

PHILOSOPHY COURSES

FALL 2015

Morality and Its Critics

Benjamin Bagley

An introduction to ethics, focusing on two representative views of the nature and significance of morality. On one (utilitarianism), morality is roughly about doing what best serves the interests of everyone involved; on the other (associated with Immanuel Kant) it instead concerns relating to people on terms that respect their dignity and autonomy. We'll explore these views in the context of issues ranging from animal rights and global poverty to happiness, manipulation, and responsibility, and we also consider whether both views might seriously exaggerate the place of morality in our lives.

Love and Inner Conflict

James Doyle

It is supposed to be distinctive of human beings that they can *reason* – about how things are, but also about *what to do*. But sometimes we act in ways we know to be 'contrary to reason': our thoughts about what's best come into conflict with other forces in the soul, in a way we don't understand.

In this course, we will look at this idea of conflicting elements in the soul by studying three of its greatest exponents: Plato, Augustine and Freud. We shall see that they also posited a fundamental force in the soul as explaining its development and division. They called this force *love*, although it is not straightforward what they meant, or whether they meant the same thing, by calling it that.

Stoicism

James Doyle

After Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, Stoicism was the most influential philosophical tradition of the ancient world. The writings of the Greek founders now exist only in quotations and paraphrases in later authors, but Roman Stoicism is given detailed expression in complete surviving works of Cicero, Seneca and others.

We will study the main surviving texts of Stoicism, which attest to its continuing relevance. We will pay particular attention to (i) the Stoics' 'materialist' conception of nature; (ii) their 'natural law' account of ethics, which became extremely influential and still has much to contribute to our own attempts to come to terms with the human condition; and (iii) their permanent and fundamental contributions to the study of logic.

The True and the Good (Gen Ed: C&B)

Bernhard Nickel

The course introduces students to philosophical argumentation and writing. It is organized around a range of central philosophical questions, concerning the nature of right and wrong, free will and responsibility, the relation between self, mind, and nature, and god and death. No previous experience with philosophy is required.

Existentialism in Literature and Film

Sean Kelly

What is it to be a human being? How can human beings live meaningful lives? These questions guide our discussion of theistic and atheistic existentialism and their manifestations in literature and film. Material includes philosophical texts from Pascal, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Sartre; literature from Dostoevsky, Kafka, Beckett; films from Jean-Luc Godard, Alain Resnais, Carol Reed.

Later Philosophy of Wittgenstein

Warren Goldfarb

A close reading of Ludwig Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*, focusing on its treatments of the topics of meaning, reference, rule-following, cognition, perception, "the private mental realm," knowledge, scepticism, and the nature of philosophy. Attention to Wittgenstein's philosophical methodology, with its claim to dissolve philosophical problems rather than propose solutions to them.

Fundamentals of Logic

Warren Goldfarb

Analysis of the central concepts of logic: validity, satisfiability, implication. Basic elements of model theory: completeness, compactness, Löwenheim-Skolem theorem, Beth's definability theorem. Applications to the foundations of mathematics. Attention also to higher-order logic and to non-classical (constructive) logical systems.

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Philosophy of Mind

Cheryl Chen

An examination of the relation between the mind and the natural world. Topics will include: the mind-body problem and proposed solutions to it, the nature of consciousness, and mental representation.

Race and Social Justice (Gen Ed: ER)

Tommie Shelby

Critically examines recent philosophical work on questions of racial justice: What is racism? What makes racial discrimination wrong? Are reparations owed for past racial injustices? Is racial profiling ever justified? Under what conditions should we regard racial disparities (e.g., in wealth or employment) as unjust? Should government foster racial integration in schools and neighborhoods? Is affirmative action unfair? Is a just society a "color-blind" society?

Philosophy and Photography

Richard Moran

The seminar will examine the nature of photography and what makes it distinctive as a form of visual representation. Topics include the nature of photographic 'realism', the difference between mechanical and 'hand-made' images, and how these differences matter both epistemically and to our aesthetic, moral, and psychological responses to them. Readings will be taken from writers such as Barthes, Bazin, Benjamin, Berger, Cavell, Sontag and others.

Buddhist Philosophy

Parimal Patil

Selected topics in Buddhist epistemology, metaphysics, philosophy of action, and philosophy of mind. Special attention will be given to arguments that Buddhist philosophers used to defend their views and respond to their critics. In addition to understanding these arguments in their historical contexts, we will ask what we can learn from them today and, when relevant, investigate how they are being used in contemporary philosophy.

Animals and Ethics (Gen Ed: ER)

Christine Korsgaard

What, if anything, do we owe to the other animals, and why? Do the other animals have a moral nature, and does it matter to how we treat them whether they do? What can we learn about human morality by thinking about animals? Should or could animals have legal rights? We will consider some answers to these questions, including utilitarian and Kantian approaches and others.

A Humanities Colloquium: Homer to Descartes (Gen Ed: AIU/C&B)

Alison Simmons

2500 years of essential works alongside current art events. Hum 10a includes works by Homer, Plato, Thucydides, Virgil, Augustine, Dante, Chaucer, Shakespeare, and Descartes. All sections are led by professors. Join the conversation.

Deductive Logic (Gen Ed: EMR)

Ned Hall

Learn to think with clarity, precision, and rigor—and discover the joy that attends such thinking. Become fantastically sophisticated in your understanding of how language can be used and abused as a vehicle for persuasion. Conquer the most fiendish logic puzzles known to humankind. Logical Reasoning. It's what makes us most deeply human.

Tutorial Topics

Personal Identity (PHIL 97)

James Bondarchuk

Hume's Ethics (PHIL 98)

Lauren Kopajtic

Emotions (PHIL 98)

Olivia Bailey

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