

Fall 2005 Graduate Courses

PHH 5405-01 **Central Topics in Early Modern Philosophy** **Course ref. # 07459**
(H)* **(Prof. John Roberts)** **Tuesday 2:00-5:00 PM, 181 DOD**

This seminar will cover topics in metaphysics and epistemology central to 17th and 18th century Continental and British philosophy. Readings will be drawn from Descartes, Malebranche, Leibniz, Bayle, Locke, Berkeley, Hume, and Reid, as well as from contemporary secondary sources.

PHH 5609-01 **Contemporary Political Philosophy: Rawls** **Course ref. # 07461**
(V)* **(Prof. Victoria Costa)** **Thursday 2:00-5:00 PM, 181 DOD**

This course will focus on the evolution of John Rawls' theory of social justice. This theory has made a substantial contribution to the understanding of what the justice of a scheme of social institutions might consist in, as something that can be measured in terms of two principles of justice. Although Rawls' approach has received innumerable criticisms, it has, nevertheless, been one of basic sources of the theoretical debate about social justice for the last three decades. During this course we will examine the early version of the theory of justice as fairness, as presented in *A Theory of Justice* (1971), and we will discuss some of the main criticisms that Rawls has received. Finally, we will analyze the changes in the justification of the principles of justice introduced by Rawls to address his critics in his later writings, in particular in *Political Liberalism* (1993).

PHM 6205-01 **Philosophy of Gender and Class** **Course ref. # 03311**
(V)* **(Prof. Maria Morales)** **Wednesday 2:30-5:30 PM, 181 DOD**

Gender and race theory have become established areas of philosophical inquiry. In this course we will investigate some recent work on the social construction of gender and race from a philosophical perspective. Our goal will be twofold. First, we will analyze the notion of social construction, including the question whether and how social constructivism in race and gender theory differs from other forms of constructivism in social philosophy. We will examine different theoretical accounts of the concepts of gender and race and ask whether (and why) some might be sounder than others and which analytical tools are most useful in the examination of gender and race as social and political phenomena. Finally, we will be asking under what conditions "social kinds" might be oppressive. The second goal of the course is to explore questions of identity as they relate to debates about the "reality" of gender and race, notably how the constructs of gender and race affect the formation of a sense of self. Other critical questions we will ask are whether we should give up gender and racial identification and whether the constructs of gender and race have any use in nonsexist and nonracist theory.

PHI 6325-01 **Mind and Action** **Course ref. # 07464**
(M&E)* **(Prof. Al Mele)** **Monday 2:30-5:30 PM, 181 DOD**

This seminar will explore central issues in the philosophy of action that fall squarely into the philosophy of mind: for example, the role of mental states in the production of actions and the place of consciousness in human agency.

This is an interdisciplinary course, with faculty (Michael Ruse, Philosophy; Joe Travis, Biology; John Kelsay, Religion) and students from philosophy, biology, and religion. We shall be looking at some of the major issues in the life sciences, particularly evolution, but as interest and time allow such areas as molecular biology, technology (for instance, genetically modified foods), and ecology, seeing what issues are raised –for instance about reduction, about falsifiability, about implications for humankind and so forth. The aim throughout is to see what perspectives the three different disciplines throw on problems –for instance, is evolution just a theory to the scientist, and yet to the philosopher and the scholar of religion something much more interesting/threatening than other scientific theories, and if so why? What are the philosophical and theological implications of cloning, as opposed to the biological challenges? Is ecology a matter for anyone other than the scientist and why? The course will be part lecture, and part seminar. Students will be expected to give presentations, working with students from other disciplines. There will be a number of outside speakers.

*Fulfills history (H), value theory (V), or metaphysics and epistemology (M&E) distribution requirement for Philosophy graduate students.