University College Dublin

National University of Ireland

##### PHILOSOPHY

##### Level 3 MODULES 2012-2013

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| **First Semester**  **(10 September – 30 November 2012)** | |  | **Second Semester**  **(21 January - 8 March and 25 March – 26 April 2013)** | |
| **Mon @ 10-11**  **&**  **Wed @ 10-11 G-24 AG** | **Philosophy of Law PHIL30260**  **Dr Christopher Cowley/Alan Greene** |  | **Mon @ 1-2**  **&**  **Wed @ 1-2**  **A109** | **Philosophy of Interpretation PHIL30280**  **Dr Tim Mooney** |
| **Tues @ 2-3**  **&**  **Thurs @ 2-3**  **C110** | **Nietzsche and Heidegger PHIL 30190**  **Dr Joseph Cohen** |  | **Tues @ 2-3 B101**  **&**  **Thurs @ 2-3 A109** | **Critical Theory PHIL30300**  **Prof Brian O’Connor/Prof Maeve Cooke** |
| **Mon @ 1-2**  **&**  **Wed @ 1-2**  **C110** | **Anarchy, Law & the State PHIL30230**  **Prof Gerard Casey** |  | **Mon @ 12-1**  **&**  **Wed @ 11-12**  **NTh1** | **Philosophy of Mind PHIL30030**  **Dr Jim O’Shea** |
| **Tues @ 3-4 C108**  **&**  **Thurs @ 4-5 NTh2** | **Philosophy of Language PHIL30070**  **Prof Maria Baghramian** |  | **Tues @ 1-2 C110**  **&**  **Fri @ 1-2 C108** | **Questions of God PHIL30220**  **Prof Fran O’Rourke/Dr Tim Crowley** |
| **Tues @ 10-11 A105**  **&**  **Thurs @ 10-11 C108** | **Medieval Philosophy PHIL30290**  **Prof Fran O’Rourke/Dr Tim Crowley** |  | **Mon @ 4-6**  **A109** | **Phenomenology & Existentialism PHIL30010**  **Dr Mahon O’Brien** |

**SEMESTER ONE**

**Philosophy of Law PHIL 30260**

This module will focus on a number of philosophical problems associated with moral and criminal responsibility, with a view to the context of the criminal law and tort law. What conditions does a person need to fulfill in order to be held responsible for an offence? When does a mistake become negligent? What sorts of excuses can be offered to reduce or eliminate that responsibility? How can punishment be justified? What role does mercy and forgiveness play? (Note that we will NOT be discussing jurisprudence, i.e. the nature of law or of law-making.)

**Nietzsche and Heidegger PHIL 30190**

The relationship between Nietzsche and Heidegger can be interpreted as the crucial point from which contemporary continental philosophy will develop. We will, in the course of this seminar, seek to grasp this relation by concentrating our reflection on the question of violence and history in the deployment of what Heidegger in his early 1930 lectures on Nietzsche calls the 'onto-theo-logical event of Being'. What kind of anti-Platonic philosophy does Heidegger develop and how far has it been influenced by Nietzsche's philosophy? We will thus examine in detail the Heidegerrian interpretation of Nietzsche and most particularly the claim made by Heidegger that Nietzsche represents the 'point of accomplishment of the history of onto-theology. Inherent to this interpretation is the Nietzschean 'reversal' of Platonism and his critique of philosophical systems. Careful attention will thus also be given to understanding how we should interpret both Heidegger's and Nietzsche's relation to the history of metaphysics. Where do they agree and where do they differ? And furthermore, is Heidegger's philosophy in the 1930's nihilistic from a Nietzschean point of view? We will also seek to determine in which manner the Heideggerian interpretation of Nietzsche has shaped contemporary philosophical debates in Continental thought, most specifically in France.

**Anarchy, Law & the State PHIL 30230**

This module will consider a central topic in political philosophy - the nature, function and justification of the State - from a libertarian perspective. A considerable amount of reading material will be made available to students via Blackboard and this material will contextualise the discussions. Murray Rothbard's The Ethics of Liberty (available on blackboard) is the core text for the module. Also worth consideration is Harold Berman's Law and Revolution and Gerard Casey's Libertarian Anarchism (published July 2012). If required, my book, Libertarian Anarchism, can be obtained from the Campus Bookshop or ordered online.

**Philosophy of Language PHIL 30070**

Questions concerning language and the nature of meaning have been at the center of twentieth century philosophy. Moreover, philosophy of language has been the defining theme of the analytic tradition in philosophy. This course aims to introduce students to key issues and debates in contemporary philosophy of language by concentrating on the dual themes of meaning and reference. It addresses questions such as: What is the connection between language and thought? how does language connect with the world? what gives meaning to our utterances? what are the requirements for interpreting and translating other speakers? The course takes a historical-thematic approach The first section of the course focuses on key texts by the originators of the analytic tradition in philosophy - Frege, Russell and Wittgenstein. In the second section, we look at the development and critique of the earlier themes by contemporary American philosophers of language including Quine, Davidson, Kripke and Putnam.

**Medieval Philosophy PHIL 30290**

This course offers an historical and critical introduction to the late classical and medieval philosophical traditions in the West, from the late Greek period through to the Renaissance. Selected classical texts influential on the medieval tradition, e.g. works by Plato, Aristotle and post-Aristotelian philosophers, will be examined. The course will then focus on selected readings from some of the following medieval philosophers (including Christian, Islamic and Jewish traditions): Augustine of Hippo, Boethius, Johannes Scottus Eriugena, Anselm, Averroes, Avicenna, Maimonides, Aquinas, Meister Eckhart, Nicholas of Cusa. Topics may include, among others: faith and reason, the existence of God, the nature of soul and intellect, the structure of being, and the nature of the good.

**SEMESTER TWO**

**Philosophy of Interpretation PHIL 30280**

What philosophical issues are raised in expressing, translating and understanding? Can we even perceive things without interpreting them? What are the best ways to understand the works of other cultures and epochs, and why? Is the interpreter passive and neutral before the text, or is he or she always active and creative? How shuld we evaluate creative interpretations? In this module such questions will be considered by way of an historical and critical introduction to the movements of hermeneutics and deconstruction. These collectively comprise the philosophy of interpretation in recent European philosophy. We begin with the foundations of hermeneutics laid by Schleiermacher and Dilthey, proceed to its development in the phenomenologies of Husserl and Heidegger, and conclude with its post-phenomenological variants in the work of Gadamer, Derrida and Ricoeur.

**Critical Theory PHIL 30300**

This module examines the tradition of Frankfurt School Critical Theory from Adorno and Horkheimer up to the current work of Habermas and Honneth. Closely reading the classic texts of this tradition the concepts of reification, alienation, dialectics, communicative ethics and recognition, among others, will be critically interrogated. Part I of the module will deal with the history of critical theory from its precursor articulations in Marx before moving on to the foundational texts of Adorno, Horkheimer and Marcuse. Part II examines Habermas' break from the theoretical assumptions of his predecessors through his turn to language and communication. Honneth's theory of recognition will also be considered, as well as his reconstruction and reinterpretation of the tradition of Critical Theory

**Philosophy of Mind PHIL 30030**

The big issues in the philosophy of mind are the nature of consciousness, the nature of agency or intentional action, and the nature of thought or intentionality (how mental states can be about anything). This course will critically examine these issues in contemporary philosophy of mind and action. Other problems treated will include the relationship between mind and body, the relationship between mind and behaviour, intentions, perception, and beliefs.

**Questions of God PHIL 30220**

This module offers a critical examination of some representative philosophical positions concerning the question of God. The course will comprise two complementary series of twelve lectures. (1) One series will examine: epistemological and metaphysical presuppositions for the affirmation of God; concepts of divinity in Greek philosophy; Aquinas' formulation of the 'Five Ways'; the problem of naming God and Feuerbach's critique; and evolution versus creationism. (2) The other series of lectures will examine selected issues in modern philosophy of religion. The questions for study may include any of the following: Is the concept of God coherent? Can God's existence be proved by a priori argument? How should one treat a person's claim to have had a 'religious experience', or to have witnessed a miracle? What is the relationship between religion and morality? Is faith irrational? Does the fact of pain and suffering constitute evidence that God does not exist? Can there be life after death? Among the philosophers whose work may be considered in this series of lectures are Descartes, Pascal, Hume, Kant, James, Mackie, Plantinga, and Swinburne.

**Phenomenology and Existentialism PHIL 30010**

This course offers a historical introduction to and critical assessment of some central texts of the phenomenological tradition, the most prominent European philosophical movement of the twentieth century. The course will trace the development of phenomenology from the descriptive psychology of Franz Brentano through the descriptive and transcendental phenomenologies of Husserl and Heidegger to the existential phenomenology of Sartre and Merleau-Ponty. Students will read selected classical texts in phenomenology, based on the assigned textbook, The Phenomenology Reader, ed. Dermot Moran and Tim Mooney (London: Routledge, 2002). Themes treated include: intentionality, perception, consciousness, the epoche and reduction, the life-world, the nature of human existence (Dasein), freedom, embodiment, the relation to the other, empathy, intersubjectivity, and the nature of art and technology.

**Single Major Research Project PHIL 30210**

The Undergraduate Research Project requires third year Single Subject Major Philosophy students to produce a sustained in-depth piece of work (7,500 word max.). Successful completion of the project will require a significant degree of self-discipline and self-motivation, as it demands much independent research and study. Students are free to pursue a philosophical topic of their choice, on condition that the module co-ordinator considers the topic viable, and there is a member of staff who is able and willing to act as supervisor. Students should therefore begin to think about and prepare their proposals as soon as possible in the first semester. The project is due at the end of the eight week of the second semester.