poetics of the small in literature and philosophy: What can small mean on the level of (literary) form? What (historically specific) kind of readings do small forms facilitate? What readings do they thwart? What happens to aphorisms when they become parts of a monstrously large overall composition? What distinguishes small forms from (e.g.) fragments? How do small forms relate to simple forms (Jolles) or minor literature (Deleuze)? To what extent do small forms gain epistemological impact, e.g. with respect to the critique of system and systematic philosophy since 1870? Readings include Lichtenberg, Schlegel, Novalis, Nietzsche, Kafka, Robert Walser, Benjamin, Adorno. Readings and discussions in German.
Instructor(s): A. Krauss
Area: Humanities.

AS.213.610. The Idea of a University in Classical German Philosophy.
The role and function of a university in life and in society was a topic of considerable concern for some of the most prominent German philosophers of the late 18th and early 19th century. Their published (and unpublished) contributions led to a new understanding of what a university should be that proved to be very influential for the conception of the ‘modern’ university, as realized in Germany in the 19th century. The seminar will examine the writings of Kant, Fichte, Schelling, Schleiermacher, and Humboldt on the university with attention to the relation of the authors’ thoughts on education to their more general philosophical positions. The seminar will begin on March 22 and continue to the end of the term.
Instructor(s): R. Horstmann.

AS.213.629. The Art of Framing.
Frames and Framings in art and literature are aesthetic means of creating focus. They draw a distinction between interiority and exteriority, foreground and surroundings; they cut out segments from space-time continuum and thus provide basic instruments of orientation, they constitute pictorial representation as well as the compositional structure of literature. From an epistemological perspective one can say that frames create a paradoxical threshold between which facilitates both the differentiation and transgression of spheres. It is further remarkable that frames while spectacularly making visible something specific at the same time expose the instances of their own ‘showing’: by implementing frames representation observes itself in the very process of representing. Through constellating systematic and historical readings the seminar will analyze theoretical concepts of frame and framing (Simmel, Genette, Marin, Derrida) and at the same time explore the transformation of frame forms and functions in literature and aesthetic discourse between 1720 and 1830 (Brockes, v. Haller, Wieland, Lessing, Herder, Lichtenberg, Goethe, Moritz, Jean Paul, Schlegel, Brentano, Tieck, Hoffmann). Among the topics to be discussed will be the conceptualization of subject-object relations as an analytical tool to reconstruct how the organizing principles of framing in Enlightenment (point of view, Guckkasten, chain of pictures, landscape/camera obscura) drift into the twilight of epistemological reflection: Around 1800 frame structures (and its doublings/transgressions) present the “Produzierende mit dem Produkt” and thus articulate the insights of transcendental philosophy, they turn into a medium of romantic irony.
Instructor(s): A. Krauss
Area: Humanities.
AS.213.634. Schiller’s Aesthetic Writings.
Schiller’s theoretical writings might be approached by the sentence ‘it is only through beauty that man makes his way to freedom’. Discussing the assumption that humans live in a condition of unfreedom resulting from social and economic divisions, Schiller’s notion of beauty crosses boundaries between ethics, politics and aesthetics to formulate a theory of modernity in which beauty functions as a medium to reconcile man’s sensuous nature and his capacity for reason. The course will examine Schiller’s concept of beauty in relation to the anthropological, political, ethical and aesthetic discourses of his time especially with respect to Kant’s view of aesthetic judgment which Schiller at the same time embraced and criticized. Particular attention will be paid to Schiller’s reflexions on representation as well as to the poetics of his aesthetic discourse. Readings include: Kallias-Briefe (1793), Über Anmut und Würde (1793), Vom Erhabenen (1793), Über die ästhetische Erziehung des Menschen in einer Reihe von Briefen (1793), Über naive und sentimentalisiche Dichtung (1795/96). Readings and discussions in German.
Instructor(s): A. Krauss.

Taught in German. The course title marks a problem of translation which already Leo Spitzer in his “Prolegomena to an interpretation of the word ‘Stimmung’” underscores: “It is a fact that the German word Stimmung as such is untranslatable.” Mood, attunement, atmosphere are facets of an aesthetics of Stimmung as it developed in literature and philosophy from the 18th to the 20th century. Most recently, Stimmung has had a renaissance as a methodological term in a Literary Criticism which seeks to overcome the paradigm of post-structuralism. As David Wellbery has demonstrated, the linguistic usage of the word Stimmung comprises three aspects: a subjective mode of experience/perception, an atmospheric dimension and a communicative efficacy. It is along those lines that the course analyzes the poetics and aesthetics of Stimmung in German Literature and Thought from the 18th through the 20th century. Stimmung proves to be fertile ground for contagious forms of communication, specific modes of representation (i.e. coloring, nuance), and the dissolution of subject/object boundaries. Furthermore, we will discuss Stimmung as a term of Literary Criticism from the 20th century to the present. Readings will include: Kant, Schiller, Stifter, Fontane, Hofmannsthal, Hermann Bahr, Thomas Mann, Georg Simmel, Martin Heidegger, Leo Spitzer, Erich Auerbach, Gernot Böhme, Hans-Ulrich Gumbrecht.
Instructor(s): E. Strowick
Area: Humanities.

In the [eighteen-]forties,” Benjamin writes in “The Arcades Project,” “boredom began to felt on an epidemic scale”. It is, however, as early as in German Enlightenment that boredom (“Langeweile”) haunts aesthetics and discourses on sensitivity: The construction of the sensitive man is beleaguered by figures of insensitivity – boredom among others. In boredom, aesthetics encounters its anesthetic pendant. From the beginning of its discursive emergence, boredom combines an “existential and a temporal connotation” (Goodstein): an emotional emptiness/apathy with a particular experience of time. Against the backdrop of the discursive history of boredom from the 18th to the 20th century, the course addresses the specific connection between boredom and modern literature. How can we understand the “ecstasy glimpsed from the banks of desire”, the “warm gray muffle lined with glowing silk” in which “we wrap ourselves when we dream” – as Barthes and Benjamin describe boredom respectively – with regard to literary representation? How does modern literature transform boredom into the empty time of writing? We will analyze poetics of boredom with respect to their temporal structures, the monotony of the everyday, the loss of meaning, the differentiation of perception and the time of reading/reading time. Readings include: Kant, Herder, Tieck, Büchner, Kierkegaard, Schopenhauer, Stifter, Nietzsche, Hofmannsthal, Thomas Mann, Heidegger, Benjamin, Barthes, Max Frisch, Hans Blumenberg. Readings and discussions in German.
Cross-listed with Philosophy
Instructor(s): E. Strowick.

The course will be taught in German. With Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten’s thesis “Philosophical meditations pertaining to some matters concerning poetry” (1735) the term “aesthetics” was introduced to philosophical discourse. The new name for the discipline did not signify a complete break with previous philosophical positions, that is, with the perfectionist aesthetics of Leibniz and Wolff. However, by conceptualizing sensible cognition as “analogue of reason” (analogon rationis) Baumgarten depicted the aesthetic sense as a locus of perfection in its own right and, thus, did transform the Wolffian model and paved the way for much more radical revisions of aesthetic experience in Germany. The course will study the emergence and specificity of Baumgarten’s concept of aesthetics in relation to the Wolffian framework, Gottsched’s poetics, (Georg Friedrich) Meier’s adoptions of Baumgarten, and Herder’s response to Baumgarten. Readings include Baumgarten’s early Meditations on Poetry (Meditaciones philosophicae de nonnullis ad poema pertinentibus, 1735), excerpts from his Metaphysics (Metaphysica, 1739) and Aesthetics (Aesthetica, 1750-58). Cross-listed with Philosophy
Instructor(s): A. Krauss.
Taught in German. The course analyzes the performative on the basis of the very field that John L. Austin's speech act theory excludes: literature. What challenges Austin's speech act theory indeed opens up the question of the performative towards iterability and theatricality and thus calls for the performative as a methodological category of literary criticism. According to Shoshana Felman's readings of Austin, the performative act can be accentuated as an act of the "speaking body" in which the body is conceived of not as a means of linguistic expression but rather as a spillover of the act of utterance into the statement. How then is the corporeality or materiality of writing asserted in acts of narrating and reading? The course will examine theories of the performative from the perspective of literature and literary criticism as well as analyze literary speech acts (promises, pacts, etc.) in detail. Readings will include: Austin, Derrida, Felman, Freud, Nietzsche, de Man, Hamacher, Goethe, Büchner, Kafka, Henry James, Thomas Mann etc.
Instructor(s): E. Strowick
Area: Humanities.

AS.214.761. Reading & Writing in Pre-Modern Europe.
This course has a fourfold aim: First, it is designed to familiarize participants with the basics of Latin paleography from Roman antiquity through the age of printing with moveable type; throughout, we will practice deciphering literary and documentary sources of various types, even as we concentrate on the evolution of different writing styles. Second, we will think about paleography's status as a "discipline." That is, the term "paleography" dates back to 1708 and Montfaucon's classic work, Palaeographia Graeca. However, it was only in the late nineteenth century in the world of the German research university that paleography came into the orbit of the Geisteswissenschaften as a "Hilfswissenschaft." Both implicitly and explicitly throughout the seminar we shall be asking what consequences that move entailed. Third, we will study the manner in which printing with moveable type changed western graphic culture: was printing "revolutionary" or "evolutionary"? Did printing and its radical graphic changes introduce new forms of consciousness in readers? Fourth, we will become familiar with certain aspects of "the history of the book," discovering as we do what sorts of questions scholars in this broad field of scholarly endeavor have been asking recently.
Instructor(s): C. Celenza
Area: Humanities.

AS.225.328. The Existential Drama: Philosophy and Theatre of the Absurd. 3 Credits.
Existentialism, a powerful movement in modern drama and theatre, has had a profound influence on contemporary political thought, ethics, and psychology, and has transformed our very notion of how to stage a play. Selected readings and lectures on the philosophy of Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Camus and Sartre -- and discussion of works for the stage by Sartre, Ionesco, Genet, Beckett, Albee, Pinter, Athol Fugard (with Nkani & Nhone), Heiner Müller and the late plays of Caryl Churchill. Opportunities for projects on Dürenmatt, Frisch, Havel, Witkiewicz, and Mrozek.
Instructor(s): J. Martin
Area: Humanities
Writing Intensive.

Humanities Center
AS.300.319. Skepticism and Theology. 3 Credits.
This course examines the relation between the history of philosophical theology and the foundations of modern skepticism by focusing on their mutual point of departure: the concept of the human being as an essentially "finite" being "limited" in its capacity to know others, the world, and God.
Instructor(s): T. Dika
Area: Humanities
Writing Intensive.

AS.300.342. The Bible and Philosophy I. 3 Credits.
This course will examine several attempts by ancient, modern, and contemporary thinkers to come to terms with the Biblical concept of revelation and prophecy, law and election, apocalyptic and eschatology. We will put special emphasis on the first articulation of the idea of Christian universalism, faith and justification, time and eternity.
Readings will include the entire corpus of St. Paul's authentic letters, in addition to the major Scriptural passages on which he draws, but also selections from Philo of Alexandria, St. Augustine, Spinoza, Luther, Nietzsche, Jakob Taubes, Alain Badiou, Giorgio Agamben, and Jean-Luc Nancy.
Instructor(s): H. de Vries
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences.

AS.300.343. Philosophy and Literary Form. 3 Credits.
This course examines the difference literary form can make to the shaping of philosophical content. Philosophers have tended to treat literary form as merely ornamental. For this reason, they have often underestimated the philosophical significance not only of certain works of literature but also the literary form of even those works uncontroversially considered to be philosophical. This course explores the philosophical significance of literary forms in both kinds of works. The first half examines how and why Anglo-American philosophers have incorporated the interpretation of individual literary works into their philosophical writing. We will concentrate on three works of literature—Ibsen’s A Doll’s House, James’s The Golden Bowl and Wordsworth’s Prelude—each of which has attracted significant philosophical attention. The second half of the course examines how philosophers have brought literary analysis to bear in order to illuminate the philosophical achievement of certain canonical philosophical texts. We will concentrate on three literary forms—dialogue, meditation and confession—as these forms are instantiated by three works of philosophy: Plato’s Republic, Descartes’s Meditations and Wittgenstein’s Philosophical Investigations.
Instructor(s): K. Boyce
Area: Humanities.

AS.300.381. The Moses Complex. 3 Credits.
Instructor(s): R. Leys
Area: Humanities.

AS.300.388. Introduction to the Philosophy of Time. 3 Credits.
This course explores answers to the question "What is time?" that take account of time as something both inside and outside of us. Readings include, among others, Aristotle, Augustine, Kant, Bergson, Heidegger, and Einstein. Cross-listed with Philosophy
Instructor(s): N. Schott
Area: Humanities.
AS.300.390. Obama and Philosophy. 3 Credits.
The course will investigate the theological and philosophical as well as rhetorical and literary backgrounds and guiding principles that have informed Barack Obama’s writings, speeches, and political strategies so far. While paying minute attention to a few pivotal controversial recent debates, both in domestic policy and international relations, our central focus will be on understanding the curious blend of Obama’s version of so-called Christian realism, influenced by Reinhold Niebuhr, among others, and of what we will call his deep pragmatism. Special attention will be paid to his early appeal to “simple ideas” and “small miracles,” each of them yielding the Biblical and sobered injunction of a “hope against hope.” Cross-listed with Philosophy
Instructor(s): H. de Vries
Area: Humanities.

AS.300.399. Cinema and Philosophy. 3 Credits.
Do movies have anything to say about philosophical problems? Why is contemporary philosophy so interested in cinema? What are the most productive ways of bringing films and philosophy into conversation? Why is contemporary philosophy so interested in cinema? Recommended readings will include writings by Donald Davidson, Stanley Cavell, Sari Nusseibeh, Hannah Arendt, Isaiah Berlin, Barack Obama, and others.
Cross-listed with Philosophy
Instructor(s): H. de Vries.

AS.300.400. Philosophy of Tragedy. 3 Credits.
Since the late eighteenth century, philosophers have repeatedly been drawn to investigations of tragedy and the tragic. In this course we will study some of the most important thinkers in this tradition, and examine the different implications (philosophical, historical, political, existential, aesthetic, etc.) that these concepts carry in their works. Authors to be read will include Schiller, Hegel, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Unamuno, Benjamin and Cavell.
Instructor(s): L. Lisi
Area: Humanities.

AS.300.411. Animal Minds. 3 Credits.
An examination of some of the scientific and philosophical literature on the nature of animal minds and the way(s) in which they differ from the human mind. The most important of these apparent differences are the use of language, the exercise of concepts, and instrumental reasoning, including the use of instruments. Co-list with AS.150.490
Instructor(s): M. Williams; R. Leys
Area: Humanities.

AS.300.601. Philosophy of Tragedy.
Since the late eighteenth century, philosophers have repeatedly been drawn to investigations of tragedy and the tragic. In this course we will study some of the most important thinkers in this tradition, and examine the different implications (philosophical, historical, political, existential, aesthetic, etc.) that these concepts carry in their works. Authors to be read will include Schiller, Hegel, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Unamuno, Benjamin and Cavell. Cross-listed with: English, German & Romance Languages & Literatures, Philosophy
Instructor(s): L. Lisi.

AS.300.608. Philosophy and the Event.
What constitutes or characterizes a genuine event, whether in history and politics or in individual lives and loves? This seminar explores several answers to this philosophical question, starting out from the major works of two contemporary thinkers, Alain Badiou and Jean-Luc Marion, whose central concerns in Being and Event and Being Given elsewhere—namely, the so-called laicization of grace and the phenomenology of givenness—seem at once close and diametrically opposed to each other. Attention will further be paid to concrete historical and literary examples as well as to other conceptualizations of the event that would seem to either substantiate or contradict their respective claims. Readings will also include writings by Donald Davidson, Stanley Cavell, Sari Nusseibeh, Hannah Arendt, Isaiah Berlin, Barack Obama, and others.
Instructor(s): H. de Vries.

AS.300.676. Heidegger’s Being and Time II.
This seminar consist of an integral reading and discussion of Martin Heidegger’s 1927 magnum opus Being and Time (Sein und Zeit) in light of its historical and philosophical context as well as its contemporary reception in both the phenomenological, existentialist, hermeneutic, and analytic traditions. We will focus primarily on the Second Division but also revisit central questions from Division One. However, it will not be necessary for students to have attended the previous seminar on this earlier part of Heidegger’s major work. Recommended readings will include the commentaries by Emmanuel Levinas, Jacques Derrida, Jean-Greisch, Jean-Luc Marion, Hubert Dreyfus, Robert Brandom, and others.
Cross-listed with Philosophy
Instructor(s): H. de Vries.

Center for Africana Studies
AS.362.357. Black Existential Thought. 3 Credits.
Black existentialism is a branch of Africana philosophy—the philosophical tendencies that arose out of the experience of the African Diaspora. This course is a philosophical interrogation into the meaning of the lived experience of being black in the context of an anti-black world through addressing such existential questions as freedom, identity, anguish, dread, responsibility, embodied agency, evil, resentment, liberation, and nihilism.
Instructor(s): F. Hayes
Writing Intensive.

Computer Science
EN.600.430. Ontologies and Knowledge Representation. 3 Credits.
Knowledge representation (KR) deals with the possible structures by which the content of what is known can be formally represented in such a way that queries can be posed and inferences drawn. Ontology concerns the hierarchi- cal classification of entities from given domains of knowledge together with the relations between various classes or subclasses. We begin with KR, examining the standard variety of frameworks developed or implemented over the last twenty years, including 1st-order logic and automated theorem proving, networks, frames, and description logics. Then we move on to a study of the problems inherent in ontology development and examine the some of the currently prevalent environments, including Universal Modeling Language, OWL and Protege®, RDFS and semantic web applications.
[Analysis] Recommended Course Background: EN.600.107 and EN.600.271
Instructor(s): R. Rynasiewicz
Area: Humanities, Quantitative and Mathematical Sciences.