

# UC Davis Philosophy Department

## Expanded Course Descriptions

### Spring, 2008

#### **PHILOSOPHY 1**

#### **INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY**

Brendan Jackson  
MWF 10:00-10:50 A.M. 2 Wellman  
CRNs: 56585-56592

#### TEXT:

*Reason and Responsibility*, J. Feinberg & R. Shafer-Landau (13th edition)

#### COURSE CONTENT:

The course will introduce students to philosophy through an examination of some of the most important writings in the Western tradition concerning reality, knowledge and morality. Students will learn how to read a philosophical text, so that they can comprehend philosophical theories and evaluate the argumentation supporting them. There will be significant writing assignments in which these skills will be put to use.

#### REQUIREMENTS:

Weekly reading response assignments, two papers and two exams.

#### PREREQUISITE:

None

#### G.E. CREDIT:

Arts & Humanities, Writing Experience.

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#### **PHILOSOPHY 5**

#### **CRITICAL THINKING**

Magdalena Balcerak  
MWF 11:00-11:50 A.M. 176 Everson  
CRNs: 58532-58537

#### TEXT:

*Reasons, Explanations and Decisions*  
Thomas McKay, Wadsworth 2000.

#### COURSE CONTENT:

This course will focus on the development of various critical skills, such as identifying the structure of arguments, evaluating arguments, detecting various kinds of fallacies, and applying critical reasoning to cases from both, science and everyday life. At the

same time, we will be looking at different kinds of explanations, and their strengths and weaknesses. Another goal of the course is to introduce to the basic methodology of philosophy, and to learn how to prepare and write argumentative papers.

REQUIREMENTS: 2 exams, 2 short papers, and homework assignments

PREREQUISITES: None

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**PHILOSOPHY 15**

**BIOETHICS**

Gerald Dworkin  
TR 10:30-11:50 A.M. 176 Everson  
CRNs: 58604-58609

TEXT: *The Elements of Moral Philosophy*, James Rachels  
*The Idea of Perfection*, M. Sandel

COURSE CONTENT: A study of the ethical issues that arise in the practice of medicine and the study of human biology. Typical issues include: doctor-patient relationship, physician-assisted suicide and euthanasia, paternalism, and genetic enhancement.

REQUIREMENTS: Grades will be based on a final examination and two short papers. The final will count for 40% of the grade and the two papers for 30% each.

G.E. CREDIT: Art & Humanities, Writing Experience

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**PHILOSOPHY 22**

**HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY: EARLY MODERN**

G. J. Matthey  
TR 12:10-1:30 P.M., 158 Olson  
CRNs: 67011 & 67012

TEXTS: *Readings in Modern Philosophy*, Vols. I & II, Ariew and Watkins  
*Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics*, Kant

COURSE CONTENT: The course will survey the main trends and thinkers in the first two centuries of the modern period. Most of the course will be devoted to Descartes, Locke, Hume, and Kant. Other philosophers to be covered in

less detail are Spinoza, Leibniz, and Berkeley. The main issues arising in this period include the nature and extent of human knowledge, the composition of the physical world and of the human mind (and the relation between the two), the existence of God, and human freedom. Readings will be from the original writings of the philosophers. Papers will require exposition and interpretation of those writings.

REQUIREMENTS: Two 5-page papers, final examination, discussion participation.

PREREQUISITE: None

G.E. CREDIT: Arts and Humanities, Writing Experience

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**PHILOSOPHY 30**

**INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE**

Roberta L. Millstein  
TR 1:40-3:00 PM, 119 Wellman  
CRNs:66715-66718

TEXT: *Readings in the Philosophy of Science: From Positivism to Postmodernism*, edited by Theodore Schick, Jr. (2000)  
Additional readings online

COURSE CONTENT: This course considers a variety of questions in the philosophy of science, including: What is the nature of science? Can we distinguish science from non-science (or pseudoscience)? What role, if any, does gender play in science? No knowledge or ability in science is presupposed; however, we will take a non-mathematical look at a number of (potential) sciences, including creationism, evolution, sociobiology and parapsychology.

REQUIREMENTS: Class participation and in-class group projects, reading reflections, short written assignments, final exam.

PREREQUISITES: Not open for credit to students who have taken course 104.

G.E. CREDIT: Arts & Humanities or Science and Engineering, Writing Experience.

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**PHILOSOPHY 102****THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE**

G. J. Matthey  
TR 10:30-11:50 A.M., 158 Olson  
CRNs: 67017 &67018

TEXT: On-line text by the instructor.

COURSE CONTENT: The course will be an overview of the main issues in the theory of knowledge from ancient times to the present. Questions to be discussed include: What is a theory of Knowledge supposed to do? How should the concept or concepts of knowledge be understood? How is human knowledge to be described? How might we determine whether we have knowledge?

REQUIREMENTS: Two five-page papers and a final examination.

PREREQUISITE: One course in philosophy.

G. E. CREDIT: Arts & Humanities, Writing Experience

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**PHILOSOPHY 103****PHILOSOPHY OF MIND**

Bernard Molyneux  
MWF 9:00-9:50 A.M. 212 Wellman  
CRN: 66720

TEXT: *Philosophy of Mind: Classical and Contemporary Readings*, David Chalmers (ed.)  
*Philosophy of Mind*, Jaegwon Kim

COURSE CONTENT: This course is designed to give a first taste of philosophy of mind to those new or nearly new to the topic. The contemporary philosophical literature on the nature of the mind is vast and fascinating and we will barely have a chance to scratch the surface. However, students will gain some understanding of the main metaphysical theories of mind and their major strengths and weaknesses. They will learn why most philosophers now reject the once dominant idea of a soul, and why the main naturalistic alternatives (Behaviorism, Mind-Brain Identity and Functionalism)

are nonetheless controversial.

REQUIREMENTS: Grades are based on two papers (35%) and a final exam.

PREREQUISITE: None

G.E. CREDIT: Art & Humanities, Writing Experience

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**PHILOSOPHY 137C**

**PHILOSOPHY OF LANGUAGE: SEMANTICS AND PRAGMATICS**

Brendan Jackson  
MW 12:10-2:00 P.M., 101 Wellman  
CRN: 66713

TEXT: Course Pack

COURSE CONTENT: This course will introduce students to some central topics in the philosophy of language, with an emphasis on topics concerning the relationship between semantics and pragmatics. Possible topics include: the distinction between literal meaning and what is communicated, Grice's theory of conversational implicature, the role of context in determining meaning, pragmatic enrichment, the theory of speech acts, and Moore's paradox.

REQUIREMENTS: Two papers and a final exam.

PREREQUISITE: One course in philosophy or linguistics.

G.E. CREDIT: Arts & Humanities, Writing Experience

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**PHILOSOPHY 143**

**HELLENISTIC AND NEOPLATONIC PHILOSOPHY**

Jan Szaif  
MW 10:00-11:50 A.M., 147 Olson  
CRN: 66722

TEXTS: Brad Inwood, Lloyd P. Gerson (eds.), *Hellenistic Philosophy: Introductory Readings* (2nd edition); Cicero, *On Moral Ends* (ed. by Julia Annas)

COURSE CONTENT: Hellenistic philosophy is the era of ancient Greek and

Roman philosophy that comes after Plato and Aristotle. It is a period characterized by a highly professional and sophisticated debate between competing philosophical schools (Stoics, Epicureans, Academics, Peripatetics). The thematic focus of this course will lie on ethical problems, but we will also pay attention to some aspects of the Hellenistic debate about the epistemological and metaphysical foundations for ethical theory.

REQUIREMENTS: A report, a mid-term and a final examination.

PREREQUISITE: Philosophy 21 or consent of instructor.

G.E. Credit: Art and Humanities, Writing Experience

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**PHILOSOPHY 162**

**ARISTOTLE**

Michael Wedin  
TR 1:40-3:00 P.M. 7 Wellman  
CRN: 58594

TEXT: *A New Aristotle Reader*, ed. John Ackrill

COURSE CONTENT: This course introduces the student to some of the main doctrines and theories of Aristotle in semantics, scientific explanation, ontology, and metaphysics. Format is lecture and discussion.

REQUIREMENTS: Includes two papers and a final examination.

PREREQUISITES: Philosophy 21 or consent of the instructor.

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**PHILOSOPHY 189H**

**SPECIAL TOPICS IN PHILOSOPHY: PHILOSOPHY OF MIND**

Bernard Molyneux  
MWF 1:10-2:00 P.M. 7 Wellman  
CRN: 66712

TEXT: Course Reader

COURSE CONTENT: We will be examining the externalist challenge to the traditional conception of the mind. According to the

externalist, events, processes and states external to the organism are relevant, even constitutionally relevant, to the presence of certain brain states. We will discuss the seminal works of content externalists, who claim that the intentional content of mental states is partly determined by the organism's environment, as well as anti-representationalist theses advanced by contemporary researchers in robotics, and extremely recent work on embodied, embedded and extended cognition.

REQUIREMENTS: Grades are based on two papers (35%) and a final exam.

PREREQUISITES: None

G.E. CREDIT: Arts & Humanities, Writing Experience

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**PHILOSOPHY 208**

**PHILOSOPHY OF BIOLOGY**

Roberta L. Millstein  
R 3:10-6 PM, 2275 Social Sciences and Humanities  
CRN: 66719

TEXT: Readings will be taken from recent journals and will be available online

COURSE CONTENT: Topics in the philosophy of biology, such as chance in evolution, the question of whether there are laws in biology, pluralism.

REQUIREMENTS: TBD

PREREQUISITES: Graduate standing or consent of instructor.  
May be repeated for credit when topic differs and with consent of instructor.

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**PHILOSOPHY 290-001**

**HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY**

Henry E. Allison  
W 3:10-6 P.M., 2275 Social Sciences and Humanities  
CRN: 66712

TEXT: We shall be using the Norton and Norton edition of the *Treatise* and the Beauchamp edition of the *Enquiry* [both published by Oxford]. I shall also make either the typescript or the proofs [if available] of my forthcoming book: *Custom and Reason in Hume: A Kantian Reading of the first Book of the Treatise* available to all those attending the seminar and I propose to use it as a secondary source. In addition, some of the recent standard works on Hume will be placed on reserve in Shields and students will be expected to consult them in connection with seminar presentations and the final paper.

COURSE CONTENT: This seminar will be devoted to Hume's theoretical philosophy. It will involve a close reading and critical analysis of the bulk of the first book of *A Treatise of Human Nature* and relevant portions of *An Enquiry concerning Human Understanding*. Students will be required to give a seminar presentation on a portion of the text and write a final paper of approximately fifteen pages. The minimal prerequisite is a solid upper division course in early modern philosophy. A basic familiarity with the central themes of Locke's *Essay* will be assumed. Some knowledge of Kant is highly desirable but not required.

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## PHILOSOPHY 290

## HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY

Jan Szaif

T 3:10-6:00 P.M., 2275 Social Science

CRN: 66723

TEXT: *Complete Works of Plato*, . by J. Cooper

COURSE CONTENT: In this seminar, we will discuss selected passages from different Platonic dialogues (some early dialogues, *Meno*, *Phaedo*, *Republic*, and *Phaedrus*)—passages that shed light on Plato's ideas about methods of philosophical investigation. Since the development of his ideas about method is intimately connected with the way he addresses the epistemological questions that he cares about, this will also be a course on the development of the Socratic and Platonic understanding of knowledge.

REQUIREMENTS: One substantial research paper.

PREREQUISITE: Graduate standing or consent of instructor.