

SUNY Buffalo State Philosophy Course Offerings

SPRING 2021

ALL PHILOSOPHY COURSES FOR THE SPRING 2021 SEMESTER WILL BE DELIVERED ONLINE AND SYNCHRONOUSLY. ALL COURSE ACTIVITY COMPLETED ONLINE, REQUIRES SOME OR ALL SCHEDULED INTERACTIVE ONLINE SESSIONS IN WHICH DIRECT INSTRUCTIONS OCCURS IN REAL TIME, WITHOUT DELAY. USE OF AN INTERNET CONNECTED COMPUTER IS REQUIRED.

PHI 101: Introduction to Philosophy

Dr. Kimberly Blessing

CRN 3977 1:40pm – 2:55pm TR **Freshman Only**
CRN 1231 3:05pm – 4:20pm TR

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. We shall consider various topics in metaphysics (the study of reality), epistemology (the study of knowledge), and ethics (the study of morality). Some of the Big Questions we'll consider include: What is the point of education?; Are things always as they seem?; What is real and what is not?; Does God exist?; Am I free or ruled by fate?; Is there an afterlife?; Do I have a moral obligation to help strangers, such as children in Africa 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: Frankfurt, *On Bullshit* (Oxford); Plato, *Five Dialogues* (Grube, trans.; Hackett); Voltaire, *Candide* (Wooton, trans., Hackett); Warburton, *A Little History of Philosophy* (Yale University Press, 2011).

PHI 102: Introduction to Ethics

Dr. John Torrey

CRN 2616 9:25am – 10:40am TR
CRN 3978 10:50am – 12:05pm TR

This course is designed to introduce students to different philosophical approaches to value theory and social and political philosophy. The primary question driving this course is, "How should we live together?" This notes, in particular, questions of justice, freedom, morality, and human nature through the work of various thinkers, including Plato, Hobbes, Locke, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Patricia Hill Collins. In addition, the course will challenge students to be proactive in shaping and forming their own worldview. In order to achieve these aims, students will learn the skills to create and evaluate arguments.

Required Course Text: *No Textbook Required*

PHI 102: Introduction to Ethics

Dr. John Abbarno

CRN 4140 6:00pm – 8:40pm M

Various views of how we ought to live and how society should be organized, considered in the context of discussions about the "good" life and "good" society. Several ethical issues shall be presented which underscore the breadth of meaning one can offer for the "good society."

Required Course Text: *Sommers & Sommers, Vice and Virtue in Everyday Life (VV) Rachels, James, Elements of Moral Philosophy (EMP)*

Recommended: Read the current new magazines such as *Time*

SUNY Buffalo State Philosophy Course Offerings SPRING 2021

PHI 110: Meaning of Life

Dr. Leigh Duffy

CRN 2628 10:00am – 10:50am MWF
CRN 2629 12:00pm – 12:50pm MWF
CRN 3980 1:00pm – 1:50pm MWF

In this course, we examine the ways different thinkers throughout history have approached the question of the meaning of life. We consider philosophers who argue for meaning based on God, religion, or spirituality; those who claim that meaning can be found without religion in a variety of different ways, such as in purpose or happiness; and even some who argue that life is in fact meaningless. We discuss these different approaches and try to use the best views to answer related, applied questions, such as “how can I best live my life?”, “who would I want to be my model for living a meaningful life”, “how do I consider others when making decisions about how to live a good life?”, “is there a difference between a meaningful life, a happy life, a good life, and a purposeful life?”.

Students will be required to watch some films on their own in order to be able to discuss how the theories get applied to characters in the film.

Required Text: *The Meaning of Life: A Reader* ed. E.D. Klemke and Steven M. Cahn

PHI 113: Environmental Ethics

Dr. Jason Grinnell

CRN 3981 12:00pm – 12:50pm MWF

DESCRIPTION & TEXTS TBA

PHI 300: NON WEST CIV, MIND, MED, & PHIL

Dr. Leigh Duffy

CRN 2528 9:00 am – 9:50am MWF **INSTRUCTOR PERMISSION REQUIRED**

This course investigates the Eastern philosophical roots of mindfulness and meditation practices found specifically in Zen Buddhism and yoga. We will discuss the way these Eastern Philosophical traditions answer important questions about the nature of the universe, about humanity, about the nature of the mind, about personal identity, and about how to live a good life. We will look at the ways in which mindfulness and meditation are related to those answers and the methods of investigation and how they have changed. We will compare and contrast the alternative theories and analyze their strengths and weaknesses. We will also practice mindfulness and meditation exercises as a class. The personal practice will allow us to develop a deeper understanding of the philosophy and the tools to find more peace and contentment in life.

Required Course Text: TBA

PHI 304: Philosophy of Law

Dr. John Draeger

CRN 2807 1:00pm – 1:50pm MWF

This course will explore a variety of questions. Why should we obey the law? Why should laws have authority over us? How are law and morality related? How are law and economics related? What is the difference between civil and criminal law? What is the relationship between legislators and the courts? This course will not resolve any of these important questions. However, in considering them, we should have a better understanding of the law as a complex social institution that helps govern our lives.

Required Course Text: TBA

SUNY Buffalo State Philosophy Course Offerings SPRING 2021

PHI 308: Love and Sex

CRN 2808 2:00pm – 2:50pm

MWF

Dr. John Draeger

This course explores the nature of intimate interpersonal relationships with friends, family, and romantic partners. For example, what is the difference between a friend and a lover? Is it the sex or is it an alternative form of love? In the process of considering how to characterize intimate relationships, we will examine a variety of related ideas, including love, trust, sex, and compassion

Required Course Text: TBA

PHI 360: Africana Philosophy

CRN 3343 3:00pm – 5:40pm

W

Dr. John Torrey

Philosophical thought across the African diaspora. Both historic and contemporary responses to issues specific to the black experience across the globe, such as understanding freedom, rationality, and humanity from the position of the formerly enslaved and/or colonized, and analysis regarding the intersections of race, gender, and white supremacy.

Required Course Text: TBA

SUNY Buffalo State Philosophy Course Offerings

SPRING 2021

Religious Studies

REL 104: Introduction to Religious Studies

CRN 2813 8:00am – 9:15am TR

Dr. Elizabeth Lenegan

This is a general introduction to religious studies. We will examine what is important in religions generally, ethics, basic questions, philosophy, beliefs about good and evil, the afterlife, and why they work as they do. The emphasis is on religions in general rather than analyzing a specific religion

REL 303: Women in Global Religions: Women in Islam

CRN 4264 1:40pm – 2:55pm TR

Susan C. Randaccio

This course examines the history of women and gender in Islam from Muhammad to contemporary times. We will begin by building an understanding of Abrahamic faith traditions that precede the Revelations to Muhammad. We will study the Revelations received by Muhammad, the birth of Islam, and the traditions of the early Muslim community. We will then look at the traditions as well as how women practice and experience Islam and Muslim culture in the Golden Age of Islam through the Ottoman period, looking at religious, social, and legal trends. The second half of the course will focus on the impact of the rise of the West and appraise the impact of colonialism, modernist reform, nationalism, and Western orientalist perceptions, looking at the examples of Egypt, secular Turkey, and Saudi Arabia in the 19th and 20th century as case studies. Lastly, we will look at contemporary experiences of faith for Muslim women worldwide, including in Western migrant communities.

REL 321: World Religions

CRN 1325 9:25am – 10:40am TR

Dr. Elizabeth Lenegan

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)*

REL 360: Western Monotheisms

CRN 4017 1:40pm – 2:55pm TR

Joseph Marren

This course is an examination of the belief systems of the three major Abrahamic faiths (Judaism, Christianity and Islam). It will provide a brief overview of the core beliefs and theological challenges as they evolved in contact with each other. Parallels with Hellenistic thought will also be examined as the basis for ontotheology. Ideas and efforts toward ecumenism will be explored.