

Fall 2010 Course Descriptions

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Philosophy 325i: Philosophy of Law

Mondays from 7:00-9:45pm

Professor: Nellie Wieland: nwieland@csulb.edu

Study of the historical development of the philosophy of law and examination of the problems in the field ranging from general theories to analysis of fundamental legal concepts and normative issues. Topics include Positivism, Natural Law Theory, legal interpretation, responsibility and causation, the insanity defense, paternalism, and free speech.

Philosophy 361i: Philosophy of Art

Mondays and Wednesdays from 9:30-10:45am

Professor: Julie Van Camp: jvancamp@csulb.edu

The course will consider central problems in aesthetics, such as the possibility of objectivity in criticism, traditional and contemporary definitions of "art," truth and meaning in the arts, and the relationship of moral and aesthetic value.

To meet the University requirements for IC courses, students will have a writing assignment no later than the fifth week of the semester, with sustained writing throughout the course.

GENERAL EDUCATION: This course meets the C.2.b. ("Philosophy") and the IC/interdisciplinary capstone requirements. Philosophy majors and minors may "double-count" it for both IC requirement and credit in the values group of the major/minor.

TEXTS:

- Terry Barrett, *Why Is That Art? Aesthetics and Criticism of Contemporary Art* (Oxford, 2008) (list price: \$34.95)
- Several on-line primary sources (Plato, Aristotle, Danto, Tolstoy, Hume)
- Articles on the Library's electronic reserve

PREREQUISITES: Completion of GE Foundation requirements and at least one Explorations case; junior standing

Philosophy 381i: Philosophy of Science

Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3:30-4:45pm

Professor: Cory Wright: cdwright@csulb.edu

PHIL 381i is an introduction to core issues in contemporary philosophy of science. These include scientific reasoning, the distinction between science and pseudoscience, the problems of induction and confirmation theory, conceptions of scientific explanation, and the nature of modeling. A range of philosophical positions will be considered, including naturalism, empiricism, and scientific realism, as well as a variety of figures, including Popper, Hempel, Kuhn, Salmon, and Psillos. The course will focus on a range of subdisciplines rather than any particular one. Students are strongly encouraged to bring to the discussion material from sciences in which they have background. Having completed the course, students will have an appreciation for the central issues in philosophy of science, will be better prepared to critically assess the reasoning in scientific texts, and will have developed their skills in writing and analysis and their abilities to articulate and evaluate arguments.

Philosophy 414/514: British Empiricism

Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2:00-3:15pm

Professor: Lawrence Nolan: lpnolan@csulb.edu

In this course we shall investigate the epistemological and metaphysical views of the three leading British Empiricists—Locke, Berkeley, and Hume. The empiricist tradition exerted perhaps *the* greatest influence on twentieth-century analytic philosophy, especially logical positivism and logical atomism. So in order to understand later philosophy, one must have some appreciation of the British Empiricists.

Our primary aim will be to examine how figures in this tradition applied the empiricist principle—that all our knowledge originates in experience—with ever-increasing rigor (and skepticism) to claims about the self, the material universe, and God. Other important doctrines studied will include the primary/secondary quality distinction, the notion of substance, the nature of the mind, personal identity, the empirical criterion of meaning, the theory of ideas, causation, the problem of induction, abstract ideas, real vs. nominal essences (and natural kinds), and skepticism.

The instructor will encourage open discussion of the philosophical issues.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

- a) Regular attendance and frequent participation
- b) Two take-home assignments
- c) Final Exam
- d) Extra-credit option: in-class debate

Graduate Students:

- a) Two take-home assignments (or term paper)
- b) Final Exam
- c) Critique sampling of undergraduate papers
- d) Extra-credit option: brief oral presentation

TEXTS: Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Berkeley's *A Treatise Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge*, Hume's *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* and *A Treatise of Human Nature*.

Philosophy 451i: Race, Ethnicity and Gender in American Law

Wednesdays from 7-9:45pm

Professor: Amanda Trefethen: atrefeth@csulb.edu

This course will examine the nature of basic constitutional notions, such as liberty, justice, and equality, against the backdrop of an American legal history too frequently blighted by systematic and pervasive human inequality. In short, this course will examine the social construction of race, ethnicity, and gender and consider when and to what extent this construction has served as a legal sanction for perpetuating an exclusive, rather than inclusive, interpretation of "justice." In the process we will ask (and find surprising answers to) such questions as: Does Race Exist? What is Justice? Can the Sexes be Equal?

GENERAL EDUCATION: This course can be "triple-counted," as (1) 3 units of the University Interdisciplinary (IC) requirement, (2) 3 units of the University Human Diversity (HD) requirement, and (3) 3 unit credits for the philosophy major OR 3 units of C.2.b. "Philosophy" for non-majors.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS: The University IC requirements include substantial writing. To comply, the course will require (1) a 1000-word essay on the assigned readings due at the end of the fifth week, (2) an in-class essay mid-term exam, (3) a take-home exam, (4) an in-class essay final exam, and (5) additional points for legal briefing and in-class participation.

TOPICS: We will begin by considering the nature of "justice," with special attention to issues of race, ethnicity, and gender. We will then consider how the law historically has identified and distinguished these groups, how these distinctions have been justified and implemented by the law, and how the law has developed to reject different treatment. We will read both philosophical texts and extensive court decisions. We will read philosophical texts by Catherine MacKinnon, John Stuart Mill, Naomi Zack, Thomas Nagel, Susan Okin, John Rawls, Alex de Tocqueville, Richard Wasserstrom, and others. To comply with the University HD requirements, we will consider court decisions which address African-Americans, Asian-Americans, Latinos, Native Americans, and women.

TEXT: Ethical Issues in the Courts: A Companion to Philosophical Ethics (Julie Van Camp, Wadsworth Publishing, 2000) We also will use a course supplement, available at the University Bookstore in late August, e-reserve materials, and public domain readings.

Philosophy 483/583 Philosophical Psychology

Mondays and Wednesdays from 11:00am-12:15pm

Professor: Wayne Wright: wwright2@csulb.edu

This course addresses philosophical perspectives on fundamental issues for the scientific study of the mind and behavior. The first part of the course examines differing views on the relationship between the mental and the physical and what a theory of the mind might look like. Once that background is in place, the course turns to topics such as the connectionism/classicism debate, content and theories of mental representation, perception and sensation, and reasoning and decision-making. A recurring concern throughout the course will be whether philosophers of psychology (a) have correctly identified issues requiring a foundational contribution from philosophers and (b) employ methods suitable for dealing with such issues. Students are expected to give careful thought to the topics we will cover, as merely memorizing facts and terminology will not be sufficient to succeed in the course.

Philosophy 489: Pre-Law Internship

TBA (3-6 units)

Professor: Julie Van Camp: jvancamp@csulb.edu

Volunteer internship with private organization or governmental agency with law-related focus. 150 hours of volunteer service is required for three academic units (an average of 10 hrs/week for 15 weeks).

PRE-REQUISITES: completion of 15 upper-division units for the Philosophy major. Senior standing strongly recommended.

You must plan to make all final arrangements for the internship with the Pre-Law Advisor before the start of classes. At the most popular sites, it can take several months to process your application. If you are interested in the internship program for Fall 2010, please contact me by e-mail your earliest opportunity. We have arranged volunteer internships at the Orange County Public Defender's Office and other public service organizations. We will jointly select one that is appropriate for your interests. For links to these programs, please see my web page: <http://www.csulb.edu/~jvancamp/courses.html#PHIL489>

You are also welcome to look at the internship opportunities at the CSULB Career Development Center (SS/AD 250). Additional opportunities are listed on the Web sites for both Orange County Government and Los Angeles County Government. If you find an opportunity (either paid or volunteer) which you believe would meet the goals for the Philosophy Pre-law Internship, please contact me ASAP, so we can discuss it. (E-mail is fastest.)

We will jointly identify philosophical issues in the workplace, especially ethical problems, which you will consider during the semester, and which will be the subject of your mid-term and final narrative report on the internship.

GRADING: Credit/No Credit

Julie Van Camp received her B.A. from Mount Holyoke College, her Ph.D. in philosophy from Temple University, and her J.D. from Georgetown University. She has been admitted to the District of Columbia Bar and the State Bar of California, and is the Philosophy Pre-Law Advisor.

Philosophy 496/596: Special Topic in Value & Evaluation: Reasons for Action

Tuesdays from 7:00-9:45pm

Professor: Jason Raibley: jraibley@csulb.edu

Prerequisite: 6 units of philosophy or consent of instructor

This will be an advanced course in ethical theory. In it, we will evaluate recent accounts of reasons for action, i.e., theories about what individuals have reason to do or what is rational. We will examine approaches according to which reasons for action are grounded in objective values, approaches according to which they are grounded in the agent's desires, and several hybrid views. We will pay special attention to how these accounts accommodate two noteworthy kinds of reasons: moral reasons and reasons of self-interest.

Readings will include sections from Derek Parfit's forthcoming book, *On What Matters*, Alan Goldman's *Reasons from Within*, and Mark Schroeder's *Slaves of the Passions*. We may also read parts of T. M. Scanlon's *What We Owe to Each Other* and Locke Lectures.

Requirements will include attendance and --- for undergraduates --- three take-home exams. Graduate students will be expected to write at least one argumentative research paper.

It is recommended that undergraduates take this course after having taking *PHIL 363: Ethical Theory*, but exceptions may be made in special circumstances.

Philosophy 610: Perception from Descartes to Reid (Proseminar)

Wednesdays from 7:00pm-9:45pm

Professor: Alexander Klein: aklein@csulb.edu

We think of modern science as having its roots in the new physics of the 17th century, particularly in the work of people like Galileo, Boyle, and Descartes. But these figures offered such a revolutionary picture of physical reality that their work immediately demanded new accounts of *perception* to accompany the new physics. After all, these figures had to have a story to tell about how a physical world such as they conceived it could be cognitively accessible to inquirers. This course will investigate key early modern theories of perception, especially in light of then-new advances in the physical sciences. We will focus on two central challenges that emerged for such figures. First, theorists had to offer accounts of how we can perceive *primary properties* directly, or at least reliably indirectly. Of special interest in this vein was the primary property of three-dimensional spatial extension. A good deal of early modern theorizing about perception arises in the context of accounts of spatial perception, so we will pay special attention to this topic. Second, the accounts of perception these figures offered had to fit—in some intelligible way—inside the very same world that physics describes. Thus we will find theories of perception getting drawn not just into epistemological questions, but into metaphysical questions as well. The main figures we will study include Descartes, Berkeley, Hume, and Reid.

This class will serve as the Philosophy Department's proseminar this year. As such, the course will be writing intensive. Assignments will be specially designed to help students learn how to conduct graduate-level research in philosophy.

Philosophy 680: Seminar in Epistemology

Mondays from 7:00pm-9:45pm

Professor: Charles Wallis: cwallis@csulb.edu

This seminar examines the actual and potential impact of naturalism, reliabilism, cognitive science, and other academic disciplines on the manner in which western philosophy frames and formulates theories of knowledge.