

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY – LONG BEACH
UPPER DIVISION COURSE DESCRIPTIONS
Spring 2012

PHIL 352i (Section # 01): Philosophy of Law
Professor Amanda Trefethen

TOPICS: This course will introduce students to the study of philosophical topics related to law and its adjudication. Some of the questions we will address include: What is law? Why, when, and how are we constrained by the law? Is there an essential relationship between law and morality? Can there be a "right answer" in legal disputes? And what does it mean to have "liberty"? Toward this end, we will analyze the more theoretical debates between legal positivism and natural law, as well as engage in a discussion of more specific legal and normative topics such as tort law, the insanity defense, free speech rights, paternalism, and the duty to rescue. Our readings will be drawn primarily from the historical development of the philosophy of law, including pieces by such philosophers as Thomas Aquinas, J.S. Mill, John Austin, H.L.A. Hart, Lon Fuller, John Rawls, and Ronald Dworkin.

REQUIREMENTS: 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. Requirements for the course include: significant class participation, weekly reader-response papers, a short paper (5 pages), an in-class mid-term examination, and a comprehensive, two-hour, in-class, final examination.

PHIL 352i (Section # 02): Philosophy of Law
Professor Michael Tiboris

The course covers topics in analytical and normative jurisprudence. Students will learn about historical and contemporary theories about the nature and authority of law, including debates about the role of race and gender in the law. The course considers philosophical debates about constitutional interpretation, equality under the law, the justification of punishment, penal proportionality and the death penalty, the nature of legal excuses, and tort liability. This course is writing-intensive.

PHIL 363: Ethical Theory
Professor Jason Raibley

This course introduces students to several of the main approaches to ethical theory through a close reading of classic texts. Our main authors will include Aristotle, Thomas Hobbes, Jeremy Bentham, David Hume, Immanuel Kant, and Friedrich Nietzsche. We will also briefly discuss religious approaches to ethics and several forms of ethical relativism.

Ethical theory attempts to provide an integrated understanding of such phenomena as value (good and bad), moral obligation (right and wrong), personal character (virtue and vice), justice, practical rationality, and personal well-being. An integrated treatment of these phenomena may help us lead our lives: we will at least know which characteristic(s) an action, outcome, or policy would need in order for it to be morally or rationally choiceworthy. Furthermore, such an account will hopefully guide us in ordering the basic institutions of our society and writing just laws.

Requirements: attendance, participation, three take-home essay examinations.

PHIL381i: Philosophy of Science
Professor Cory Wright

PHIL 381i is an introduction to core issues in contemporary philosophy of science. These include scientific reasoning, models and modeling, the distinction between science and pseudoscience, the problems of induction and confirmation theory, scientific laws, and conceptions of scientific explanation. 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 Laudén. 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 reasoning in scientific texts, and will have developed both their skills in writing and analysis and their abilities to articulate and evaluate arguments.

PHIL 403i: Medical Ethics
Professor Patrick Dieveney

In this course, we will be exploring a wide range of issues in contemporary biomedical ethics. Topics discussed in the course include ethical issues concerning the professional-patient relationship, human and animal research, physician-assisted suicide, abortion and embryonic stem-cell research, and social justice and health-care policy. The primary goal in the course is to introduce students to the various ethical issues and debates surrounding the bio-medical sciences, and to equip them with the analytical tools necessary to appreciate the various positions and arguments. In the process, students will also gain an understanding of some of the historically prominent theories in normative ethics, e.g., Virtue Ethics, Kantian Ethics, Utilitarianism. The course should prove beneficial to those for whom this may be their only philosophy course, and it will provide a good background for those who wish to pursue further studies in philosophy.

PHIL 414/514: British Empiricism
Professor Larry Nolan

In this course we shall investigate the epistemological and metaphysical views of the three leading British Empiricists—Locke, Berkeley, and Hume. Our primary aim will be to examine how these figures applied the empiricist principle—that all our knowledge originates in experience—with ever-increasing rigor (and skepticism) to claims about the self (or soul), 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, the empirical criterion of meaning, the theory of ideas, causation, the problem of induction, abstract ideas, real vs. nominal essences, and skepticism.

Open discussion of the philosophical issues will be strongly encouraged.

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

TEXTS:

Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (Penguin)
Berkeley's *A Treatise Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge* (OUP)
Berkeley's *Three Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous* (OUP)
Hume's *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* (Hackett Publishers)

PHIL 423/523: Kant
Professor Nellie Wieland

Have you read the rationalists and felt adrift? Have you read the empiricists and found life meaningless? Did you have difficulty putting the *Prolegomena* down once you'd picked it up? This class is for you! In just 15 long, difficult, and frustrating weeks we will read most of the *Critique of Pure Reason*. We will work hard to understand reason, the limits of knowledge, experience, space and time, appearances and reality. Ultimately, we will fail.

Nonetheless we will leave this course better prepared to discuss this extremely important episode in the history of philosophy, and be better prepared to take the richness of Kant's philosophy and apply it to many contemporary philosophical debates. Join us!

PHIL 425/525: Wittgenstein
Professor Brian Rogers

Ludwig Wittgenstein is one of the most influential philosophers of the twentieth century. This influence came in two phases. The "early" Wittgenstein's *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* contributed to the development of analytic philosophy with the picture theory of meaning and a novel account of logical truth. Later in his career, Wittgenstein came to view many of the dominant approaches to philosophy – including those inspired by his early work – to be fundamentally misguided. In his posthumously published *Philosophical Investigations*, the "later" Wittgenstein insisted that philosophical discussions of meaning must be informed by an examination of how language is used in human interactions. Contemporary philosophers in both the analytic and continental traditions have taken inspiration from this later work, and the implications of Wittgenstein's discussions of

rule-following, private language, and philosophical methodology continue to be vigorously debated today.

In both his early and late phases, Wittgenstein employed a unique writing style consisting of brief philosophical remarks. Because of this characteristic style, Wittgenstein's writings have been subjected to a large number of competing interpretations. The result is that even though thousands of secondary works have been published on his writings and many contemporary philosophers consider themselves to have been influenced by his philosophical thought, there is relatively little consensus on *what* Wittgenstein's contributions to philosophy are. This makes paying close attention to the wording of his writings particularly important in adjudicating between competing interpretations. As we work through Wittgenstein's two major works in this class, we'll evaluate the extent to which a number of competing interpretations are consistent with a close analysis of the text. The techniques of textual analysis you develop in this class will serve you well in a number of fields in which interpretive skills are valued, including law and the history of philosophy.

PHIL 483: Philosophical Psychology
Professor Charles Wallis

[No description provided.]

PHL 496/596(Special Topics): Marx & Foucault
Professor Max Rosenkrantz

The first part of this course (covering 2/3 of the semester) will be devoted to a careful reading of substantial selections from Volume I of *Capital*, supplemented with selections from the 1844 *Manuscripts* and *Grundrisse*. We will cover the central issues in Marxist theory: the origins of capitalism, the labor theory of value, class, exploitation, technology, economic crisis (i.e. recessions and depressions), "early Marx" vs. "late Marx", and the relation between Marx's thought and the theory and practice of orthodox Marxism.

In the second part of the course (covering 1/3 of the semester) we will turn to a consideration of Foucault's 'Nietzsche, Genealogy, History' and *Discipline and Punish*. We will also read works by some of Foucault's most important critics: Charles Taylor, Jürgen Habermas and Gilles Deleuze. Our guiding theme will be the extent to which Foucault develops a theory that is a viable alternative to Marx's.