

# Department of Philosophy

## Course Descriptions

### Spring 2010

#### Introductory Courses

Any section of Philosophy 110: Introduction to Philosophy can be taken to fulfill the college core requirement in philosophy. Only one Philosophy 110 course may be taken for college credit.

<b><u>Phil 110</u></b>	<b><u>Introductory Philosophy Classes</u></b>	<b><u>3 credits</u></b>
Terence Martin	12:00-12:50 MWF	
Charlie Hobbs	2:00-2:50 & 3:00-3:50 MWF	
George Trey	11:00-12:15 TR	
Megan Zwart	12:30-1:45 and 2:00-3:15 TR	

<b><u>Phil 110W</u></b>	<b><u>Introductory Philosophy</u></b>	<b><u>3.5 credits</u></b>
Ann Clark	11:00-11:50 MWF & 3:30-4:20 T	

Readings and discussions designed to introduce the student to the major areas and problems of philosophy through a study of writings of classical and contemporary thinkers.

#### Upper Division Courses

<b>Phil 230</b>	<b>Socrates to Scholasticism</b>	<b>3 credits</b>	<b>Megan Zwart</b>
<b>10:00-10:50 MWF</b>			

Early philosophers asked many of the same questions we ask today: What can we know about the world, what can we know about God, how should we live? In this course, we will ask these questions alongside the Ancients and Medievals, paying attention to how historical context affects both the questions one asks and the answers one gives. We will read the presocratics, Plato, Aristotle, the Stoics, Augustine and Aquinas among others. Students who enjoyed their introductory philosophy experience are invited and encouraged to further test the waters of philosophy with Socrates to Scholasticism.

<b>Phil 245</b>	<b>Non-Western philosophy</b>	<b>3 credits</b>	<b>Ann Clark</b>
<b>2:00-3:15 TR</b>			

American Indian thought has not been discussed as one of the sources of American philosophical reflection until very recently. Thus we will be stepping into new intellectual territory in this course. To spur our inquiry, we will read novels, poetry, plays, histories, participant observation studies, transcriptions of early conversations and political critique by American Indians. Also included will be secondary sources by Euro-Americans which illuminate the multiple cultural traditions at work in today's United States. Some questions which are not often asked in a philosophical context will be sparked by these writings and some questions will be quite familiar. For example: "Might someone have the soul of her grandmother?" "Can land be owned?" "Might animals help me to decide what I ought to do?" "What is an imaginary Indian?" Or: "What is democracy?" "What is human speech and what is not?" "How should conflicts within communities be settled?" "What does it mean to have a relationship to the Divine?" American Indian thought is often sentimentalized and rarely taken seriously as a part of the heritage of the Americas. This course aims to alter that tradition. Writings will be, for the most part, by women. Multiple representations of gender will arise but will not be understood as particular to women because American Indian traditions do not usually presuppose a male/female dichotomy.

**Phil 254**  
**9:30-10:45 TR**

**Social Justice**

**3 credits**

**Megan Zwart**

Who has spent more time abroad: you or your t-shirt? Do you know where your hamburger (or your tomato) has been? What does your latte have to do with global or local poverty? What do any of these questions have to do with philosophy? Philosophy prepares us to think critically about the relationship between our beliefs and our actions. In this course in applied social philosophy, we will pay special attention to the hidden costs of the things we consume daily and ask how our consumption habits can reinforce or reduce oppression of those on the margins of society. We will consider the following topics: the ethics of eating, the ethics of purchasing in a globalized world, and the ethics of distribution of wealth both here and abroad. In addition to lots of discussion, this course will also include visits with local advocates for fair trade and sustainable farming, and some hands-on learning including a field trip and a shared meal. This course fulfills a general education requirement (additional humanities choice). It also fulfills a requirement for the Justice Education minor.

**Phil 332**  
**3:00-4:15 MW**

**Kant and His Critics**

**3 credits**

**George Trey**

Contemporary discussions of persons, of knowledge, of ethics, and of community emerge from the insights and problems left to us by Kant. We will read Kant's work with care and we will consider a series of critiques from American, English, and Continental traditions about whether Kant's Critique saves reason or not, saves knowledge or not, or gives us a picture of ourselves in the world that we can live with or not. In the process of this discussion we will see how Kantian we are and, perhaps, whether we want to be. Grades will be based on class participation, presentations, and papers. *Advanced students in any discipline will find this study of one of the most elegant and annoying of all thinkers both illuminating and thought provoking.*

**Phil 343**  
**3:30-4:45 TR**

**20<sup>th</sup> Century Philosophy**

**3 credits**

**Charles Hobbs**

Join us as we explore some of the incredibly rich and varied tapestry of philosophy from the last one hundred years. In considering the history of twentieth-century philosophy, some of the questions we shall address include the meaning of democracy, education, freedom, the self, language, and the very nature of philosophy itself. We shall do this by examining representatives from three major twentieth-century philosophical traditions: (1) John Dewey of the pragmatist tradition, (2) Jean-Paul Sartre of the existential-phenomenological tradition, and (3) Ludwig Wittgenstein of the linguistic tradition. We shall begin in 1916 with Dewey's *Democracy and Education*, culminating in a February meeting with Larry A. Hickman—one of the world's most renowned scholars of John Dewey's philosophy (who will meet with our class during his upcoming visit to SMC). After Dewey, we shall turn to selections from Sartre's *Being and Nothingness* (1943). Next on our sojourn will be selections from Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* (1953). Finally, we shall conclude by considering a very recent thinker who in his own way brings these three traditions together, the American philosopher Richard Rorty and his *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (1979). Regular activities of this course will include careful reading, writing, presentations, and focused discussion.

**Phil 354**  
**11:00-12:15 TR**

**Ethics**

**3 credits**

**Charles Hobbs**

How should I be living my life? What *is* happiness, really? What is the meaning and significance of *friendship*? What role should *pleasure* and *desire* play in our lives? Is morality simply about following *rules*? What is the relationship between habit, intelligence, and morality? What is the relationship between *emotions* and morality? To deal seriously with such questions, we shall explore and consider a variety of influential positions from Western ethics, starting with some

ancient Greek and Roman philosophers and philosophical movements (Aristotle, Epicureanism, Stoicism). We'll then move on to the 18th-century German philosopher Immanuel Kant, after which the next stop on our journey will be the 19th-century British philosopher John Stuart Mill. Finally, we shall turn our attention to two recent American philosophers: first John Dewey, and then the (living!) Chicago philosopher Martha Nussbaum. We seek throughout to understand sympathetically the ethical positions expressed in our readings, as well as to critically evaluate them, as we consider their relevance for the *living* of our lives. Join us.

<b>Phil 497.01</b> Permission	<b>Independent Study</b>	<b>1 to 3 credits</b>	<b>Ann Clark</b>
<b>Phil 497.03</b> Permission	<b>Independent Study</b>	<b>1 to 3 credits</b>	<b>George Trey</b>
<b>Phil 497.04</b> Permission	<b>Independent Study</b>	<b>1 to 3 credits</b>	<b>Charles Hobbs</b>
<b>Phil 497.05</b> Permission	<b>Independent Study</b>	<b>1 to 3 credits</b>	<b>Megan Zwart</b>
<b>Phil 998.01</b> Permission	<b>Advanced Writing Proficiency</b>		<b>George Trey</b>
<b>Phil 999.01</b> Permission	<b>Comprehensive Exam Passed</b>		<b>George Trey</b>

## Advising: Spring 2010

For advising regarding course selection you may consult with any member of the Philosophy faculty, or, if you are working on a major or minor in Philosophy Contact:

George Trey, Chair  
Room 160 Spes Unica  
Ph: 4547  
Email: gtrey

Ann Clark  
Room 158 Spes Unica  
Ph: 4503  
Email: aclark

Terence Martin  
Room 163 Spes Unica  
Ph: 4519  
Email: tmartin

Patricia Sayre  
**(on Sabbatical)**  
Room 161 Spes Unica  
Ph: 4538  
Email: psayre

Megan Zwart  
Room 161 Spes Unica  
Ph: 4538  
Email: mzwart

Charles Hobbs  
Room 157 Spes Unica  
Ph: 4169  
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