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.

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 work 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

(Also see Requirements for a Bachelor’s Degree (http://e-catalog.jhu.edu/undergrad-students/academic-policies/requirements-for-a-bachelors-degree).)

Philosophy majors must take 11 departmental courses.

Majors must take at least one course in each of the five following categories:

- Two History of Philosophy:
  - Ancient philosophy
  - Modern philosophy

- Three Focal Areas:
  - 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 history of philosophy categories are commonly satisfied by taking AS.150.201 Introduction to Greek Philosophy and AS.150.205 Introduction to the History of Modern Philosophy. In addition, majors are required to take an “undergraduate seminar”, preferably in the junior year. The other remaining courses required to reach 11 courses total may be distributed based on a student’s interest, but at least 6 must be at the 300-level or higher.

Additional Rules for the Major

- Of the two general introductory courses, AS.150.111 Philosophic Classics and AS.150.112 Philosophical Problems, only one may count toward the major (neither is required), and only two 100-level courses may count toward the major.
- A minimum of six courses must be at the 300-level or higher.
- Courses may not be taken satisfactory/unsatisfactory and students must receive a C- or better grade for the course to apply towards the major.
- Well-qualified majors may be admitted to a graduate seminar during the senior year. They should consult their major advisor.

Major Requirements

| One course in ancient philosophy          | 3 |
| One course in modern philosophy           | 3 |
| One course in logic, philosophy of science, or philosophy of mathematics | 3 |
| One course in philosophy of mind, theory of knowledge, philosophy of language, or metaphysics | 3 |
| One course in ethics, aesthetics, or political philosophy | 3 |
| One undergraduate seminar (300-level; ideally in junior year) | 3 |
| Five additional courses                  | 15 |
| Total Credits                            | 33 |
Examples of Courses in Each Required Area

Ancient Philosophy
AS.150.201 Introduction to Greek Philosophy 3
AS.150.401 Greek Philosophy: Plato and His Predecessors 3
AS.150.402 Aristotle 3
AS.150.403 Hellenistic Philosophy 3

Modern Philosophy
AS.150.205 Introduction to the History of Modern Philosophy 3
AS.150.412 Kant’s Critique of Practical Reason 3
AS.150.417 Kant’s ‘Critique Of Pure Reason’ 3

Logic, Philosophy of Science, or Philosophy of Mathematics
AS.150.419 Kant’s Critique/Judgment 3
AS.150.118 Introduction to Formal Logic 3
AS.150.420 Mathematical Logic I 3
AS.150.421 Mathematical Logic II 3
AS.150.422 Axiomatic Set Theory 3
AS.150.424 Foundations of Probability & Induction 3
AS.150.429 Topics in Logic: Ontology and Knowledge Representation 3
AS.150.433 Philos/Space & Time 3
AS.150.434 History and Philosophy of Quantum Physics I 3
AS.150.435 The Philosophy and Theology of Maimonides 3

Philosophy of Mind, Theory of Knowledge, Philosophy of Language, or Metaphysics
AS.150.245 Introduction to Philosophy of Mind 3
AS.150.459 Theory Of Knowledge 3
AS.150.476 Philosophy and Cognitive Science 3

Ethics, Aesthetics, or Political Philosophy
AS.150.219 Introduction to Bioethics 3
AS.150.220 Introduction to Moral Philosophy 3
AS.150.452 Freedom of Will & Moral Responsibility 3
AS.150.454 The Value of Humanity 3
AS.150.455 Ethics And Animals 3

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 11 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.

Honors Thesis Program
AS.150.551 Honors Project 3
AS.150.552 Honors Project 0-3

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
  - Philosophy of mind, theory of knowledge, philosophy of language, or metaphysics

Minor Restrictions
- 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.
- Courses may not be taken satisfactory/unsatisfactory and students must receive a C- or better grade for the course to apply towards the major.

Minor Requirements
One course in history of philosophy (ancient or modern) 3
Two courses, each from a different focal area 6
Four additional courses 12
Total Credits 21

The Bioethics Program offers an interdisciplinary minor in which philosophy plays a large role. See Bioethics Program (http://catalog.jhu.edu/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.

Admission

In addition to submitting an application, applicants are asked to submit a sample of written work. While an undergraduate major in philosophy is good preparation for graduate study in the department, applications are welcomed from students with other majors whose interests are now turning toward philosophy.

The deadline for those applying both for admission and financial aid is January 15. Awards will be announced by April 1. Inquiries should be addressed to Admissions Chair, Department of Philosophy, The Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Maryland, 21218. Graduate applications can also be downloaded from the admissions office website.

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.150.102. What Is Art For? Topics in Aesthetics.
In this course we will consider a range of views about the purpose and functions of art held by different philosophers from antiquity to the early 20th century. We will start from Plato’s criticism of art in the Republic. Against this foil we will discuss the views on the point of art of Aristotle, Lessing, Kant, the early German Romantics and Viktor Shklovsky. In addition, during the course we will read a few literary works by Sophocles, Shakespeare and Tolstoy.
Instructor(s): A. Kabeshkin
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.103. Philosophy of Oppression and Resistance.
In general, human beings would rather not be oppressors, and would rather not live in oppressive social orders. Yet this does not prevent social structures from being oppressive in both explicit and covert forms, even in societies highly committed to just democratic ideals. The course will analyze what it means for an individual, practice, or institution to be oppressive, and will review concrete mechanisms which underlie racialized/gendered forms of oppression such as hate speech, pornography, propaganda, ideology, and material inequality. Finally, we will discuss how social agents can resist explicit and covert oppression in a way that is conducive to the realization of just ideals.
Instructor(s): P. O’Donnell
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.108. Introduction to Philosophy of Biology.
This course will introduce students to a range of questions debated in contemporary philosophy of biology. The course will have a character of a rather broad overview of the field with a particular attention to debates around the “received” and the gene-centric views of evolution on the one hand, and the problem of reductionism/antireductionism in biology on the other hand. Problems such as the analysis of the concept of adaptation, the status of biological species, and others will also be discussed.
Instructor(s): A. Kabeshkin
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.110. Delusions.
What is a delusion? Are delusions just irrational beliefs? Can delusions be true? Are some religious and political beliefs delusions? If so, which ones? Are overly optimistic people simply deluded? In this course we will attempt to answer some of these questions by reading and discussing contemporary work from philosophy, psychology, and the neurosciences. Part of the goal will be to get a clearer understanding of the relationship between false beliefs, irrational beliefs, and delusions.
Instructor(s): B. Miller
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.111. Philosophic Classics.
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.

AS.150.112. Philosophical Problems.
An introduction to philosophy through several central problems. Topics vary from year to year, but might include such topics as the nature and limits of human knowledge, free will, consciousness, death, or paradoxes of truth and reasoning.
Instructor(s): S. Gross
Area: Humanities.

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 Freshman Seminar
Instructor(s): N. Goldberg
Area: Humanities.

From domestic debates about abortion and health care to international dialogue about women’s rights, genital mutilation and genocide, human rights claims have become increasingly common, and we’ve come to rely on the discourse of human rights to assess the way human beings are treated by one another and by states. But what are human rights? How are human rights claims justified? Are human rights really objective and universal or are they contingent and relative to particular cultures? Where did the human rights culture begin, and how has it become so important? This course aims to explore these questions by examining foundational human rights documents, historical works on human rights and contemporary philosophical inquiry into their foundations (or lack thereof).
Area: Humanities.
AS.150.118. Introduction to Formal Logic.
An introduction to symbolic logic and probability. In the first two parts of the course we study formal ways of determining whether a conclusion of an argument follows from its premises. Included are truth-functional logic and predicate logic. In the third part we study the basic rules of probability, and learn how to make probability calculations and decisions in life. Co-listed with AS.150.632 (for graduate students) (01-F 11:00-11:50am).
Instructor(s): P. Achinstein
Area: Humanities, Quantitative and Mathematical Sciences.

AS.150.119. Existentialism.
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.150.120. The Philosophy of Emotions.
Are emotions always irrational or can they also make us do the right thing? Can thoughts influence emotions? Can emotions influence our moral evaluations? In this course we will investigate a number of important philosophical questions about the nature of emotions by surveying some of the classic works in philosophy (e.g. Aristotle, Descartes and Hume). We will also read a number of contemporary papers, including works by J. Prinz and M. Nussbaum. Finally, we will look at recent work in psychology and cognitive neuroscience on the impact of emotion on reason (J. Green, A. Damasio).
Instructor(s): M. Bergamaschi Ganapini
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.124. Myths of Quantum Physics.
What is the fate of Schrodinger’s cat? How does EPR paradox lead to quantum teleportation? Who is Wigner’s friend? Does wave-particle duality imply that we have free will? In this course, we will explore the philosophical problems about quantum physics and attempt to dispel the myths generated by the quantum world. No prior understanding of physics or philosophy is required.
Instructor(s): G. Guralp
Area: Humanities, Natural Sciences.

AS.150.125. Introduction to Modern Philosophy.
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.

AS.150.126. Relativism.
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.
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.

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.
What is knowledge and how to define it? Does knowing require an ability to produce supporting reasons or is it sufficient that our beliefs track the truth? Which general model better its structure, Foundationism, Coherentism or Infinitism? Does knowing depend on context? Can we discover empirically what knowledge is? These are key questions we will be discussing in our seminar, inspired by reading texts ranging from classics like Plato, the Stoics, and Sextus Empiricus, to contemporary authors like Gettier, Davidson, Goldman, DeRose, and others. Dean’s Prize Freshman Seminar.
Instructor(s): P. Stojanovic
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.131. Introduction to Social Philosophy.
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.150.133. Do We Know What We Think We Know?.
This is an introductory course into Theory of Knowledge. The following questions will be discussed: What is knowledge? What is philosophical skepticism? Can Theory of Knowledge answer the skeptical challenge? Which general model of knowledge is better, Foundationalism, Coherentialism or Infinitism? Is what constitutes knowledge something internal or external to the subject? We will mostly read texts written by contemporary philosophers.
Instructor(s): P. Stojanovic
Area: Humanities.

A study of Socrates as portrayed by his contemporaries, and of intellectual and political trends to which he may have been reacting. Authors will include Plato, Xenophon and Aristophanes. Freshmen Only.
Instructor(s): R. Bett
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.180. Plato on Knowledge.
What is knowledge? What is the difference between true belief and knowledge? In this course, we will explore Plato's analysis of these questions. Our primary focus will be his dialogues "Meno", "Theaetetus", and "The Republic".
Instructor(s): P. Stojanovic
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.182. What is Science?.
A philosophical introduction to very basic questions about scientific reasoning, its scope and limits. Is there a universal scientific method? Can science really explain everything, anything? Must everything be proved in science? Is science incompatible with religion? Readings will be from scientists and philosophers who have thought about these issues from Descartes and Newton to the present. No prerequisites either in philosophy or science.
Instructor(s): P. Achinstein
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.185. Why Are You Here?.
College students, bowed under the relentless pressure to succeed and make good marks, rarely if ever stop to answer the above question. This course seeks to rectify that by providing students the opportunity to reflect upon the purpose of a university education. We will read selections from The Closing of the American Mind, Cultivating Humanity, and William Deresiewicz's new polemic, Excellent Sheep. We will also look at some supplemental essays by Hutchins and Leo Strauss.
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.191. Freshman Seminar: Ethical Topics in Plato.
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.

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

AS.150.193. Philosophy of Language Seminar: Proper Names and Definite Descriptions.
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.

AS.150.194. Freshman Seminar: Skepticism Ancient and Modern.
Can we gain knowledge of reality, or is everything a matter of opinion? Does it matter? Why do we want (or need) knowledge anyway? Questions like this have been the stock in trade of philosophical skeptics throughout the entire history of our Western philosophical tradition. This class will involve close readings of some classic works on the topic of skepticism with a view to understanding some of the main arguments for (and against) skepticism: how they work and how they may have changed over time. Readings include selections from Sextus Empiricus, Descartes, Hume and Wittgenstein.
Instructor(s): M. Williams
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.200. What is Happiness?.
The question of human happiness dates back to Ancient times. What is the best life a human can lead? Is it a life of pleasure, or does it include other features? Does a good life vary among people and cultures, or is it universal? Do we select the things that make our life go well, so that it allows for self-creation and personal expression of one’s values? Possible readings include selections from Plato, Aristotle, Epicurus, Nozick, Nussbaum, and Scanlon, among others.
Instructor(s): K. Powell
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.201. Introduction to Greek Philosophy.
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.

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. Dean’s Prize Teaching Fellowship.
Instructor(s): B. Miller
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.203. Contemporary Metaphysics.
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.
AS.150.204. Nietzsche and Contemporary Meta-Ethics.
Since the Scientific Revolution, philosophers have struggled to articulate a conception of moral value and agency consistent with our scientific self-understanding. Developing such a conception is a central task of meta-ethics. Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) offered one of the most provocative accounts of moral value and agency, and his work has recently been appropriated by contemporary meta-ethicists. This course offers an introduction to 1) Nietzsche’s writings on value and agency, 2) contemporary meta-ethics, and 3) recent appropriations of Nietzsche for contemporary meta-ethics. No prior coursework in philosophy is required.
Instructor(s): P. Leland
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.205. Introduction to the History of Modern Philosophy.
An overview of philosophical thought in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. We shall focus on fundamental questions in epistemology (knowledge, how we acquire it, its scope and limits), metaphysics (the ultimate nature of reality, the relation of mind and body, free will), and theology (the existence and nature of God, God’s relation to the world, whether knowledge of such things is possible): all questions that arose in dramatic ways as a result of the rise of modern science. The principal philosophers to be discussed are Descartes, Locke, Hume and Kant, though we shall also make the acquaintance of Spinoza, Leibniz and Berkeley.
Instructor(s): Y. Melamed
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.211. The Philosophy of Love.
In this course, we will read and discuss various philosophical accounts of the nature of love. We will consider whether there is a deep difference between the sort of love that grounds close adult friendships and the sort of love that grounds long-term romantic relationships. We will then consider some ways that love can be a reason, or justification, for certain decisions and actions.
Area: Humanities.

This course will provide a selective overview of problems in philosophy of biology. We will, first, discuss the so-called received view of evolution and will consider some challenges to that view. After that we will focus on the debates about the meaning and the role of the concept of adaptation in evolutionary theory. Finally, we will briefly discuss the relation between ecology and evolution.
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.214. Reasons, Norms, and Rationality.
Are human beings rational? Should they be rational? The right answer to these questions may seem obvious. However, in the last few decades these questions have gained a new urgency and importance. Famous, Aristotle thought that human beings are by definition rational beings. However, a large body of empirical studies now seem to show that most people consistently and systematically reason incorrectly. At the same time, one may wonder whether being rational is really helpful to survive and reach our goals in real life. That is, one may ask whether reasoning accordingly to the canon of rationality is actually a goal that we should pursue. Recent philosophical work has put new pressure on the issue of the normativity of rationality. In this course we will explore the issue of rationality and its normative implications by reading both historical works, ranging from Plato to Hume, and contemporary philosophical texts while looking at some important psychological studies on human reasoning.
Area: Humanities.

What is a responsible business practice? Do corporations have responsibility as “moral agents”? What is the relation between business and environment? In this course we will investigate the relationship between business practices and ethical thinking by analyzing and assessing philosophical arguments about the moral status of business. We will start by reading philosophical texts that offer an analysis of moral practices, decision-making procedures, and moral theories. In particular, we will read historical text by Aristotle, Hume, Adam Smith, Mill, Marx, and Keynes. Then we will see how these philosophical concepts and theories can be applied to the contemporary world of business. The main goal of this course is to critically evaluate the philosophical foundations and justifications for business and economic systems, and how these applies to specific issues as workplace discrimination, ethics of advertising, environmental destruction and consumer protection.
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.216. Minds and Machines.
The course is a philosophical introduction to the topic of artificial intelligence. We will examine such questions as whether machines can think and whether we can build robots that have emotions, personalities and a sense of self. In doing so, we will touch upon a closely connected question: is the human mind itself a machine?
Instructor(s): N. Andonovski
Area: Humanities, Natural Sciences.

AS.150.217. 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.
Prerequisites: This course is equivalent to AS.150.472
Instructor(s): P. Stojanovic
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.219. Introduction to Bioethics.
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, Social and Behavioral Sciences.

AS.150.220. Introduction to Moral Philosophy.
An introduction to moral philosophy through in-depth and critical reading of selected texts from the history of philosophy. The philosophers whose texts will be discussed include Plato, Aristotle, Kant and Nietzsche.
Instructor(s): L. Theunissen
Area: Humanities.
AS.150.223. Formal Methods of Philosophy.
During the last century or so, symbolic logic and other formal methods have come to play an essential role in most areas of systematic philosophical inquiry. This course serves as an introduction to these formal prerequisites for more advanced study in a wide variety of contemporary philosophical areas. Topics include the syntax and semantics of sentential and first-order predicate logic, natural deduction, basic set theory, mathematical induction and recursion, probability, modal logic, and non-standard logics. The emphasis is on basic comprehension, not on mathematical virtuosity. (Co-listed/combined with 150.423)
Instructor(s): J. Bledin; R. Rynasiewicz
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.227. Introduction to Asian Philosophy.
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.150.229. Religion and/or Science?.
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.

What can contemporary neuroscience tell us about the traditional problems in the philosophy of mind? The course will focus on three such problems: consciousness (what is the nature of conscious states?), the self (what is the self and is there such a thing?) and imagination (what is imagination and how is it possible?).
Instructor(s): N. Andonovski
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences.

AS.150.235. Philosophy of Religion.
Can one prove or disprove the existence of God? What is the relation between reason and faith? Are science and religion at odds with one another? We will consider historically significant discussions of these questions as well as important contemporary writings.
Instructor(s): S. Gross
Area: Humanities.

In this course, we will discuss ethical controversies related to some of the issues currently debated in the public sphere: homosexuality, sexism, racism, immigration, abortion, cloning, genetic enhancement, war, terrorism, torture, and others. Our goal will be to explore how major philosophical theories in ethics approach these controversies, and how they can help us understand and resolve these controversies.
Instructor(s): P. Stojanovic
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.237. Foundations of Modern Political Philosophy.
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.
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.150.248. Introduction to Metaphysics.
The class is an introduction to contemporary, analytic, metaphysics. Topics to be discussed include: what is metaphysics, the nature of existence, time and temporality, modality and possible worlds, identity and personal identity, persistence, mereology, causation, and universals and abstract entities.
Instructor(s): Y. Melamed
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.252. Kant’s Copernican Revolution.
After the publication of Kant’s Critique of Pure Reason, Philosophy would never be the same again. This monumental work revolutionizes the way we think about the relationship between the mind and the world and is still widely regarded as the most important turning point in the history of modern philosophy. The course will undertake a close reading and analysis of the two crucial sections of the Critique of Pure Reason, Transcendental Aesthetic and Transcendental Analytic and is targeted at both students new to Kant’s thought as well as those who would like to deepen their understanding of his Copernican revolution.
Instructor(s): G. Lebanidze
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.253. Introduction to Philosophy of Psychology.
Psychology is the study of mind and behavior, and philosophy of psychology is the study of the foundations of psychology. Foundational issues in psychology addressed by philosophy of psychology come in the form of the following questions. What is the nature of mental representation? What is the basic architecture of the mind, and is it innate? Can psychological theories proceed in abstraction from the environment? The purpose of this course is to introduce students to these and related questions and the various answers they’ve been given.
Instructor(s): D. Lindeman
Area: Social and Behavioral Sciences.

AS.150.259. Introduction to the Theory of Knowledge.
An introduction to the central problems, concepts and theories of philosophical epistemology (theory of knowledge). Topics to be explored will include: what is knowledge (and why do we want it)? Can we get it (skeptics answer “No!”), or is everything in the end a matter of opinion? (skeptics say “Yes!”). Theories of knowledge and justification: foundationalism versus the coherence theory; externalism versus internalism in epistemology. To what extent is knowledge an appropriate object of theory? Readings from early 20th century through contemporary sources.
Instructor(s): M. Williams
Area: Humanities.
AS.150.300. Prometheus Editorial Workshop.
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. Prerequisite: MUST have taken one philosophy course.
Instructor(s): K. Powell
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.301. Undergraduate Seminar: Practical Reason.
How does reasoning that results in action differ from reasoning that results in belief? Is all practical reasoning a kind of means-end (instrumental) reasoning, or is there a form of moral reasoning that is presupposed by instrumental reasoning? These questions and more will occupy us as we work our way through the recent philosophical debates about practical reason. Restricted to philosophy majors and minors only.
Instructor(s): D. Moyar
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.304. The Ethics of Human Experimentation.
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.

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.

Without the presupposition that we can act freely, we cannot make sense of our talk about responsibility and blameworthiness. But scientific investigation increasingly makes the world more predictable (or, at best, random), and our most ambitious scientific theories aspire to a generality that would leave little room for freedom. This course is about how to reconcile the need to see ourselves as free, with the (at least apparent) indications that we are not.
Instructor(s): N. Tebben
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.309. Introduction to Philosophy of Physics.
This course starts on July 7th and runs until August 1st. This course aims at introducing the student to the basic philosophical issues that lie at the heart of the modern physicist’s conception of nature. To this end, we will look carefully at the foundations of two modern theories of physics, namely, the special theory of relativity and quantum theory. Relativity revolutionized our understanding of space and time, whereas quantum physics shattered our established beliefs about causality and determinism in nature. In the special relativity section of this class, we will cover topics such as the speed of light postulate, conventionality of simultaneity thesis, and the twin paradox. In the foundations of quantum physics, we will probe the measurement problem, Schrodinger’s cat paradox and the uncertainty principle. No previous background in physics is required.
Instructor(s): G. Guralp
Area: Humanities, Natural Sciences.

AS.150.310. Marx’s Critique of Capital.
This course is devoted to exposition and examination of Marx’s mature critical theory of capitalism, as expounded in the first volume of Capital. Special attention will be given to clarification of Marx’s method as well as the basic categories of his theory. No previous course in philosophy or social sciences is required.
Instructor(s): A. Abazari; E. Connolly
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.311. Undergraduate Seminar: Philosophy of Ludwig Wittgenstein.
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.
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.
TBA
Instructor(s): L. Papish
Area: Humanities.
AS.150.315. Philosophy of Human Rights.
From domestic debates about abortion and health care to international dialogue about women’s rights, genital mutilation and genocide human rights claims have become increasingly common, and we’ve come to rely on the discourse of human rights to assess the way human beings are treated by one another and by states. But what are human rights? How are human rights claims justified? Are human rights really objective and universal or are they contingent and relative to particular cultures? Where did the human rights culture begin, and how has it become so important? This course aims to explore these questions by examining foundational human rights documents, historical works on human rights and contemporary philosophical inquiry into their foundations (or lack thereof).
Instructor(s): T. Wilk
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.316. Puzzles and Paradoxes.
The course is a survey of puzzles and paradoxes of truth, belief, knowledge, meaning, confirmation, rational action, and vagueness. Specific puzzles and paradoxes include, among others: Russell’s paradox, the liar paradox, Moore’s paradox, the skeptical paradox, Newcomb’s paradox, and the sorites paradox. Besides being fun to think about, these puzzles and paradoxes touch on many areas of philosophy, including philosophy of language, logic, metaphysics, and epistemology. When introducing each puzzle or paradox, attention will be paid to its history and significance. In addition to this exposure to some of the many domains of philosophy, students will gain analytical skills applicable well beyond philosophy.
Instructor(s): A. Abazari
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.317. Undergraduate Seminar for Philosophy Majors: Recent Works in Skepticism.
We all take it for granted that perceptual experience yields knowledge of the world around us. But in the first of his Meditations on First Philosophy, Descartes invents a new and puzzling thought experiment. He imagines an evil demon with the power to manipulate the total course of his (Descartes’s) experience, so that what he naturally takes to be experience of the world around him is really a kind of perpetual dream: a simulation or virtual reality, as we might say today. Descartes’s problem, which has made its way into popular culture through films like those in the “Matrix” series, remains a source of philosophical puzzlement. While no one believes that skeptical hypotheses like Demon or computer deception are true, it is not easy to say how we can exclude them. Given that the deception is systematic, it seems that any “evidence” I cite could itself be part of the simulation. So how do I (or could I) know (for sure) that I’m not the victim of the Deceiver or the Matrix? We shall examine some of the latest attempts to respond to Descartes’s challenge. Does the “How could I know?” question admit of a theoretical answer, or is the question itself somehow ill-posed? Can we answer it without making significant concessions to skepticism? Exploring such questions should teach us some interesting lessons about knowledge (or the concept of knowledge). Readings from Descartes, Barry Stroud, G. E. Moore, Robert Nozick, David Lewis, Keith De Rose, James Pryor, and others.
Instructor(s): M. Williams
Area: Humanities.

This course explores philosophical responses to the French Revolution. Texts are from, among others, Hegel, Fichte, Kant and Marx. No previous knowledge in philosophy or social sciences is required.
Instructor(s): A. Abazari
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences.

AS.150.319. The Mechanical Mind.
This course provides a philosophical introduction to the topics mind, machine, and mental representation — ideas fundamental to the cognitive sciences. Specific questions addressed include, among others, the following. What is the mind-body problem, and how might it be solved? Might minds be computers? Can there be thought without language? Is thought itself a sort of language? How do minds represent the external world? Can the mind be fully explained in scientific terms? Does it help in theorizing about the mind to think of it as a sort of machine?.

AS.150.320. Marx: Critique of Political Economy.
A close reading of Marx’s Capital: Volume One. Specific attention will be given to clarification of Marx’s methodology, the foundational categories of his critique of political economy, the systematic unity of his theory, and the underlying normative concepts which inform his work. No previous course in philosophy or social sciences is required.
Instructor(s): A. Abazari
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences.

AS.150.322. Emotion, Mind & Morality.
In this course, we will investigate a number of important philosophical questions about the normative structure of emotions and their role in moral cognition by surveying some of the classic works in philosophy. We will also read a number of contemporary papers. Finally, we will look at recent work in psychology and cognitive neuroscience on the impact of emotion on reason.
Instructor(s): M. Bergamaschi Ganapini
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.323. Undergraduate Seminar: Topics in Meta-Ethics. 3 Credits.
This is a seminar on theoretical topics in ethics. We focus on debates over cognitivism and non-cognitivism; realism and anti-realism: reasons internalism and externalism; relativism and pluralism. We read contemporary classics by Sharon Street, T.M. Scanlon, Joseph Raz, Bernard Williams, Allan Gibbard, and others.
Instructor(s): L. Theunissen
Area: Humanities
Writing Intensive.

AS.150.324. The Language of Thought.
According to the Language of Thought Hypothesis, thought is couched in a mental language with a combinatorial syntax and semantics operating computationally over a system of representations physically realized in the brain. The philosopher and cognitive scientist Jerry Fodor first developed this hypothesis in his now classic 1975 work The Language of Thought. In this course, we will engage in a close reading of this text, important both for its historical and contemporary significance to cognitive scientific theorizing. Lectures will be supplemented by further historical and theoretical material. Students should come away with a deeper appreciation of some of the key concepts in cognitive science.
Instructor(s): D. Lindeman.

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.

10  Philosophy
AS.150.351. The Philosophy of Race and Racism.
The twin specters of race and racism have perennially dominated nearly every aspect of American social, economic, and political life. In this course, we will try to appreciate the nature and scope of this dominance by addressing fundamental questions about the nature, functions, and manifestations of race and racism in contemporary American life. Topics include: the “metaphysics” of race, conditions of racial membership, the moral harms introduced by racism, the psychology of racial bias, and institutional forms of racism.
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences.

AS.150.406. Can Science Explain Everything?.
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.
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.150.411. Arabic-Islamic Philosophy.
Introduction to major philosophers of the Arabic-Islamic tradition, including Avicenna, al-Ghazali, and Averroes. Topics addressed include the existence of God, metaphysics (e.g., causality), human freedom and knowledge, revelation and reason.
Instructor(s): S. Ogden
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.412. Kant’s Critique of Practical Reason.
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: Justice and Pluralism.
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.150.415. Schelling’s System of Transcendental Idealism.
Schelling’s System of Transcendental Idealism is one of the key texts in the transition from Kant to Hegel. It is also one of Schelling’s clearest and most successful publications, and one of the best introductions to his philosophy. This course offers a close examination of the System of Transcendental Idealism against the background of Kant and Fichte.
Instructor(s): E. Forster
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.416. Kant’s major “minor writings."
Some of Kant’s so-called “minor writings” are in fact brilliant essays that represent important stages in the formation and development of his mature, “critical” philosophy. In this course we will study ten of these essays in detail.
Instructor(s): E. Forster
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.417. Kant’s ‘Critique Of Pure Reason’.
An examination of the philosophy of Immanuel Kant, with emphasis on The Critique of Pure Reason.
Instructor(s): E. Forster
Area: Humanities.
AS.150.419. Kant’s Critique/Judgment.
This course will examine closely and in detail the aesthetic and teleological parts of Kant’s third masterpiece, The Critique of the Power of Judgment.
Instructor(s): E. Forster
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.420. Mathematical Logic I.
The development, first, of sentential logic and, then, of first-order predicate logic. Topics covered include formal languages, effective procedures, truth-functional and Tarski semantics, logical entailment, systems of derivation, deductive soundness and completeness, compactness, theories, formalization of mathematics, sizes of models, and interpretations between theories.
Instructor(s): R. Rynasiewicz
Area: Humanities, Quantitative and Mathematical Sciences.

AS.150.421. Mathematical Logic II.
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
Instructor(s): R. Rynasiewicz
Area: Humanities, Quantitative and Mathematical Sciences.

AS.150.422. Axiomatic Set Theory.
Axiomatic development of set theory, including the theory of transfinite ordinals 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 or equivalent
Instructor(s): R. Rynasiewicz
Area: Humanities, Quantitative and Mathematical Sciences.

AS.150.423. Formal Methods of Philosophy.
During the last century or so, symbolic logic and other formal methods have come to play an essential role in most areas of systematic philosophical inquiry. This course serves as an introduction to these formal prerequisites for more advanced study in a wide variety of contemporary philosophical areas. Topics include the syntax and semantics of sentential and first-order predicate logic, natural deduction, basic set theory, mathematical induction and recursion, probability, modal logic, and non-standard logics. The emphasis is on basic comprehension, not on mathematical virtuosity. (Co-listed/combined with 150.223)
Instructor(s): J. Bledin; R. Rynasiewicz
Area: Humanities.

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 ravens paradoxes. No previous knowledge of probability is required.
Instructor(s): P. Achinstein
Area: Humanities, Quantitative and Mathematical Sciences.

AS.150.425. Poetic Thought.
This course will examine essays and poems by Goethe, Hölderlin, and Rilke with an eye toward the ways in which their work addresses issues central to German Idealism and modern German thought. These include the relation of subject to object; the problem of the representation of the whole; the reconciliation of science and art; and the role of consciousness in the construction of the world. Readings include texts by Goethe, Hölderlin, and Rilke with commentary by Heidegger, Gadamer, Henrich, Husserl, Benjamin, and Allemann. Reading knowledge of German is required.
Instructor(s): E. Forster; R. Tobias
Area: Humanities, Natural Sciences.

AS.150.426. Philosophy and Disability.
In this course, we will consider various philosophical issues related to disability. What counts as a disability? What obligations do we have, both as individuals and as a society, to people with disabilities? What counts as respecting people with disabilities, and what counts as unjustifiable discrimination against them?
Prerequisites: AS.150.219 OR AS.150.220
Instructor(s): H. Bok
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences.

AS.150.428. Spinoza's Political Theology.
“Political Theology” is a term that acquired significant resonance in recent years. The current class will study closely two texts by Spinoza, the founder of this discipline: the Theological-Political Treatise and the (incomplete) Political Treatise.
Instructor(s): Y. Melamed.

AS.150.429. Topics in Logic: Ontology and Knowledge Representation.
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 Protegé 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.
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.
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): S. Harvey
Area: Humanities.

This course is a continuation of Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit, Part One, taught last Spring. We will closely study the second half of the book, compare its methodology with that of the first half, and end with an examination of Hegel's systematic reflections in the "Preface".
Prerequisites: AS.150.430
Instructor(s): E. Forster
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.433. Philos/Space & Time.
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.
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.
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.150.438. Spinoza’s Ethics.
The seminar is an in depth study of Spinoza’s major work, The Ethics.
Instructor(s): Y. Melamed
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.439. Epistemology.
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, an 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.
A close reading of Wittgenstein’s Uncertainty familiarity with the Philosophical Investigations is required.
Instructor(s): M. Williams
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.443. Wittgenstein’s Philosophy of Mind.
The seminar will begin with a careful examination of the private language argument in the Philosophical Investigations. Among the additional themes we will examine are his analogy between philosophy of mathematics and his philosophy of psychology, implicit criticisms of the representational theory of mind, the problem of other minds and the role of deception, and the “grammar” of psychological concepts. There are numerous manuscripts concerned with mental and psychological concepts. Two volumes of the Remarks on the Philosophy of Psychology will be ordered for the seminar, though we will not be “working through” them in a systematic way. The Philosophical Investigations and Zettel are essential. Recommended Course Background: Familiarity with Wittgenstein’s work.
Instructor(s): M. Williams
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.444. The Identity of Indiscernibles.
Can two things (such as bodies, events, moments, thoughts, or geometrical points) have precisely the same qualities? If so, what makes them different from each other? In this class we will explore the debate about the Principle of the Identity of Indiscernibles. Readings will include texts by: Leibniz, Clarke, Max Black, Ayer, Ian Hacking, Robert Adams, and Michael Della Rocca.
Instructor(s): Y. Melamed
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.446. Hegel’s Science of Logic.
In this course we will focus on the first two parts of Hegel’s Science of Logic, and address the following issues (among others). In what sense is Hegel’s dialectical logic continuous with the classical metaphysical tradition and in what sense is it a critique of traditional metaphysics? What motivates the project, or what questions does Hegel think his logic can answer that previous logics did not?
Instructor(s): D. Moyar; E. Forster
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.447. Law and Philosophy.
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.
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.

AS.150.454. The Value of Humanity.
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 four parts. The first part takes up questions about the basis of human value. We consider various proposals, including Kant’s, about 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? The second part takes up questions about the explanation of the value of human beings. Does the proposed feature make us valuable because it instantiates a simple value property, making us valuable in ourselves, or simpliciter? We consider whether the notion of value simpliciter is a notion we fully understand, or need. Does the proposed feature make us valuable because it makes us good-for something or someone? Who or what does it make us good-for? Or again, does the proposed feature make us such that we are objects of an appropriate attitude or practical stance? If so, what is the attitude or stance? The third 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 fourth part of the class applies what we have learned so far to related topics: to the question of whether human life or existence is valuable, and conversely, whether death is disvaluable. We consider, albeit briefly, the value of human beings in relation to the value of animals. And we ask about the role of Kantian notions like dignity in applied contexts, so that highly philosophical considerations about value are shown to have real-world bearing.
Instructor(s): L. Theunissen
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.455. Ethics And Animals.
Instructor(s): H. Bok
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.456. Medieval Philosophy.
Instructor(s): S. Ogden
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.459. Theory Of Knowledge.
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.

Russel, Frege, and Wittgenstein (in Tractus) provided much of the philosophical foundation for 20th C.analytic philosophy. Their influence continues to be felt, especially in their conception of philosophical problems and the methods by which they can be solved.
Instructor(s): M. Williams
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.463. Theories of Rationality.
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.
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.
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. Philosphic Logic.
This course is a survey of various topics in philosophical logic. We begin with a review of the model theory of classical first-order logic. In our first unit, we will then move beyond the standard existential and universal quantifiers and consider generalized quantifiers, substitutional quantifiers, and plural quantification. In our second unit, we will investigate the theory of propositional modal logic, considering its syntax, semantics, and proof theory, and some of its applications. In our third unit, we will investigate various formal approaches to defining truth. In our fourth unit, we will get more philosophical and ask: what is logical consequence? In the course of answering this question, we will consider intuitionistic, normative, and informational conceptions of logic.
Instructor(s): J. Bledin
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.468. Global Food Ethics.
This course is an introduction to ethical issues that arise within the contemporary global agrifood system. The overarching goal of the class is to give you the opportunity to think critically about a variety of conflicting views as to how we should produce, distribute, and consume food to achieve food security for over 9.6 billion people by 2050. We will borrow tools from practical ethics and theories of justice to shed light on these pressing issues that determine our common future and the way we personally relate to the food we eat.
Instructor(s): Y. Saghai
Area: Humanities.
AS.150.470. Spinoza and the Pantheism Debate.
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.
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.
Instructor(s): P. Stojanovic
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.473. Classics of Analytic Philosophy.
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.
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.

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, Natural Sciences, Social and Behavioral Sciences.

This year’s topic: Temporal Experience. Do we perceive time? If so, through what sense(s)? How long is the conscious “now”? Does the temporal order of our perceptions mirror the temporal order of what we perceive? Must the experience of a temporal duration itself be extended in time? What is the relation between the experience of time (for example, the experience of time’s passage) and memory? Does our experience of time accurately represent temporal features of reality, or is it actually illusory? How does attending to time’s passage affect its perceived rate of passage (and what is it to attend to time’s passage)? We will explore these and other questions through an examination of both psychological and philosophical work. [This course meets jointly with Professor Flombaum’s AS.200.316 and AS.200.616.]. Permission of instructor required to enroll.
Instructor(s): J. Flombaum; S. Gross
Area: Humanities, Natural Sciences, Social and Behavioral Sciences.

AS.150.477. Existentialism.
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.150.478. Program Abroad: Jerusalem: Modern Jewish Thought.
Intersession Abroad Program. The course examines the modern Jewish thought in Israel. Guest Lecturers.
Instructor(s): Y. Melamed
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.479. The Ethics of Making Babies.
In this class, we will investigate many aspects of the ethics of making babies, asking not only which children we should create and how we should create them, but whether we should make any more people at all. Investigating these questions will take us through large chunks of moral theory, bioethics, and public health ethics. For more information, or to request permission of the instructor (for those who do not meet the prerequisite requirements), email Travis Rieder at trieder@jhu.edu.
Recommended Course Background: One course in ethics or bioethics, or permission of the instructor.
Instructor(s): T. Rieder
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.483. Topics in Jewish Philosophy: Hassidism.
Hassidism is the ecstatic religious movement that emerged in East European Jewry in the mid eighteenth century. In this research seminar we will concentrate on the teachings and activities of the circle of Dov Ber of Mezrich between 1760 and 1772. We will study both internal and external sources (such as Salomon Maimon’s report in his Lebensgeschichte). All materials will be available in English translation, though reading knowledge of Hebrew would be an asset.
Instructor(s): Y. Melamed.

AS.150.484. Is Knowledge Possible: Epistemic Problems, Puzzles & Paradox.
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.150.488. Enlightenment Moral and Political Theory.
Instructor(s): H. Bok
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.489. Spinoza’s Metaphysics.
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.

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.
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.
We will study various methods for proving scientific claims defended by scientists and philosophers. Included will be rationalism (Descartes), various forms of empiricism (Newton, Mill, Whewell), realism vs. anti-realism, and scientific strategies to follow when you cannot prove your favorite theory. No particular scientific background required.
Instructor(s): P. Achinstein
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences.

AS.150.494. Descartes.
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.
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.

AS.150.496. Topics in the Theory of Value.
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.
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.
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 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.

According to the Principle of Sufficient Reason every fact must have a reason, or explanation. In other words: there are no brute facts. If a certain penguin has three dots on its right wing - there must be a reason for this. If there are no penguins with precisely three dots on their right wings – there must be a reason for that as well. In the first half of the course we will read works by the two philosophers who introduced the principle: Spinoza and Leibniz. In the second part, we will read texts by Kant, Maimon, Hegel, Schopenhauer, and some contemporary analytic philosophers, and discuss the plausibility, implications, and justification of the principle.
Instructor(s): Y. Melamed
Area: Humanities.

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

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

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

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

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

AS.150.599. Independent Study.
Instructor(s): H. Bok.

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.150.604. 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, Phillippa Foot, Shelly Kagan, Samuel Scheffler, Derek Parfit, G. E. M. Anscombe, and Bernard Williams.
Instructor(s): L. Theunissen
Area: Humanities.

The seminar will focus 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.150.607. Graduate Seminar: Knowledge and Perception.
How does perception reveal the world, if it does? Why have philosophical reflections on perception often led to skepticism? For background, we will start with readings from Ayer and Austin (on the sense-datum theory), and Sellars (on the Myth of the Given). We will then spend time on contemporary "disjunctive" accounts of perceptual consciousness, with readings from McDowell, Travis and (possibly) others.
Instructor(s): M. Williams
Area: Humanities.

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 univocality 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.150.614. Topics in Meta-Ethics (Graduate Seminar).
This is a seminar on theoretical topics in ethics. We focus on debates over cognitivism and non-cognitivism; realism and anti-realism; reasons internalism and externalism; relativism and skepticism. We read contemporary classics by Sharon Street, T. M. Scanlon, Joseph Raz, Bernard Williams, Allan Gibbard, and others.
Instructor(s): L. Theunissen
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.615. Martin Heidegger, Being and Time: Integral Reading and Current Perspectives.
Starting with a detailed discussion of its Introduction and Division One, this jointly taught seminar will bring phenomenological, hermeneutic, and deconstructive as well as analytic, epistemological, and pragmatist methods and viewpoints to bear upon this modern classic. Co-listed with AS.300.653
Instructor(s): H. de Vries; M. Williams
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.619. Topics in Hegel’s Philosophy: The Philosophy of Right.
This course will be a close reading of G.W.F. Hegel’s Philosophy of Right. Some of the main topics for discussion will be the relation of law and morality, the dependence of the political philosophy on Hegel’s Logic, and the relation of individual and social conceptions of freedom.
Instructor(s): D. Moyar
Area: Humanities.

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.150.627. Seminar in Epistemology.
Instructor(s): M. Williams; P. Achinstein
Area: Humanities.

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.
An introduction to symbolic logic and probability. In the first two parts of the course we study formal ways of determining whether a conclusion of an argument follows from its premises. Included are truth-functional logic and predicate logic. In the third part we study the basic rules of probability, and learn how to make probability calculations and decisions in life.* Co-listed with AS.150.118 (for undergraduate students) (01-F 11:00-11:50am).
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 language acquisition as involving a special
kind of learning, one that requires the active participation of an adult in
what the child does. The account we will be discussing draws heavily on
Wittgenstein’s philosophy of language, particular the treatment of the
problem of similarity and the development of reference.
Instructor(s): M. Williams
Area: Humanities.

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

AS.150.651. Seminar: Descartes-Newton-Leibniz: Motion,
Method, God & Cosmos.
Although all three were Copernicans in the broad sense, these great
mathematician-philosophers of the 17th century held subtly different
positions on the question whether the sun or the earth moves, in large
part because they proposed very different analyses of what it is for
a body to move. These analyses emerge from quite divergent views
on space, time, matter, mind, and scientific-philosophical method
in relation to natural theology. The focus of the seminar is on the
interaction of these views: Newton’s rejection of Descartes’ Followed by
the clash between Newton’s and Leibniz’s.
Instructor(s): R. Rynasiewicz
Area: Humanities.

AS.150.652. Seminar in the Philosophy of Science.
Philosophy of experiment, Bayesianism, severe tests. Readings from
Hacking, Galison, Franklin, Mayo, and others. Applications range from
physiology to cosmology.
Instructor(s): R. Rynasiewicz
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences.

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.

AS.150.659. Topics in Formal Semantics: Counterfactuals?.
In this seminar, we will investigate the semantics and communicative
function of counterfactuals. Among the questions that we will
consider are these: What are the compositional semantic values of
counterfactual conditionals? What is the context change potential
of a counterfactual and what kind of structure must we add to the
common ground of a conversation to model its communicative effect?
Do counterfactuals recommend a dynamic approach to meaning? Are
counterfactual conditionals truth-apt? Do they serve to describe the
world? If so, which aspect of reality is a counterfactual sensitive to?
Instructor(s): J. Bledin
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences.

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.

Preparing philosophy graduate students for the impending job market
by discussions of, and practicing for, constructing and submitting
dossiers, interviews and giving talks both in and outside one’s particular
field. Open to all philosophy graduate students, regardless of year and
field. No degree credits. Offered sporadically.
Instructor(s): P. Achinstein.

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

English

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 Sigwick. 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.

Psychological Brain Sciences

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.
Instructor(s): J. Halberda; L. Feigenson
Area: Social and Behavioral Sciences.

German Romance Languages Literatures

AS.211.265. Panorama of German Thought.
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 include Luther, Leibniz, Kant, Humboldt, Hegel, Nietzsche, Marx, Warburg, Freud, Benjamin, Kracauer, Weber, Simmel, Cassirer, Auerbach, Adorno, Arendt, Heidegger, and Luhmann. Indeed, current approaches to understanding 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 survey course will highlight important topics in German Thought, which may include 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. Taught in English.
Instructor(s): R. Tobias; Staff
Area: Humanities.

What if Rousseau’s description of the sentiment de l’existence were to join to the models of consciousness Damasio develops in The Feeling of What Happens? This course explores aspects of consciousness in French literature (Rousseau, Sand, Nerval, Amiel, Flaubert, Valéry, Proust, Sartre) in a dialogue with recent texts in theory, philosophy, neuroscience (e.g. Poulet, Merleau-Ponty, Sartre, Scarry, Noë, Humphrey, Damasio, Sacks).
Instructor(s): E. Ender
Area: Humanities.

AS.213.235. Panorama of German Thought I.
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 of 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).
Instructor(s): E. Strowitz
Area: Humanities.
**AS.213.236. Panorama of German Thought II.**

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.**

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.

Area: Humanities.

**AS.213.313. Heidegger's "Being and Time" and "Rectify."**

This course will introduce students to Heidegger's seminal work as seen through the lens of the TV series Rectify, which considers what it means to be “thrown” into the world and how we construct a meaningful horizon for our experiences. We will explore some of the fundamental concepts in Being and Time, including care, projection, fallenness, affect and time, and being-unto-death, and consider how these same issues are taken up in Rectify, which as a TV show has to develop its own visual vocabulary to explore the structure and nature of being in the world. Taught in English.

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

**AS.213.368. German Political Thought.**

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.

**AS.213.603. Lebendige Bildungen." Goethe's Morphology and its Legacy for the 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 (Delaeva)? 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.213.629. 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 in-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.213.654. „Stimmung“: Mood – Attunement – Atmosphere in Literature and Literary Criticism.**

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**

**AS.213.666. “To be continued”- Seriality in Literature and Other Media.**

Taught in German. By ending with the words “(To be continued)” (“(Ist fortzusetzen)”), Goethe's Wilhem Meisters Wanderjahre not only reflects on the open form of the modern novel but also points toward serialized formats of fiction as they emerge in the 19th century due to advances in printing technologies. The publication of fiction in periodical installments in magazines or newspapers brings about the development of new genres (serialized novel/Feuilletonroman) along with specific serial narrative techniques. The cliffhanger e.g. – although invented earlier – becomes a prominent technique to create suspense. The course analyzes seriality with respect to narrative forms and genres across various media (literature, theater, film, TV) from the 19th century to the present. It further discusses serial aesthetics, seriality in structuralist and poststructuralist theory as well as the ambivalent status of seriality in the arts between avantgarde and popular culture. The course material will include: Stifter, Fontane, excerpts from the magazine “Die Gartenlaube”, Wagner, Freud, Kafka, Lévi-Strauss, Deleuze, Ecco, Iser, “The Perils of Pauline” (serial, 1914), “Copycat” (Jon Amiel, 1995), “Twin Peaks” and current US-American TV series.

**Instructor(s):** E. Strowick  
**Area: Humanities**

Writing Intensive.

**AS.213.745. Literary Speech Acts.**

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, Bückner, Kafka, Henry James, Thomas Mann etc.

**Instructor(s):** E. Strowick  
**Area: Humanities**
The course explores some aspects of the contradictory constitution of the modern subject as a subject that is split, opposed, in tension. Two archetypal figures of this split are the “bourgeois,” as the social-economic subject, and the “citizen” or “citizen,” as the political subject. The bourgeois and the citizen are defined by distinct and opposing conceptions of the “will,” of education (Bildung), and of the relation between law and nature, normativity and facticity. In asking how to understand the conflictual relationship between these two basic figures of the modern subject, the course will focus especially on the paradoxes of “individual rights” (subjektive Rechte) as the fundamental mechanism of modern subject-formation. How do rights both empower subjects, while also contributing to forms of their disempowerment? To what extent do rights contain and organize the tensions between subjects understood as social or economic, and as political? CLASS BEGINS FEBRUARY 25 AND ENDS APRIL 1. Readings will include excerpts from (among others): Hegel, Marx, Nietzsche, Horkheimer and Adorno, Heidegger, Foucault, Balibar and Rancière. Instructor(s): C. Menke; R. Tobias; Staff
Area: Humanities.

AS.214.479. Dante Visits the Afterlife: The Divine Comedy.
Dante’s Divine Comedy is the greatest long poem of the Middle Ages; some say the greatest poem of all time. We will study the Commedia critically to find: (1) What it reveals about the worldview of late-medieval Europe; (2) how it works as poetry; (3) its relation to the intellectual cultures of pagan antiquity and Latin (Catholic) Christianity; (4) its presentation of political and social issues; (5) its influence on intellectual history, in Italy and elsewhere; (6) the challenges it presents to modern readers and translators; (7) what it reveals about Dante’s understanding of cosmology, world history and culture. We will read and discuss the Commedia in English, but students will be expected to familiarize themselves with key Italian terms and concepts. Students taking section 02 (for 4 credits) will spend an additional hour working in Italian at a time to be mutually decided upon by students and professor. Instructor(s): W. Stephens
Area: Humanities.

Giambattista Vico’s Princìpi di scienza nuova d’intorno alla comune natura delle nazioni (1725, 1730, 1744) was intended to found an “ideal” and “eternal” model of human development, valid for all societies. Vico considered his project both philology and philosophy, and tried to revolutionize thinking about human history as practiced between about 1550 and 1700, by exposing misconceptions behind attempts to square “sacred history” (the presumed historical accuracy of the Bible) with “profane” or non Judeo-Christian concepts of history, both ancient and modern. The culture shock underlying this “old science” stimulated Vico to base philosophical and historical knowledge of mythology on a conception of narration. Recommended Course background: Italian and Latin Instructor(s): W. Stephens
Area: Humanities.

Theatre Arts Studies
AS.225.328. The Existential Drama: Philosophy and Theatre of the Absurd.
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 & Nshone), Heiner Müller and the late plays of Caryl Churchill. Opportunities for projects on Dürrenmatt, Frisch, Havel, Witkiewicz, and Mrozek.
Instructor(s): J. Martin
Area: Humanities.

Humanities Center
AS.300.228. Brain and Society.
On April 2, 2013, President Obama unveiled the Brain Activity Map Project, a $100 million dollar investment to map the single-celled neurons composing the human brain. Scientific in its aim, the project is culturally significant as well. Popular websites lumosity.com and neuronetlearning.com offer brain-exercises to boost intelligence, while the emergent academic fields neurophilosophy, neuroethics, and neurohistory borrow from the brain sciences. The interaction between the brain and society, however, is by no means new. In this course, we will investigate the origins of brain maps and trace their reception in nineteenth-century European and American literature, philosophy, and politics. Topics include phrenology, the nervous system, psychopathology, and brain localization, and these fields’ resonance in German Idealism, Victorian literature, French anthropology, and American fiction. The course is reading intensive.
Instructor(s): L. McGrath
Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences.

AS.300.319. Skepticism and Theology.
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.
AS.300.343. Philosophy and Literary Form.
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.300.388. Introduction to the Philosophy of Time.
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.
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.
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?
Instructor(s): P. Marrati
Area: Humanities.

AS.300.411. Animal Minds.
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.

This seminar will address the major writings and guiding concepts of Emmanuel Levinas and investigate his increasing critical role as a touchstone and dividing line in the formation of twentieth century and contemporary schools of thought (phenomenology, pragmatism, post-analytic philosophy, literary, feminist, and political theory, anthropology). Additional readings will include Stanley Cavell, Jacques Derrida, Vasily Grossman, Jean-François Lyotard, and Hilary Putnam.
Instructor(s): H. de Vries
Area: Humanities.

AS.300.653. Martin Heidegger, Being and Time: Integral Reading and Current Perspectives.
Starting with a detailed discussion of its Introduction and Division One, this jointly taught seminar will bring phenomenological, hermeneutic, and deconstructive as well as analytic, epistemological, and pragmatist methods and viewpoints to bear upon this modern classic.
Instructor(s): H. de Vries; M. Williams.

AS.300.658. Must We Mean What We Say?.
Starting out from Stanley Cavell’s programmatic book and title, this seminar will revisit his discussion of J.L. Austin, John Searle, Jacques Derrida, and Shoshana Felman, with special emphasis on these authors’ theories of intentionality, seriousness, and sincerity, and with reference to the ancient and modern concepts of tragedy on which they partly rely. In addition to the aforementioned thinkers’ relevant works, reading will include selections from Euripides, Henrik Ibsen, Isaiah Berlin, Emmanuel Levinas, and Jean-Luc Marion.
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
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.
This seminar examines various ideas, theories, and practices of thinkers, writers, and activists whose work and practices have constituted an Africana Studies intellectual tradition. The purpose of this seminar is to teach students to read, think, and write critically about questions relative to the formation and history of Africana thought and its intellectual tradition, in particular, and the genealogy of thought and intellectual traditions, in general. We will also think about various fields of knowledge that have shaped Africana Studies. The seminar therefore will work through the different meanings of intellectual work and critical thought and theory in Africana Studies.
Instructor(s): F. Hayes.