

# Spring 2001 Undergraduate Courses

## LIBERAL STUDIES (GORDON RULE) COURSES:

### **Introduction to Philosophy**

MWF 11:15-12:05, 143 BEL

PHI 2010-01

Instructor: Mr. Sean Millard

Ref: 03001

This course is designed to provide students with an introduction to some of the fundamental questions of philosophy. We will begin with a brief introduction to some basic philosophical concepts, and to understanding the nature of arguments. The remainder of the course will be devoted to a thorough examination of the following questions: What makes an action morally right or wrong? What can I know? What is a person? Does God exist?

### **Introduction to Philosophy**

TR 2:00-3:15, 201 DIF

PHI 2010-02

Instructor: Mr. Adam Sipos

Ref: 05120

Is there a world that is external to our minds? If so, how can we know anything about it? How should we live? Do we have absolute duties to ourselves and to others or are our actions to be appraised solely with respect to their consequences? Does God exist? Are minds distinct from bodies? If so, what is the relationship between them? These are just a few of the questions that have exercised the greatest minds of the Western philosophical tradition. We will engage some of these minds by taking a close look at the answers they have given to these, and related, questions. After developing some basic analytical skills, we will put them to use in assessing the various answers and the arguments offered for them.

### **Reasoning & Critical Thinking**

MWF 1:25-2:15, 103 DHA

PHI 2100-01

Instructor: Mr. Jonathan Caro

Ref: 03002

We are bombarded every day with the claims of activists, advertisers, politicians, and others. What reasons do they give for their claims? Do these claims follow from their reasons? In this class, we will develop and apply the general (and practical!) skills for answering these questions, by taking up the study of arguments. We will learn the criteria for the evaluation of sound arguments, talk about common fallacies, and along the way learn to become better reasoners ourselves.

### **Reasoning & Critical Thinking**

TR 9:30-10:45, 006 LSB

PHI 2100-02

Instructor: Mr. Christopher Pynes

Ref: 05124

What are the criteria for determining if a given argument is a *good* argument? Is everything an author provides relevant? Does the argument rely on some unstated but assumed reason? In this course, we will answer these questions. The course will begin with an investigation of some general features of natural language and how it is used. Then we will develop the essential skills for reconstructing, evaluating, and understanding many kinds of arguments found in natural language (including, for example, arguments about abortion and God's existence). The skills students will learn in this class will prove useful in any field where clearheaded thinking is a virtue. In addition, the skills acquired in this class will be particularly useful for those hoping for successful careers in law or business, or for higher scores on the LSAT or GRE.

**Introduction to Political Philosophy**Instructor: Dr. Russell SwansonTR 5:15-6:30, 103 DHA  
(MULTICULT. "X")PHM 2300-01  
Ref: 03028

This class will explore some of the most influential theories in the history of political philosophy. We will begin with the classic arguments for various kinds of political governments, which include discussions of human nature, the political state, economics, political authority, and punishment. We will then examine contemporary approaches to problems such as civil disobedience, rights, and revolution.

**Ethical Issues and Life Choices**Instructor: Mr. G. T. Smith

TR 3:35-4:50, 103 DHA

PHI 2630-01  
Ref: 03003

Our everyday life choices and views on contemporary ethical issues often presuppose more fundamental assumptions about right and wrong, good and evil. Discussion of controversial topics brings these fundamental assumptions to light for critical evaluation. In our readings and class discussions, we will focus on the personal and social aspects of five topics: sexual morality, sexism and racism, abortion, capital punishment, and environmental ethics. Our goal will be not to resolve these difficult issues, but to reason better by critically reflecting on our own as well as others' reasoning.

**Ethical Issues and Life Choices**Instructor: Mr. Stephen Morris

MWF 1:25-2:15, 218 HTL

PHI 2630-02  
Ref: 07250

Questions about ethics are central to many important issues facing our society today. Discussions about abortion, euthanasia, capital punishment, and our responsibility to those living in poverty turn on what we take the boundaries of our moral obligations to be. We will begin our attempt to respond to such issues by surveying some of the predominant ethical theories. The remainder of the course will be spent examining some responses that have been addressed to these controversial topics. During the course of the semester, we will attempt to construct some original responses of our own.

**Aristotle to Augustine**Instructor: Prof. Alfred Mele

MW 2:30-3:45, 002 LSB

PHH 3140-01  
Ref: 02996

An introduction to the philosophy of Aristotle and Augustine. The comprehensive survey of Aristotle will include his moral philosophy, metaphysics, epistemology, and philosophy of mind. The more concentrated survey of Augustine will focus on connections among his moral philosophy, his theology, and his position on free will.