

SUNY Buffalo State Philosophy Course Offerings

FALL 2019

PHI 101: Introduction to Philosophy **NEW FRESHMAN ONLY**
CRN 2144 1:40pm – 2:55pm TR

Dr. Kimberly Blessing

This course is specifically designed for first-year freshmen who are looking for an *intellectually rigorous and challenging course*. This course will introduce students to some of the major figures and issues in Western Philosophy. Some of the Big Questions we'll consider include: What is the point of education?; Are things always as they seem?; Does God exist?; Am I free?; Do I have a moral obligation to help children who are dying of starvation?; What is happiness?; Am I living a good life?; Who am I and what do I value?; What is the meaning of life?; What is the nature of friendship?; Etc. Emphasis will be placed upon reading philosophical texts and recognizing and evaluating arguments. Students will also develop and enhance critical thinking skills and apply them in reading and discussing philosophical texts. Students who successfully complete this course should develop a deeper understanding of yourself, and a heightened sense of wonder about the world in which we live. Maybe even a love of wisdom. Students who do well in this course enjoy reading and writing, and they relish being challenged intellectually; they are typically students who are placed into CWP 101 in their first semester.

Required Course Texts: Cicero, *How To Be a Friend* (Princeton); Frankfurt, *On Bullshit* (Oxford); Plato, *Five Dialogues* (Grube, trans.; Hackett); Voltaire, *Candide* (Wooton, trans., Hackett); Warburton, *A Little History of Philosophy* (Yale University Press).

PHI 101: Introduction to Philosophy
CRN 3954 9:00am-9:50am MWF
CRN 3955 1:00pm-1:50pm MWF

Dr. Leigh Duffy

This course will take a thematic approach to some basic philosophical topics including the nature of knowledge, God/religion, the nature of mind, and morality. This course will expose students to basic philosophical issues and develop their ability to think critically about such issues. This exposure will probably challenge some basic beliefs, so an open mind and a willingness to consider other beliefs are necessary.

Required Course Text *Philosophy: Quest for Truth (10th Edition)*. By Pojman and Vaughn, Oxford University Press

PHI 102: Introduction to Ethics
CRN 1923 10:50am – 12:05pm TR

Dr. John Draeger

This course explores a variety of social and moral questions. Should the public good outweigh private concerns? Do we have a duty to help those in need or is it enough that we leave them alone? Should the government sanction abortion, euthanasia, stem cell research, same sex marriage or capital punishment? This course will not resolve any of these important questions. However, in considering them, we will gain a better understanding of ourselves and the world around us.

Required Course Text: No Textbook required

PHI 102: Introduction to Ethics
CRN 3140 1:00pm – 1:50pm MWF

Dr. Julian Cole

This course explores a number of contemporary social and moral questions. For example, should students and teachers be allowed to carry guns on campus? Does fake news present a threat to our democracy? Should the US military grant religious exemptions to those whose faiths demand that their appearance be different from that demanded of other military personnel? Do we have a responsibility to stop children from sexting? Students will be provided with tools to help them answer these and other social and moral questions.

No Textbook Required

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PHI 103: Intro to Logic

CRN 3022 11:00 am - 11:50 am MWF

Dr. Julian Cole

Every day we are bombarded with information that attempts to persuade us to act in various ways. This information includes material from newspapers and magazines, political broadcasts, pamphlets on various causes, television ads, details of investment opportunities, and many other sources. The primary aim of this course is to provide students with some of the intellectual tools that are available for evaluating this information. Specifically, we shall be considering a number of common fallacies to which arguments in these media often fall prey. A secondary aim of this course is to aid students in clearly understanding, representing, evaluating, and writing arguments, particularly arguments found in everyday contexts.

Required Course Text: *No Textbook Required*

PHI 204: Philosophy of Religion

CRN: 4062 3:00pm – 5:40pm W

Dr. Kimberly Blessing

Philosophy of religion is the branch of philosophy that applies philosophical reasoning and methodology to matters concerning God and religion. This course will focus attention on God and religion as presented in the Judeo-Christian tradition, mainly Christianity. We shall read selections from philosophers including: Anselm, Aquinas, Pascal, Voltaire, Hume, Kierkegaard, Bertrand Russell, etc. We shall touch upon various topics and issues in philosophy of religion including, traditional proofs of God's existence and critiques of these proofs; the problem of evil and various responses to this problem; alternatives to the traditional proofs; critiques of religion, etc. This is a WEB-ENHANCED COURSE: class requires access to web-based material. Course pre-requisite: CWP 102 the successful completion of at least one course in philosophy.

Required Course Texts: Hume, David, *Dialogues on Natural Religion* (Hackett Publishers); Kreeft, Peter. *Christianity for Modern Pagans* (Ignatius Press); Robinson, T. *God* (Hackett); Voltaire. *Candide* (Wotton, trans.; Hackett Publishers).

PHI 310: History of Ethics

CRN 1996 6:00pm – 8:40pm M

Dr. John Abbarno

Historical study of the writings of great Western philosophers as they examine ethical questions about self-interest, freedom, duty, and happiness in regard to the moral life. This course will include assignments that demonstrate the impact of these theories on contemporary moral problems. Includes Plato, Aristotle, Kant, Mill, and Hume.

PHI 317: Ancient Philosophy

CRN 2546 10:00am – 10:50am MWF

Dr. Leigh Duffy

This course traces the emergence of ideas that will form the foundation of a great deal of subsequent intellectual history. Not only is Ancient philosophy fascinating in its own right, but it is also of particular importance for us, as it is the basis for much of later science, philosophy, psychology, and society. We will examine the views of the Ancients, largely Plato and Aristotle but others as well, on matters such as knowledge, the nature of reality, the nature of humanity, the universe, happiness, goodness, and the proper way for society to function. Studying the Ancients should also allow us to gain some insight into our own, modern world and to better understand what it means to be human and to live an intelligent and worthwhile human life.

Pre-requisite: Upper-division status or one or more course in philosophy. Required Course Text:

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PHI 324: Zen Buddhism

CRN 4063 12:00pm – 12:50pm

MWF

Dr. Leigh Duffy

Zen is a paradoxical method by which suffering of existence is transformed into everyday enlightenment. This class examines the contemporary practices of Zen and its historical origins in Buddha's "complete and unexcelled" enlightenment and in Lao-Tzu's living in harmony with the Tao. We will also study the foundations of this practice in the noble truths of Buddhism. Required texts: *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance* by Robert M Pirsig; *Siddhartha* by Herman Hesse; *Tao Te Ching* by Lao-Tzu. All other reading assignments posted online

PHI 351: Ethics Bowl

CRN 4064 3:00pm – 5:40pm

MW

Dr. Julian Cole

This course will prepare students for a competition in which they are judged on their ability to deploy intricate ethical reasoning in addressing case studies from practical and professional ethics. Students will develop well-informed opinions about ethically complex, everyday scenarios, orally present these opinions and supporting arguments, and provide critical oral responses to the opinions and arguments of other students and judges.

Required Text: James Rachels' *The Elements of Moral Philosophy* (any edition), McGraw Hill. ISBN: 0-07-3122547-4.

REL 105: Introduction to Christian Thought

CRN 2565 10:50am – 12:05pm

TR

Joseph Marren

This course looks at the formation of early Christian thought (patristics) and intersections with scholasticism and its Thomist critics. Parallels are drawn between the theoretical base and modern interpretations in areas such as literature, ethics, civil religion, etc., in the Western World.

REL 321: World Religions

CRN 2708 8:00am-8:50am

MWF

Dr. Elizabeth Lenegan

CRN 1551 4:30pm – 7:15pm

R

This course is designed to introduce the student to the major religions of the world- Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, Shinto, Judaism, Christianity and Islam. The values, rituals, doctrines and practices of these traditions will be explored.

Required Course Text: *Molloy, Experiencing the World Religions (7th Edition)*