

PHILOSOPHY

UPPER DIVISION COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

SPRING 2020

(Revised 2/6/20)

PHIL 314: HISTORY OF MODERN PHILOSOPHY: ETHICS AND POLITICS --- Prof. Chris Naticchia
MWF 10:40-11:50 am
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 386: PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE --- Prof. William Vanderburgh
MW 4:00-5:50 pm
wvanderburgh@csusb.edu --- (909) 537-3998

Science is a central feature of our contemporary world, so it is important even for non-scientists (including philosophers!) to understand science. Science aims to give us knowledge—knowledge we can use to do things, to make decisions, and to provide us with an understanding of the nature of reality. In this class, we will explore philosophical questions about science such as whether/how science delivers reliable knowledge, what the limits of scientific knowledge are, whether science can actually tell us about the reality underlying

appearances, how evidence works in science, and the ways in which philosophy and science inform each other. Our approach will be partly historical (using, for example, case studies relating to the 17th-century Copernican Revolution and the 20th-century discovery of dark matter) and partly abstract (using generalized accounts of how scientific theories are constructed and used). The course is designed so that students with no scientific background will understand and appreciate the philosophical content.

PHIL 390-01: CONTINENTAL PHILOSOPHY --- Prof. Kaitlyn Creasy

TR 4:00-5:50 pm

kaitlyn.creasy@csusb.edu --- (909) 537-5934

This course is a survey of intellectual traditions comprising 20th century Continental philosophy, and will include readings from a variety of major figures in Continental philosophy (such as Nietzsche, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, and Foucault), as well as contemporary applications of Continental thought.

PHIL 390-02: SOCIAL EPISTEMOLOGY --- Prof. Eric Bayruns Garcia

TR 2:00-3:50 pm

eric.bayrunsgarcia@csusb.edu --- (909) 537-7466

In this Social Epistemology course, students will take up the following questions. What is the relationship between racial or gender injustice and whether a speaker is taken as credible? What should persons know about oppression and injustice? Who, or what, is blameworthy for people's ignorance of oppression and injustice? Are there virtues that can help subjects and communities do better by way of knowledge of injustice? In examining these questions, we will take up work from the epistemic injustice, critical epistemology of race, epistemology of ignorance, feminist epistemology and analytic social epistemology literatures.

PHIL 400: ADVANCED ISSUES IN LOGIC --- Prof. John Mumma

TR 10:00-11:50 am

jmumma@csusb.edu --- (909) 537-5872

In everyday contexts we use the notion of a set often to talk about things like books on shelves and spoons in drawers. Set theory extends far beyond these contexts in abstractness and scope, giving us the means to talk intelligibly about the infinite, furnish a foundation for mathematics, and conduct investigations in metaphysics. We first look at the basic results of the subject from a perspective known as 'naïve set theory.' The perspective is known as naïve because it does not provide explicit safeguards against the famous Russell paradox. After going over the paradox and challenge it poses to naïve set theory, we examine the principles of the non-naïve and firmly established conception of sets known as the 'iterative conception.'

PHIL 485: ADV. ISSUES IN METAPHYSICS AND KNOWLEDGE --- Prof. Matthew Davidson

TR 12:00-1:50 pm

mld@csusb.edu --- (909) 537-7727

This is a course on the nature of existence and nonexistence. In it, we will address some of the most fundamental questions in metaphysics, including: Are there objects that don't exist? What are nonexistent objects like? Can things that don't exist have properties? Can we make sense of an affirmative answer to this without admitting there are, in some sense, things that don't exist? Is existence an attribute like other attributes? We will consider how answers to these questions bear on various debates elsewhere in philosophy, like the nature of fictional characters and the soundness of the ontological argument.