

PHILOSOPHY

UPPER DIVISION COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

FALL 2019

(Revised 5/22/19)

PHIL 311: ANCIENT PHILOSOPHY — Prof. Jennifer Liderth

TR 2:00 – 3:50 pm

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The Ancient Greeks may be long dead but in many ways, their lives and ideas are not so distant from us. They ate food and took naps, loved and hated and got bored. And, also like us, they tried to make sense of this crazy world. In this course, we survey some of the ways in which these Ancient thinkers tried to solve the mysteries of life. We'll use their theories of the emotions as a doorway into ideas about the nature of reality, the nature of humanity, and views about the good life.

PHIL 361B: POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY — Prof. Chris Naticchia

MWF 10:40 – 11:50 am

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This course examines three major works in contemporary political philosophy:

- *On Liberty*, John Stuart Mill's classic defense of liberal democracy, antipaternalism, and individual freedom.
- *A Theory of Justice*, John Rawls's celebrated argument for egalitarian liberalism, the welfare state, and economic justice.
- *Anarchy State and Utopia*, Robert Nozick's clever and cocky libertarian vision of liberalism and the minimal state.

Students who take this course will quickly see these political visions in contemporary political discourse. In fact, they're the main contenders:

- *Moderate Democrats and Fiscal Conservatives* -- those who claim (like Mill) that individual rights and freedoms, including economic rights and freedoms, ought to be arranged so as to maximize social well-being.
- *Liberal Democrats, Bernie Sanders, etc.* -- those who claim (like Rawls) that they should instead be arranged so as to provide equal opportunity to all regardless of income class, and in particular to promote the well-being of the least advantaged citizens.

(Continued on Reverse)

- *Libertarians, Ron Paul, Small Government Conservatives* -- those who (like Nozick) oppose the welfare state, and insist that governments should only protect citizens against force and fraud and enforce contracts.

In this course, we will evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of each view – examining socialist criticisms as well -- and try to come up with a reasoned, all-things-considered judgment as to which one is best. Students who take this course will become better-informed citizens capable of critically assessing policies in terms of political and economic justice.

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

PHIL 380: METAPHYSICS — Prof. Matthew Davidson

TR 12:00 - 1:50 pm

mld@csusb.edu (909) 537-7277

This course will focus on central issues in metaphysics, including: the nature of time, the nature of free will, the nature of composition, the nature of human persons, and the nature of material objects.

Textbooks:

Metaphysics: The Big Questions (ed. van Inwagen and Zimmerman).

Contemporary Debates in Metaphysics (ed. Sider, Hawthorne, and Zimmerman).

PHIL 381: PHILOSOPHY OF LOGIC — Prof. John Mumma

MW 4:00 - 5:50 pm

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The course examines the philosophical significance of sentential and predicate logic (the logics taught in Phil 200 and Phil 300). These are formal logics: they consist of precisely defined formal objects which relate to one another in precisely defined formal ways. What do these formal objects and relations tell us about natural language sentences and arguments? This is the central question of the course, explored with respect to a variety of specific topics. These topics include: by what principle or principles are expressions like 'and' distinguished as logical? Is logical validity to be characterized in terms of ranges of possibilities, or in terms of basic inference rules? How do the formal theories of logic relate to reasoning? In addition to the standard prerequisites for upper division philosophy, this course has Phil 200 and Math 110 (or consent of instructor) as prerequisites.