UIC PHILOSOPHY DEPARTMENT

FALL 2021
COURSE BROCHURE

UIC LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES
Philosophy

Question? Need advice about courses?
Contact:

-Your favorite instructor

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

-Departmental Advisor Albert Hernandez ahern093@uic.edu

PHIL 100: Introduction to Philosophy (On Campus)
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 10-10:50 AM
Discussion sections: F 1-1:50 PM & 12-12:50 PM

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 11-11:50 AM (On Campus)
Discussion sections: F 11-11:50 AM, 10-10:50 AM (On Campus)
*Professor Taylor Kloha | TR 5-6:15 PM (Online Asynchronous)

PHIL 102: Introductory Logic*
Information is all around you. It is stored in books, on computers, in 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 by 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, and you will gain a greater appreciation for precision in language. *(Gen. Ed.: Natural World – No Lab course; also fulfills LAS Quantitative Reasoning requirement.)*
*Professor Aidan Gray | MW 12-12:50 (Online Synchronous)
Discussion sections: F 8-8:50 AM, 9-9:50 AM, 10-10:50 AM, 11-11:50 AM (On Campus)
*Professor Niranjana Warrier | TR 5-6:15 (Online Asynchronous)

Philosophy 104: What is Democracy? (On Campus)
Is the US (still) a democracy? To think well about that question, we need to know what a democracy is. We also need to know how a democratic society answers fundamental questions like, "who are 'the people'?" and "how do they rule?" This course explores those questions in a format designed to actively engage students and help them develop basic skills of philosophical reading, thinking and writing.
(Gen Ed: This course satisfies the Understanding the Individual and Society requirement.)
Professor Tony Laden | MW 12-12:50 PM
Discussion sections: F 12-12:50 PM, 1-1:50 PM

PHIL 107: What is Art? (On Campus)
What is art? What makes art good or bad? What should we do about works that we consider morally objectionable; should they count as art? Or not? Focusing mainly on the visual arts, we'll aim to bring abstract thinking about art to bear on our experience of works of art from history and current pop culture. *(This course satisfies the Gen. Ed.: Creative Arts requirement.)*
Professor Sam Fleischacker | MW 11-11:50 AM
Discussion sections: F 10-10:50 AM & 11-11:50 PM

PHIL 109: Who Am I? (On Campus)
Who am I? What does it mean to be human? How am I different from other humans? What is the source of my identity, and is it something I can control? These questions are addressed through philosophical texts from Plato to the present. *(Gen Ed: This course fulfills the Individual and Society requirement.)*
Professor Will Small | MW 12-12:50 PM
Discussion sections: F 12-12:50 PM, 1-1:50 PM

PHIL 110: Philosophy of Love and Sex*
What is it to love someone as a lover rather than a parent, sibling, or friend? What is the nature of sexual desire; how does it relate to love, to sexual activity and sexual pleasure? Among the topics discussed are sexual intercourse, trans- gender identity, homosexuality, prostitution, pornography, incest, and rape. (Gen. Ed.: Satisfies the Individual and Society requirement.)
*Professor Maria Mejia | MW 10-10:50 AM (Online Synchronous)
Discussion sections: F 10-10:50 AM, 11-11:50 AM, 12-12:50 PM, 1-1:50 PM (On Campus)

PHIL 116: Biomedical Ethics (On Campus)
Moral issues as they arise in medical contexts, including such topics as abortion, euthanasia, paternalism, allocation of medical resources, and psychiatric issues.
Professor Hannah Martens | TR 8-9:15 AM

PHIL 201: Theory of Knowledge (On Campus)
How do we know what we know? What does it take for a belief to constitute knowledge? How are claims to knowledge justified? We will look at various answers to these questions in both historical & contemporary contexts. *Prerequisite: 1 non-logic philosophy course or instructor consent*.
Professor Jake Spinella | TR 3:30-4:45 PM

PHIL 202: Philosophy of Psychology*
Almost everyone agrees that we have minds and we have bodies. What's less clear is exactly how our minds and bodies are related. Is there really just one thing with two ways of describing it? Or are there two very different things that may or may not interact with each other? We will look at a range of answer to questions concerning the relation between mind and body. We will also focus on questions concerning individual senses from both a scientific and a philosophical perspective. *Prerequisite: One non-logic course in philosophy or consent of the instructor.*
*Professor Daniel Sutherland | MW 9-9:50 AM (Online Synchronous)
Discussion sections: F 8-8:50 AM, 9-9:50 AM (On campus)

PHIL 204: Introduction to the Philosophy of Science (On Campus)
It is often claimed that science is our best source of knowledge of the world and how it works. It is also often claimed that science is able to supply that knowledge of the world because it operates in accordance with a unique method. We will examine and evaluate these claims, addressing questions like: What is science? What is the scientific method? How reliable is the knowledge generated by science? How do fallible, sometimes irrational, scientists generate reliable knowledge? *Prerequisite: One non-logic course in philosophy; or junior/senior standing in the physical/biological/social sciences, or consent of the instructor.*
Professor David Hilbert | MW 1-1:50 PM
Discussion sections: F 10-10:50 AM, 11-11:50 AM

PHIL 206: Intro to the Philosophy of Language (On Campus)
Philosophical issues concerning meaning, the relationship between language and thought, how language is to be distinguished from other forms of communication, and how truth relates to meaning. *Recommended background: One non-logic course in philosophy.*
Professor Cody Hatfield-Myers | MW 9:30-10:45 AM

PHIL 210: Symbolic Logic (Mixed in-person and online)
The focus of this course will be first-order quantification theory. We will begin by reviewing truth-functional logic, treating it in a somewhat more abstract and rigorous way than in PHIL 102. We will then introduce quantifiers and their use to symbolize English sentences. We will set up a natural deduction system for first-order logic and consider meta-theoretical questions that arise about such a system—in particular, its soundness and completeness. *Prerequisite: PHIL 102 or consent of instructor. (Gen. Ed.: Natural World - No Lab course.)*
Professor Nick Huggett | TR 2-3:15 PM

PHIL 220/CL 220 Ancient Philosophy I: Plato and His Predecessors (On Campus)
What is a good life? What is the world like? How does the human world relate to the divine? These fundamental questions occupied the earliest Greek philosophers, from Thales to the Sophists, Socrates, and Plato. In this course, we will do philosophy with them, focusing on the themes of law (nomos) and nature (phusis). We won't just learn what these classical philosophers thought, but also question them, argue with them, and develop our own answers to these timeless questions. We will read the original texts in translation of these early Greek philosophers, as well as ancient historians, tragedians, and even doctors! No prior knowledge of philosophy or ancient Greek culture will be presupposed. *Prerequisite: One non-logic course in philosophy or consent of the instructor.*
Professor Justin Vlasits | TR 2:00-3:15

PHIL 223: History of Modern Philosophy I: Descartes and His Successors (On Campus)
Sometimes referred to as the father of modern philosophy, Rene Descartes was one of the most important figures in the early modern period. In this course we will strive to understand the revolutionary character of Descartes' philosophy. We will also consider early modern criticisms of his views by Princess Elisabeth of Bohemia, Nicolas Malebranche, Pierre Bayle, John Locke, and G. W. Leibniz. The questions that we will be considering include: What is the relation between science and philosophy? What are the limits of human knowledge? What is the nature of physical substance? What is the nature of the mind? What is the relation between my mind and my body? Is it possible to prove that God exists? *Prerequisite(s): One non-logic course in philosophy or consent of the instructor.*
Professor John Whipple | MW 9:30-10:45 AM

PHIL 241/RELS 241: Philosophy of Religion (On Campus)
The course is intended to introduce students to some basic problems in the Philosophy of Religion: for example, whether it's acceptable to believe in God without full rational support, whether God's existence would undermine human free choice, and whether one can prove the non-existence of God. Readings will be drawn from both classical and contemporary sources. *Prerequisite: One non-logic course in philosophy or consent of the instructor.*
Professor Georgette Sinkler | TR 3:30-4:45 PM

PHIL 299 Philosophy in the Islamic World (On Campus)
Philosophers throughout the Islamic world, from the 8th century until today, engaged in sophisticated debates on a wide range of topics, from logic and psychology to metaphysics, theology, and politics, developing novel arguments and theories about scientific method, the human soul, and the creation of the world. In this course, we will focus on some of these debates as they appear in authors such as Al-Farabi, Avicenna, and Averroes, as well as more recent philosophers Mulla Sadra and Muhammed Iqbal. We will consider these philosophers both in their own right and in the context of a series of fascinating cultural exchanges: the translation of Greek philosophy into Arabic with the help of Syrian Christians, the vibrant intellectual milieu among Jewish and Muslim authors in Islamic Spain, the translation of Arabic philosophy into Latin, and European colonialism. *Recommended background: One non-logic course in philosophy. *Can count towards history requirement for the major; contact Professor John Whipple or LAS Advisor Albert Hernandez.*
Professor Justin Vlasits | TR 11-12:15

PHIL 299: Buddhist Philosophy (On Campus)
Buddhism is the world's fourth-largest religion with over 7% of the global population. Most Buddhist traditions share the goal of overcoming suffering and the cycle of death and rebirth, either by the attainment of Nirvana or through the path of Buddhahood. But what is Buddhist philosophy? Is Buddhism both a religion and philosophy? We will start with this question and then examine the major philosophical traditions of Buddhism and the debates between them over the issues of metaphysics, ethics, and epistemology. We aim to answer questions such as: What do Buddhists mean when they say there is no self? What about the claim that everything is *empty*? Does Buddhism teach that we are all connected with one another? *Recommended background: One non-logic course in philosophy. *Can count towards history requirement for major; contact Prof. John Whipple/LAS Advisor Albert Hernandez.*
Professor Jun Young Kim | MW 4:30-5:45 PM

PHIL 300: Fundamentals of Philosophical Discourse (On Campus)
Do you ever feel, while writing a paper, that you don't really know what you are doing, or what, exactly, your teachers are looking for? Then this course is for you. Learn to write with purpose and confidence. Learn to present abstract ideas and arguments with clarity. Get detailed weekly feedback and coaching on your writing, and all aspects of writing philosophy papers. *Prereq(s): Major in philosophy; junior+ standing; departmental approval.*
Professor Tony Laden | MW 9:30-10:45 AM

PHIL 402: Philosophy of Mind (On Campus)
We will focus on some central problems in the philosophy of mind, with a focus on the relationship between questions about the mind and cognitive scientific study of the mind. Our aim will be to understand the mind as a reasoning, representing entity, but one that is part of the natural world. Some questions we will cover are: Is there a naturalistic understanding of mental 'aboutness'? What are concepts, and why should we think there are any? Are some of our mental abilities innate, or are they all learned through experience? What is the correct theory of mental imagery? *Prerequisites: 1 non-logic 200-level philosophy course or instructor consent. Approval to repeat course granted by department.*
Professor Rachel Goodman | R 3:30-6:00 PM

PHIL 424: Kant's Critical Philosophy (On Campus)
The course focuses on Kant's metaphysics and epistemology as it is presented in his classic and deeply influential work, *The Critique of Pure Reason*. We will focus on some of the fundamental notions underlying Kant's philosophy and make a first pass through the "positive" portion of the Critique before circling back to look at some issues in more detail. *Prerequisite(s): One 200-level course in philosophy or consent of the instructor. Approval to repeat course granted by the department.*
Professor Daniel Sutherland | T 3:30-6:00 PM

PHIL 429: Special Studies in the History of Philosophy (On Campus)
The focus of the course will be women philosophers of the Early Modern Period: for example, Sor Juana, Mary Astell, and Catherine Trotter Cockburn. We will work through what the women had to say about gender equality, the nature of substance, and the nature of morality. *Prerequisite(s): 1 200-level philosophy course or instructor consent. Approval to repeat course granted by the department.*
**Can count towards history requirement for the major; contact Professor John Whipple or LAS Advisor Albert Hernandez.*
Professor Georgette Sinkler | TR 12:30-1:45 PM

PHIL 432: Consequentialism & its Critics (On Campus)
Can the prospect of a good outcome (e.g. saving the lives of many) justify, or even require, doing something that would otherwise be considered unethical (e.g. killing an innocent person)? Do the ends always justify the means? According to some philosophers ("consequentialists") they do. We will consider some varieties of—and objections to—consequentialism in order to determine whether it can provide an acceptable theory of morality. *Prerequisite(s): One 200-level course in philosophy or consent of the instructor. Approval to repeat course granted by the department.*
Professor Will Small | MW 9:30-10:45

Philosophy Department Spotlight
to teach PHIL 220/CL 220 in Fall 2021

Professor Vlasits's research is primarily focused on ancient philosophy, in particular logic, epistemology, and philosophy of science. He is originally from Maryland and completed his BA in Philosophy and English Literature at Columbia University before completing his PhD at UC Berkeley. After his PhD, he taught for several years at the University of Tübingen in Germany. He is excited to join the UIC community!