Pre-Registration Guide
Classes in Philosophy & Religion

Summer 2011

PHL 100: Introduction to Philosophy
(UP Group I-A)

In this course, we will examine answers to some of the major philosophical questions. To answer such questions properly we must use reason and argument. Beginning with an introduction to logic and the methods used by philosophers, we will then examine problems such as the following: "Does God exist?", "How ought a human being live?", "What is the relationship between mind and body?", "What is the nature of the self?", "Is human freedom possible?"

22145598   MTWRF   1:00 pm-3:50 pm   Stecker, Robert   Moore 201
Class meets May 16\textsuperscript{th} – June 3\textsuperscript{rd}

PHL 118: Moral Problems
(UP Group I-A)

This course is the study of moral problems and proposed solutions associated with life and death, social justice, individual rights, deception and manipulation, families and children, prejudice, oppression, and sex. Specific topics may include assisted suicide and euthanasia, abortion, punishment and the death penalty, gun control, pornography and censorship, prayer in public schools, helping imperiled persons, sexual ethics, and affirmative action, among others.

22145599   MTWRF   9:00 am-11:50 am   Smith, Joshua   Dow 170
Class meets June 6\textsuperscript{th} – June 23\textsuperscript{rd}

PHL 140: Introduction to Logic
(UP Group II-B)

The aim of this course is to introduce the student to the techniques, methods, and consequences of modern symbolic logic. A desired by-product is to make you a better thinker as well. The course is divided into three main parts: First, we devote some attention to critical thinking and argument analysis in ordinary language. We will learn to “reconstruct” arguments, to separate the form or “logic” of an argument from its content, and to identify and avoid several common defects of reasoning called “informal fallacies.” Second, and this constitutes the bulk of the course, we develop a deductive formal system which is intended to highlight the structure and rationale of correct argument, and to offer an effective decision procedure for determining whether any finite argument is valid. Using this system, we spell out the precise nature of deductive inference and attempt to elucidate such formal concepts as consistency, validity, logical equivalence, logical truth, and logical entailment. Finally, we devote some attention to various forms of non-deductive inference--those of the sort most commonly found in the empirical sciences. Also discussed are philosophical problems of induction and confirmation, and inference to the best explanation.

22145600   MTWRF   1:00 pm-3:50 pm   Meixner, John   ET 226
Class meets May 16\textsuperscript{th}-June 3\textsuperscript{rd}
PHL 230: Philosophy of Religion  
(UP Group I-A)

The aim of this course is to introduce students to some basic problems in the philosophy of religion. We shall deal with topics such as the following: What is the nature of religious experience? Are fundamental religious doctrines based merely on faith, or can they be supported by reason? Is life after death possible? Is God's omnipotence compatible with human free will? We shall read both contemporary and historical writings on these topics.

This course will focus particularly on the "problem of evil" and we will read literary as well as philosophical texts. Writers to be studied include William James, Voltaire, St. Thomas Aquinas, Dostoevsky, and Pascal.

22162297  MTWRF  9:00 am-11:50 am  Wright, John  Pearce 307
Class meets May 16th-June 3rd

REL 302: Witchcraft, Magic and Occult

This course explores the history, anthropology and theory of witchcraft and demonology. We examine how the witch is “constructed” as a symbol of evil, and how this symbolic evil being comes to be associated, in witch-trials, with real, ordinary, women (and some men). Through the interpretation of some of the foundational texts of European demonology, and the reading of actual trial transcripts, we engage in important controversies of contemporary history, religious studies, and feminist studies: How does one study the history of imagined or impossible events-such as riding on broomsticks? What is the relation of witchcraft to Christianity? Is it the remnant of a pre-Christian pagan cult, or an expression of popular Christianity? Is witch-hunting woman-hunting? Were most witches women, and what does this tell us about witch-hunting societies? The course ends with discussion of the anthropological study of witchcraft in small-scale non-Christian societies and an examination of the use of the history of witchcraft by contemporary New Religious Movements such as Wicca and Neo-Paganism.

22145671  MTWRF  10:00 am-11:50 am  Ostling, Michael  Dow 109
Class meets May 16th-June 23rd

REL 320: Buddhist Tradition  
(UP Group IV-B)

Siddhartha Gautama is called the Buddha (“The One Who Woke Up”) because he claimed to have awakened to the realities of the human condition and to have discovered a way to escape the nightmare of suffering. His teachings analyze how and why we suffer and present a “path” leading to perfect peace, nirvana. We will explore how monks and ordinary Buddhists from South Asia, Tibet, and Japan follow Buddha’s path in their daily lives by meditating, chanting, practicing non-violence, cultivating compassion, etc. Video presentations will be a window into the real lives of Buddhists teaching and practicing their religion.

22145672  MTWRF  9:00 am-11:50 am  Nichols, Brian  Moore 112
Class meets May 16th-June 3rd