

PHILOSOPHY

UPPER DIVISION COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

SPRING 2019

PHIL 314: HISTORY OF MODERN PHILOSOPHY (ETHICS/POLITICS) — Prof. Chris Naticchia
MWF 12:00 – 1:10 p.m.
cnaticch@csusb.edu (909) 537-5489

In this course, we will examine three texts borne from (or catalysts for) revolutionary times: Thomas Hobbes's Leviathan, published in 1651, and largely composed during the English Civil War of 1642-1651; John Locke's Second Treatise of Government, published in 1689, and claimed by him to justify the overthrow of James II during the Glorious Revolution of 1688; and Jean Jacques Rousseau's The Social Contract, published in 1762, and used by many French radicals as the intellectual basis for their demands, culminating in the French revolution of 1789. All present famous social contract views, however different their defenses and conclusions.

The English Civil War pitted the Royalists, defenders of Charles I, and later, Charles II, against the Parliamentarians. The disorder and destruction greatly disturbed Hobbes. Charles I was executed; Charles II exiled. Against this, Hobbes penned Leviathan, in which he defended absolute sovereignty, and implicitly, the Royalists.

Locke by contrast was a revolutionary who supported the overthrow of James II and was involved in the Rye House Plot, a plan to assassinate Charles II in 1683, after Charles II was restored to the throne in 1660. Forced into exile, Locke never acknowledged his authorship while alive. Locke opposed absolute sovereignty, defended limited government, inalienable rights, and seemed to imply the legitimacy of regicide. In the opinion of some scholars, his views influenced the American revolutionaries.

While Rousseau died before the beginning of the French Revolution in 1789, his The Social Contract inspired many of the radical Jacobin (and others) who sought to tame the influence of the Catholic Church, provide subsistence for their citizens, and rid themselves of King Louis XVI. "Man was born free and he is everywhere in chains," he wrote; revolutionaries took his work and used it to free themselves from them.

In this course, we will examine their arguments, piecing them together, considering alternative interpretations, modifying them when warranted, and reaching an all-things-considered judgment about which of these famous philosophers from the social contract tradition offers the most illuminating and plausible account of social and political justice.

This course counts toward the Law and Philosophy minor, and toward the minor in Philosophy, Policy, and Economics.

PHIL 384: PHILOSOPHY OF MIND — Prof. Thomas Gardner
MWF 9:20 – 10:30 a.m.
gardner@csusb.edu (909) 537-7430

The general aim of this course is to introduce you to some of the central issues in contemporary analytic philosophy of mind. We will begin with a survey of the general features of the mind. Then we will explore some puzzles that arise from our most basic intuitions about the nature of these features of the mind. Finally, we will investigate further difficulties that arise from attempts to account for these features of the mind within our scientific understanding of the world.

Along the way, we will encounter a brilliant scientist who is forced to work from inside a black and white room, an unusual place called Twin Earth, the terrifying Swamp man, an omniscient Martian physicist, the legendary super-super Spartans, and (of course) zombies.

PHIL 387: PHILOSOPHY OF LANGUAGE — Prof. Matthew Davidson

TR 12:00 - 1:50 p.m.

mld@csusb.edu (909) 537-7727

In this class we will discuss our ability to refer to objects in the world by using language. We will examine the nature of the logical form of definite descriptions, the referential status of names, the connection between meaning and truth conditions, and the distinction between semantics and pragmatics.

PHIL 410: ADVANCED ISSUES IN HISTORY (HUME) — Prof. William Vanderburgh

TR 4:00 - 5:50 p.m.

wvanderburgh@csusb.edu (909) 537-3998

Completing the B.A. in Philosophy requires you to take one 400-level class, and additional 400-level courses count towards the 24 units of elective Philosophy courses you need in order to graduate.

This “special topics” course is an opportunity to study the work of a single philosopher in depth for a whole quarter. In spring 2019, the course will focus on David Hume (1711-1776), a Scotsman who is widely thought to be the most important figure in the history of philosophy who wrote originally in English. Hume’s impact and influence on epistemology, metaphysics, philosophy of science, philosophy of religion, ethics, political theory, history, cognitive psychology, and a range of other subjects can hardly be overstated. Even today, many of these fields begin from problems or theories found in Hume. In addition, his work is accessible, interesting, and fun to read.

The majority of the course will involve studying Hume’s *Treatise of Human Nature*, especially the parts related to epistemology and metaphysics. There will also be a unit on Hume’s philosophy of religion, and a unit on Hume’s ethics. Other topics may be introduced based on student interest, too. And if everything goes according to plan, the professor’s book on Hume will be published early in the quarter and you will have the opportunity to be among the first people in the world to read it.

Because this is an advanced course, students will be expected to make significant contributions to the discussion. This will include each student briefly presenting the main topic of the week at least once (depending on the number of students in the class). In some ways the course will operate like the sort of seminar you might take in a graduate program in Philosophy, which makes it good preparation for those planning to go on to graduate study, and a way to have a graduate-school-like experience for those who are not planning to go beyond the B.A.

The official prerequisites for the course are two 300-level Philosophy classes, but the instructor will be flexible in granting permission to enroll to students who are eager to take the class and willing to work hard even though they have not yet taken two 300-level classes. Having completed PHIL 311 (Ancient Philosophy) and 313 (Early Modern Knowledge and Reality) will be an advantage but it is not required.