UIC PHILOSOPHY DEPARTMENT

SPRING 2020 | COURSE BROCHURE

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Need advice about philosophy courses? Contact:

-Director of Undergraduate Studies Professor John Whipple **jwhipple@uic.edu**

-Departmental Advisor Albert Hernandez **ahern093@uic.edu**

PHIL 100 Introduction to Philosophy

We will use Descartes' *Meditations* and Hume's *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* to ask questions about knowledge, reality, mindedness, and personhood. We will also read contemporary treatments of these central questions. In moving between historical and contemporary readings, we will see how issues raised in the history of philosophy continue to be important today, which will teach us something about what philosophy is. Philosophy is an activity whose aim is to address foundational questions about a range of topics, by thinking clearly and carefully about them. By doing so, philosophers hope to come to a better understanding of ourselves and the world. *(Gen. Ed.: This course satisfies the Individual & Society requirement.)*

Professor Rachel Goodman | MW 10-10:50AM; F 9 or 10

Professor Tony Hernandez | M 6-8:30PM

PHIL 101 Critical Thinking

Critical thinking will enable you to better understand, evaluate, and defend the beliefs that make up your worldview, as well as the competing beliefs offered by others. We will learn how to analyze, evaluate and criticize arguments. We will then apply these skills to various forms of reasoning offered in academic and non-academic contexts. These are the skills you need to do well in college and to ace tests like the MCAT and the GRE. *(Gen. Ed.: This course satisfies the Individual and Society requirement.)*

Professor John Whipple | MW 11-11:50AM; F 10 or 11

Professor Aleksei Zarnitsyn | MW 3-4:15PM

PHIL 102 Introductory Logic

Information is all around you, stored in books, the rings of a tree, in your brain. Logic is the study of the most basic property of information: that you can put pieces of information together to make a new piece of information. This process is called inference and it is at the heart of what it means to be a thinker. In logic, we study inference but establishing precise rules for what makes a good inference. In this course you will learn principles of inference that will be useful to you in any activity that requires thought. You will improve your ability to make and evaluate arguments, gaining a greater appreciation for precision in language. (*Gen. Ed.: Natural World - No Lab course; **also fulfills LAS Quantitative Reasoning requirement.***)

Professor Bill D'Alessandro | MW 12-12:50PM; F 11 or 12

Professor Chen Liang | W 6PM-8:30PM

PHIL 106 What is Religion?

Why are people religious? Should they be religious? Just what is religion anyway? What is its function in society, or in our individual lives? We will explore these questions from many different angles; students will be encouraged to develop their own views and argue for those views. Cross-listed w/ RELS 106. *(Gen. Ed.: This course satisfies the Individual and Society requirement.)*

Professor Georgette Sinkler | TR 9:30-10:20AM; F 9 or 10

National statistics show that philosophy students outperform all others on the LSAT, GRE, and GMAT!

PHIL 107 What Is Art?

If you place a toilet in a museum, does that make it art? And who cares - why does it matter whether something is art or not? More generally: what is art, and why do we care about it (if we do)? In this course we will explore these questions, and bring the answers we come up with to bear on our experience of actual works of art in Chicago. *(Gen. Ed.: This course satisfies the Creative Arts requirement.)*

Professor Samuel Fleischacker | TR 9:30-10:20AM; F 9 or 10

PHIL 111 What Is a Fact?

"That's not a fact; that's an opinion, just a theory, fake news." What are facts? Where can we reliably find them? What's the difference between facts and theories? Are there moral facts? Religious facts? We'll explore these questions both philosophically and as a practical problem: how do we find out which sources to trust for facts, especially in the bewildering modern world of social media? *(Gen Ed: This course satisfies the Understanding the Individual and Society requirement.)*

Prof. Samuel Fleischacker | TR 12:30-1:20PM; F 12 or 1

PHIL 115 Death & Dying

There are few certainties in life, but one of them is that it ends. You, and everyone you have ever met, will one day die. What does this mean for us? In this course, we take a philosophical approach to death. We ask questions like: Is immortality possible? Would immortality be desirable? How should I feel about my own death? How should I feel about the death of other people? How should the knowledge that I will die affect how I live? *(Gen Ed: This course satisfies the Understanding the Individual and Society requirement.)*

Professor Aidan Gray | TR 11-11:50AM; F 10, 11, or 12

PHIL 116 Medical Ethics

In this course we will discuss moral issues as they arise in medical contexts, including such topics as abortion, euthanasia, paternalism, allocation of medical resources, and psychiatric issues.

Professor Kay Cho| TR 8-9:15AM

PHIL 202 Philosophy of Psychology

We consciously represent the way the world is and adjust our behavior accordingly. We are, intelligent, thinking things. What does consciousness and mental representation consist in? Is artificial intelligence possible? How is the mind related to the body? We will survey the twentieth century's most promising answers to these questions. *Prerequisite(s): One course in philosophy, or junior or senior standing in the physical, biological, or social sciences, or consent of instructor.*

Professor Mahrad Almotahari | MW 9AM-9:50AM; F 8 or 9

Did you know? Philosophy majors are accepted at a high rate to medical schools!

PHIL 203 Metaphysics

Metaphysics is the study of the most fundamental questions about the way things are. We will investigate issues of possibility, necessity, essence, and possible worlds. We ask questions like: Is it possible for a mathematical truth to be false? Could I have been a Penguin? What are the essential properties of ordinary individuals such as people, cats, trees, and tables? *Prerequisite: One course in philosophy or consent of the instructor.*

Professor Jun Young Kim | TR 3:30-4:45PM

PHIL 204 Philosophy of Science

Science is our best source of knowledge of the world and how it works, but what is the nature of that knowledge and its reliability? We will address questions like: What is science? What is the scientific method? How reliable is the knowledge granted by science? How do fallible, sometimes irrational scientists generate reliable knowledge? *Prerequisite(s): One course in philosophy or junior or senior standing in the physical, biological, or social sciences or consent of the instructor.*

Professor David Hilbert | MW 12-12:50PM; F 11 or 12

PHIL 221 Ancient Philosophy II: Aristotle & His Predecessors

This course will introduce Aristotle's philosophy by examining his conceptions of what it is to be a human being and of what it is to live a good human life. We will consider questions such as: What is a rational animal? What does a rational animal need—and need to do—in order to flourish? What is the relationship between thought and action? What role do non-rational sources of motivation play in the life of a rational animal? What is a virtue, and why are virtues worth having? How do we become good? We will focus on Aristotle's *De Anima* ('On the Soul') and *Nicomachean Ethics. Prerequisite(s): 1 course in philosophy or the consent of instructor.*

Professor Will Small | TR 2-3:15PM

PHIL 224 History of Modern Phil II: Kant & His Successors

Locke compared the human mind to a blank sheet of paper awaiting the pen of experience. Hume described the mind as a nexus of gentle yet prevailing forces that organize the echoes of sense experience. Kant viewed the mind as the generator of empirical reality itself. Through readings of primary texts, students will study the philosophical means and motives behind these provocative conceptions. *Prerequisite(s): One course in philosophy or consent of the instructor.*

Professor Tyler Hanck | TR 9:30-10:45AM

PHIL 230 Ethics and Political Philosophy

This course introduces students to five critical topics in ethics and political philosophy: metaethics, moral psychology, normative ethics, political obligation, and the nature of equality. We will ask: Are there moral facts? Are human beings motivated only by self-interest? Is the rightness/wrongness of our actions to be measured by the goodness/badness of their effects? Do we have a moral obligation to obey the government's laws? *Prerequisite(s): One course in philosophy or consent of the instructor.*

Professor Tyler Hanck | MW TR 9:30-10:45AM

PHIL 241 Why Be Moral? Confucian & Daoist Perspectives

An in-depth examination of how classical Chinese philosophers thought people can (and/or should) relate to ethical norms and social expectations. *Prerequisite(s): 1 course in philosophy or the consent of instructor.*

Professor Stephen Walker | T 3:30-6PM

PHIL 299 Latin American Philosophy (NEW!)

This course will give an overview of Latin American philosophy, from pre-Hispanic times to the present. Do the terms 'Latin America', 'Latino', and related terms make any sense at all? What role did indigenous (pre-colonial) thought play in the emergence of Latin American Philosophy? How did Latin American thought deal with major historical challenges, such as the Spanish conquest and the independence revolutions of the 19th century? How does Latin American Philosophy address today's gender, class, and race struggles? *This course is open to all students regardless of year or major; no background in philosophy is required for this class.*

Professor Alessandro Moscaritolo | W 3PM-5:30PM

PHIL 300 Fundamentals of Philosophical Discourse

Writing is fun! It is enjoyable to express interesting ideas clearly. The problem for most of us is that we can't express ourselves as effectively as we'd like, so that writing becomes a source of frustration. This course will help you to become a clear, precise, and more confident writer. *Prerequisite(s): Major in philosophy; junior standing or above or departmental approval.*

Professor Georgette Sinkler | TR 12:30-1:45PM

PHIL 401 Theory of Knowledge

This course will focus on *a priori* knowledge. *A priori* knowledge is knowledge whose justification does not depend on particular sense experiences. Since before Plato, some philosophers have believed that we can know truths, even substantive truths about the world, simply by reflecting or reasoning. Candidates for *a priori* knowledge have included mathematics, logic, ethics, and some metaphysics. But what are its properties? Is it possible to have any a priori knowledge at all, and if so, what kind of knowledge? We will explore these issues from both a historical and contemporary perspective. *Prerequisite: One 200-level course or consent of the instructor.*

Professor Daniel Sutherland | R 3:30PM-6PM

PHIL 426 Analysis and Logical Empricism

This class will deal with some aspects of the development of twentieth-century analytic philosophy. We will focus on the influence of logic. The balance of the reading and discussion will be in part determined as we go, by the needs and interests of the class. We shall read works by Frege, Russell, the Logical Empiricists (also known as Logical Positivists, especially Carnap), and by Quine. *Prerequisite: One 200-level course and PHIL 102, or consent of the instructor. Recommended background: PHIL 210.*

Professor Peter Hylton | TR 11AM-12:15PM

PHIL 410 Introduction to Formal Logic

This course will teach formal methods and concepts for use in philosophy including set theory, probability theory, computability, and issues of soundness and completeness in logic & arithmetic. *Prerequisite: PHIL 210 or consent of the instructor.*

Professor Nick Huggett | MW 9:30-10:45AM

PHIL 432 What's Special about Being Human?

What is humanity? Is it simply a prejudice to favor our fellow human beings over other animals? And what duties do we have to other animals? We will read a variety of recent philosophical writings on this topic. Students will also debate the issues in class and try to come up with their own views on it. *Prerequisite(s): One 200-level course in philosophy or consent of the instructor. Recommended background: Credit in a course in moral, social, or political philosophy.*

Professor Samuel Fleischacker | T 3:30-6PM

Graduate Student Highlight: *Alessandro Moscaritolo*

Popular graduate student instructor Alessandro Moscaritolo set to teach a new, unique course: PHIL 299: Latin American Philosophy!

Alessandro grew up and received his undergraduate education in Venezuela. He is currently a Ph.D. Candidate in Philosophy from UIC. His research interests encompass underrepresented philosophical traditions, such as Latin American Philosophy, Ordinary Language Philosophy, and LGBT+ Philosophy. In the Spring of 2020, he will teach a course, **PHIL 299 Latin American Philosophy**. Students who take this class, offered for the first time at UIC, will be exposed to underappreciated contributions of Latin American thought to mainstream philosophy in areas such as political philosophy, ethics, race theory, philosophy of religion and education, and feminist studies.