This course is a thematic survey of the central questions of philosophy. Some of the topics discussed will be the nature of persons, the nature of knowledge, the nature of the moral responsibility, the nature of morality, and the existence of God. The course will aim to examine our views concerning these topics, focusing on careful and rigorous analysis of the arguments offered on their behalf.

This course is a thematic introduction to philosophy that focuses on some of the most central issues in the field. The topics we will discuss include skepticism (that is, the view that we don't know anything about the world), the mind-body problem, free will, the nature of persons, the existence of God, and the nature of good and evil. By the end of the semester, students will not only be familiar with some of the central philosophical questions, but will have developed and sharpened their analytic and argumentative skills.

This course is an introduction to formal logic. Logic is the science of evaluating arguments. Formal logic is the use of symbolic languages to study which arguments are valid deductive argument. You will learn techniques for evaluating these logical properties of sentences and collections of sentences. We will first study the logic of compound sentences, called sentential logic. Then we will investigate the logic that attends the internal structure of sentences, called predicate logic. We will also briefly study Inductive Logic, which is the logic through which evidence may support (but not guarantee) the truth of a conclusion – it is the logic by which evidence supports scientific hypotheses and theories.
This is an introductory class in symbolic logic. Symbolic logic is the science of formally analyzing and assessing various logical properties of sentences, collections of sentences, and arguments. How does a sentence “logically follow” from other sentences? How is an argument “logically correct”? How to justify a deduction or a proof? Symbolic logic is not only the standard model of good human reasoning, but also it plays a fundamental role in science and mathematics. A major goal of this course is to introduce you to the central concepts in logic, such as validity, logical entailment (logical consequence), tautology, contradiction, contingency, consistency, deduction, and proof. A second goal is to develop your analytical skills and mathematical reasoning abilities. You will learn by doing symbolic logic. In particular, you will learn an artificial language known as the first-order language and a formal logic system known as Fitch-style natural deduction.

A growing number of college graduates are making as much money as they can in order to give it all away. In Missouri, a community avoids all electricity and petroleum, grows its own food, hosts hundreds of visitors a year, and offers a wide range of classes, never charging for anything. Drawing on real-life examples such as these, this course will introduce students to the field of ethics. The theories and concepts comprising the field will be explored in depth. Students will consider the ethical assumptions underlying their own lives, and how these assumptions might be challenged and transformed.

This course introduces foundational texts of major philosophical schools from India (Hinduism and Buddhism) and China (Confucianism and Daoism). We will examine the primary philosophical questions raised and addressed by each tradition, and, where appropriate, highlight connections or parallels to historical and contemporary Western philosophical thought. The course will introduce topics in metaphysics, ethics, and axiology such as identity and the self, the good life, the nature of death, and the best way to organize a state. No previous knowledge of or experience with philosophy, Asian cultures, or history is required.

Moral considerations pervade our lives, and business situations are no exception. In this course, we will be concerned with the ethical content of commerce, from the morality of market institutions to the normative considerations involved in business-customer, employer-employee, and firm-shareholder relations. We will consider all of these issues from both the standpoint of moral theory and by considering cases.

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Our primary focus will be on developing a deep understanding of the major ethical theories in the history of western philosophy. These include the virtue ethics of the ancient Greeks, the deontology of Immanuel Kant, and the utilitarian theories of the Enlightenment as well as possible others. We will not simply be learning the nuts and bolts of these ethical theories, however. Instead, we will focus our attention on using these theories to help us navigate practical ethical dilemmas and in turn use our intuitions regarding such cases to help us test competing ethical theories against one another.

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This course focuses on the operation of elements that are human experience that merit careful philosophical consideration yet resist easy capture in the abstract reasoning that is the principal instrument of philosophical work. One such element is human mortality. Death is both a potent object of philosophical reflection and difficult to address adequately using only the tools of philosophy. Narrative representation of mortality and the anxieties it engenders offers a mechanism for joining the abstract reflection of philosophy to the consideration of death as it manifests in the particular circumstances of individual persons. In this course we will read several works of fiction that aim, both directly and indirectly, to represent the mortal condition. We will treat these works philosophically, asking what insight they offer into concerns about mortality. Evaluation will include essay exams, a term paper, and short writing assignments.

This course looks at more than how businesses can “play nice.” We will start with the economic & ethical presuppositions of business behavior in a capitalist system. After examining issues involving the justification of markets systems (e.g., the moral importance of economic efficiency, liberty interests in commerce) we will draw some lessons about the general rights & responsibilities of businesses. Time permitting, we will then consider some specific topics in light of those lessons: government intervention in markets, labor relations, environmental concerns, etc.
Department of Philosophy  
Spring 2015  
Course Descriptions

[CRN – 32636] 3293/001 *Environmental Ethics  
MW, 3:00-4:15  
Trachtenberg

Ethically speaking, is it the right thing for people to respect nature, by (as much as possible) leaving it alone? Or, if we think that human beings are part of nature, does that mean it is ethical for them to use nature however they see fit?

These questions are at the core of Environmental Ethics—the branch of Philosophy that examines the moral dimension of human beings' actions regarding the natural environment. But Environmental Ethics faces a huge challenge, raised by the scientific proposal that the Earth has entered into the “Anthropocene”: a new geological era, in which the main driver of the planet’s natural systems is human activity. The idea of the Anthropocene suggests that human societies and the natural world are inextricably interrelated—and Environmental Ethics must view nature in a way that focuses on its interrelationship with society. In turn, that means that Environmental Ethics must rely on both natural and social science, to provide knowledge about the way the complex systems that couple nature and society.

In this class we will learn about approaches taken by natural science and social science disciplines to the Anthropocene, including the ways they each study human transformations of natural systems. And we will reflect on how coming to see society and its environment as part of a complex system can help or hinder the effort to understand what is right for human beings to do as they inhabit the Anthropocene.

Course readings: The main reading for the course is the textbook *Environmental Transformations*, by Mark Whitehead (1st ed., Routledge, 2014). In addition, we will read selected chapters from Joseph R. Desjardins, *Environmental Ethics* (5th ed., Wadsworth/Cengage, 2013). And, I will post selected articles on D2L, and students will be required to find additional readings through on-line research.

Course work: Students will contribute posts discussing readings to class blogs, and will do a term paper dealing with the themes of the class.

[CRN – 10038] 3333/001 *History of Modern Philosophy  
MWF, 10:30-11:20  
Cook

In this course we will discuss the philosophies of René Descartes, Baruch Spinoza, and Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (The Continental Rationalists); John Locke, George Berkeley, and David Hume (The British Empiricists); and Immanuel Kant—seven philosophers from the 17th and 18th century whose work is intrinsically interesting and still influential today. We will examine selections from their most important writings to see what philosophical problems worried them, how they understood these problems, and how they went about solving them. Though this is a course in the history of philosophy, we will be less concerned with the history than with understanding the philosophy as it is expressed in the philosophers’ writings. Text: Ariew and Watkins (eds.), *Modern Philosophy: An Anthology of Primary Sources*.

[CRN – 33948] 3343/001 **Chinese Philosophy  
TR, 3:00-4:15  
Olberding

This course surveys Chinese philosophy, with special attention to its earliest period and the philosophers of the pre-Qin era whose influence is felt throughout China’s philosophical history. We will study classical Confucianism, Daoism, Mohism, and Legalism. The first part of the course will examine each of these major philosophical schools, giving a robust overview of the philosophical issues and debates of the time. In the second part of the course, we will focus on contemporary efforts to draw early Chinese accounts of sagehood into dialogue with contemporary research on ethics and performance psychology. In several different strains of early Chinese philosophy, the sage is described as one who is able “not to try” and yet to achieve excellence. We will look at efforts to describe the sage that combine early Chinese philosophy with current research on human skill development, emotional ease, and equanimity. Evaluation will consist in essay exams, a term paper, and short writing assignments.

[CRN – 32638] 3433/001 **Modern Philosophy of Religion  
TR, 10:30-11:45  
Judisch

This course focuses on philosophical reflection about religious topics produced by thinkers from the beginnings of the modern era (circa 1600) through the early twenty-first century. Much of this work concerns the rationality of religious belief— including such questions as whether and how religious belief is (or can or must be) ‘based upon reason’— but we will also look closely at metaphysical topics at the intersection of philosophy and theology. Philosophers to be studied include Descartes, Malabranche, Leibniz, Hume, Kant, Mill, Kierkegaard, Pascal, James, Wittgenstein and others.

[CRN – 10049] 3503/001 *Self & Identity  
MWF, 12:30-1:20  
Demarest

In this course, we will explore questions of personhood. Who am I? Am I the same person from one day to the next? What makes all of my experiences mine? How does my position in the world affect who I am? How does my free will relate to who I am? What can I know about myself? These are very difficult questions and students should be prepared for a lot of reading.

[CRN – 33923] 3613/001 *Philosophy of Biology [Honors]  
MW, 1:30-2:45  
Riggs

Modern biology raises a host of interesting challenges that can be fruitfully addressed from a philosophical perspective. Some of these are questions and conflicts that arise from within the discipline itself, especially from evolutionary biology: “What is a species?” “What is a gene?” “Does Darwinian selection operate only on individuals or also on groups?” Others arise from the consideration of biology in relation to other sciences: “Does biology reduce to physics?” “Does biology supersede or replace social sciences like psychology and sociology?” And some of the most fundamental questions about human experience and existence are deeply affected by what we have learned in the last hundred years of biological theory. “Do people ever really act unselfishly?” “Can there be any meaning to life in a Darwinian world?” “Do my genes dictate my destiny?” These are all among the questions we will discuss in class.

*Denotes a Core Area IV ‘Western Civilization and Culture’ General Education Course  
**Denotes a Core Area IV ‘Non-Western Culture’ General Education Course  
***Denotes a Core Area I ‘Mathematics Component’ General Education Course  
****Denotes a Core Area III ‘Social Science’ General Education Course
[CRN – 33951] 6173/001 Seminar in Logic TR, 1:30-2:45 Hawthorne

The aim of this course is to introduce advance undergraduates and graduate students to Plato's philosophical works. The enormity and diversity of Plato's works make it impossible - even in a survey course - to survey them all. Accordingly, we will focus our attention on some or all of the following works: Apology, Crito, Laches, Euthyphro, Charmides, Protagoras, Gorgias, Meno, Phaedo, Republic, Theaetetus, Parmenides, and Sophist. Even so, in some of these cases we will only read part of the work. These works represent Plato's methodology, epistemology, metaphysics, philosophy of language, philosophy of mind, philosophy of science, ethics, and political philosophy. In conjunction with these primary readings there will also be some readings from secondary literature. Text: Cooper, Plato: Complete Works.

[CRN – 33269] 5623/001 Philosophy of The Social Sciences T, 3:00-6:00 Ellis

This course is concerned with the philosophical issues at the heart of the social sciences. We will start with some foundational questions: are social sciences directed primarily at predictive (causal) or interpretive theories? Is the basic unit of analysis the individual or the group? Can social science be objective? We will then delve into some methodological issues: what sorts of models/accounts are appropriate for social sciences? How should those models/accounts be evaluated? What are the ethical obligations of social scientists? Time permitting, we will also consider social science as a tool for philosophers (in ethics, political philosophy, philosophy of science, etc.). The precise issues covered will depend, in large part, on student interest.

[CRN – 33951] 6173/001 Seminar in Logic TR, 1:30-2:45 Hawthorne

Philosophy of Logic. We will introduce students to various logical systems and discuss their underlying principles. We will also introduce students to various meta-logical concepts and discuss their underlying principles.

[CRN – 33271] 6393/900 Seminar in the History of Philosophy W, 7:00-10:00 Cook

The heart of the seminar will be a very close reading of Descartes' Meditations. We will often go through the Meditations sentence by sentence, asking such questions as "Why does Descartes go into that?" and "Why does Descartes put it that way?" For example, why in the First Meditation does Descartes raise the possibility that he might be mad? Why in the Second Meditation does Descartes say, "I am, I exist, is necessarily true...?" Why not just "I am" or just "I exist"? Sometimes we won't be able to find a satisfactory answer, and sometimes the answer won't be very interesting. But behind my approach is the conviction that Descartes is extremely careful in the Meditations and always has a reason for saying exactly what he says.

Though what Descartes says in the Latin or in the French translation that he approved will sometimes come up, mostly we will just go with the English translation. (In short, no knowledge of Latin or French required.) I am requiring only Vol. II of The Philosophical Writings of Descartes, but I recommend Vol.'s I and III as well.

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In this course we will investigate some of the interconnections between language, ideology, and propaganda. We will be reading, among other things, selections from Jason Stanley’s forthcoming book *How Propaganda Works*. Here are some of the questions we will be considering. Are some concepts, such as the concepts of chivalry and honor, associated with flawed ideologies, and therefore not suited for use in moral reasoning? What about the concepts of obligation and duty? Are some fields of philosophy, such as moral philosophy and deontic logic, sites for the production of propaganda? In order to address these questions, we will draw heavily from the fields of deontic logic and natural language semantics. No background in logic or linguistics is required.