Proposed Undergraduate Curriculum and Course Changes
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Small Changes

PHI 5400: Presocratic Philosophy

Proposal  Change the course title “Presocratic Philosophy” (PHI 5400) to “The Presocratics and Sophists”.

Explanation  The new title better reflects the actual content of the course. The modern distinction between Presocratic philosophers and Sophists in the ancient Greek world is notoriously artificial and arbitrary, but it is nonetheless persistent. Consequently, the title ‘Presocratic Philosophy’ suggests that certain thinkers who are more commonly thought of as ‘Sophists’ will be excluded from the course content, when in fact they are included in it. The new title does a better job of signaling to students what the course will be about.

Proposal  Change PHI 5400 (Presocratic Philosophy) from a 3-credit course to a 4-credit course.

Explanation  The change accomplishes at least three desirable goals:

- It will make 5400 consistent with our other 5000-level history courses (e.g. Kant, Plato, Aristotle), all of which are 4-credit courses.
- The course should be a 4-credit course, because it is difficult to cover the course material in the depth appropriate to a 5000-level course in the time allotted to a 3-credit course.
- The change will make scheduling and degree planning simpler for our graduate students, for whom 4-credit courses offer a more straightforward way to maintain full-time status and meet their degree requirements.

PHI 2100: Ancient Philosophy

Proposal  Change the course title of “Ancient Philosophy” (PHI 2100) to “Ancient Greek Philosophy”.

Explanation  The new course title more accurately reflects the content of the course. “Ancient Philosophy” suggests that the course will cover a wide range of ancient philosophical ideas, such as ancient Hindu or Chinese philosophy, when in fact it is focused exclusively on the ancient Greeks. The new course title is thus more precise and avoids unnecessary ethnocentrism.
PHI 1100: Contemporary Moral Issues

**Proposal** Change the course title of “Contemporary Moral Issues” (PHI 1100) to “Moral Issues and Social Justice”

**Explanation** The new course title does a better job of signaling the fact that many of the topics covered in PHI 1100 (e.g. related to race, implicit bias, income inequality, etc.) directly concern issues of or related to social justice. The new title thus provides more information to students about the content of the course.

Foundations of Ethics and Law Concentration

**Proposal** Change the name of the "Foundations of Ethics and Law Concentration" to "Law, Ethics, and Justice Concentration".

**Explanation** It provides more information about the concentration, and more clearly and effectively. The “Foundations of” at the beginning of the title was cumbersome, and some students expressed confusion about it. The inclusion of “Justice” now does a better job of signaling to students who are interested in issues of law and justice, or who are interested in a career in Law or justice-related issues, that the concentration is well-suited for them.

PHI 4890: Honors Proseminar

**Proposal** Change the title of PHI 4890, “Honors Proseminar”, to “Honors Thesis”.

**Explanation** The course title “Honors Proseminar” has never been very clearly reflective of what actually goes on in the course (i.e. writing an Honors Thesis). The new course title is clear.

**Proposal** Change 4890 from a 4-credit course to a 3-credit course.

**Explanation** The Department recently changed the requirements for Departmental Honors in order to make it more flexible for students and give students a wider variety of Honors experience within Philosophy courses. In order to make our courses consistent with those changes, PHI 4890 should be a 3-credit course. (For further information about the recent changes to our Honors requirements, if there is interest in those details, see Appendix A.)
Change to the Wording of the Minor Requirements

Proposal  Change the wording of the course requirements for the Minor in Philosophy as indicated below.

Details  Current wording:

1. Symbolic Logic (PHI 2850, PHI 2860, or PHI 5050) or Critical Thinking (PHI 1050);
2. one course at the 5000-level or above (other than PHI 5993); and
3. three additional courses of the candidate's choice (other than 5993), at least one of which must be at the 2000-level or above.

Proposed wording:

1. Symbolic Logic (PHI 2850, PHI 2860, or PHI 5050) or Critical Thinking (PHI 1050);
2. one course at the 2000- or 3000-level (other than PHI 2850 or 2860);
3. one course at the 5000-level or above (other than PHI 5993); and
4. two additional courses of the candidate's choice (other than 5993).

Explanation  The proposed wording of the Minor requirements is better for two reasons:

- The current wording is ambiguous. It makes it sound like the course taken for requirement (2) at the 5000-level would also satisfy the requirement (3)’s demand for at least one course at the 2000-level or above. That is not accurate, however.

- The current wording makes it sound like the student could satisfy requirement (3)’s demand for at least one course at the 2000-level or above by taking a second 5000-level course. That was not our intention, and it would be bad for students to do that without taking at least one course at the 2000- or 3000-level (other than Symbolic Logic). In other words, we don’t want (but the current wording seems to allow) students to take Symbolic Logic, two courses at the introductory 1000-level, and then jump ahead to two advanced courses at the 5000-level. They also need to take at least one intermediate courses at the 2000- or 3000-levels. The new wording makes that clear.
Program Changes

New Specialized Minor Concentrations

Proposal
Create two new Minor concentrations: (1) Pre-Law Philosophy Minor, and (2) Heath Care Ethics Philosophy Minor.

Details
The requirements for each Minor will be as follows.

(1) Pre-Law Philosophy Minor:

A candidate for Pre-Law Minor in Philosophy must complete a minimum of five (5) courses in Philosophy, including the following courses or selections from course groups:

1. Symbolic Logic (PHI 2850, PHI 2860, or PHI 5050) or Critical Thinking (PHI 1050).
2. Any TWO of the following courses: Introduction to Ethics (PHI 2320), Foundations of Law (PHI 3270), Introduction to Social and Political Philosophy (PHI 2330), Philosophy of Law (PHI 5270), or Special Topics in Social and Political Philosophy (PHI 5240);
3. any one of the following courses: PHI 1100 (Contemporary Moral Issues), PHI 1110 (Ethical Issues in Health Care), PHI 1120 (Professional Ethics), or PHI 1130 (Environmental Ethics); and
4. at least one Philosophy course at the 5000-level.

Note: Courses taken in compliance with requirement (1) or (2) may be used to satisfy requirement (4), though the five course minimum must still be met.

(2) Health Care Ethics Philosophy Minor:

A candidate for Health Care Ethics Minor in Philosophy must complete a minimum of five (5) courses in Philosophy, including the following courses or selections from course groups:

1. Symbolic Logic (PHI 2850, PHI 2860, or PHI 5050) or Critical Thinking (PHI 1050);
2. Ethical Issues in Health Care (PHI 1110);
3. Introduction to Ethics (PHI 2320);
4. Life and Death (PHI 1200) or an additional course from the Theory of Value Course Group; and
5. at least one Philosophy course at the 5000-level.

Note: Courses taken in compliance with requirement (1) or (4) may be used to satisfy requirement (5), though the five course minimum must still be met.
**Explanation**  The Philosophy Department has been “beta-testing” these two Minors informally for the past year by including them as “recommended paths” for satisfying the traditional Minor for students interested in Pre-Law or Pre-Med/Health Care. The response has been very positive: many of our inquiries about the Minor are inquiries about the “recommended paths”, and many of those students have said they would prefer to have the “Pre-Law” or “Health Care Ethics” designation for the Minor officially on their transcript, rather than simply “Philosophy Minor”. This proposal is thus a way of responding to student interests and needs, and also of signaling to prospective Minors what we have to offer in our Department.

**Additional Major Requirement**

**Proposal**  Add a “Capstone Course” requirement at the 5000-level to the requirements for the Philosophy Major (in both concentrations).

**Details**  The current requirements for the Major require a minimum of nine courses, including at least three at the 5000-level or above. The proposed change would require a minimum of ten courses, including four at the 5000-level or above, one of which must be the new Capstone Course. The Capstone Course will operate like a “Special Topics” course, in that revolving Philosophy faculty will teach it, and the topic will vary by semester according to the instructor. Enrollment in the Capstone Course will be open only to junior and senior undergraduate students who have completed at least 75 total credits and at least 15 credits in Philosophy, and enrollment in the course will be limited to 15 students for a seminar-like experience. According to the new requirements, students will have to take ONE of the designated Capstone Courses prior to graduation.

**Explanation**  The Department has several reasons for introducing the new requirement:

- **Students have expressed an interest in it.** Recently the department conducted an online anonymous survey for our undergraduates, and we had 42 students (out of about 75 in our program) complete it. One of the questions asked whether students thought Majors would benefit from a Capstone Course requirement. A decisive 80% of the respondents supported the idea, and many were especially enthusiastic about it in their comments on the question.

- **It will give upper-level undergraduates a chance to take an upper-level course without graduate students.** Currently all of our 5000-level courses are open to both undergraduates and graduate students. This means that undergraduates never have the opportunity to take an upper-level course without graduate students. One of the refrains throughout the undergraduate survey that we conducted was that students wish they had such an opportunity. Many of them expressed the feeling that graduate students tend to take over courses, and that they themselves feel less inclined to participate because they are intimidated.
Sample comments from the survey: “The upper-level courses seem to be exclusively for graduate students, who can speak with one another on a level not yet reached by me and, perhaps, other undergraduates”; “No grad students, they dominate the class and inhibit the undergraduates”; “I felt like a fish out of water when the graduate students gave their opinions on a matter because they had more of a vast knowledge and wider understanding of the topic we were discussing”; “I always felt as if I was missing out on something larger than the course itself when I could not keep up with the conversation of the grad-students present”; and so on.

The students’ comments are consistent with faculty members’ experiences and observations. We agree that graduate students have a tendency to participate in class discussions more than the undergraduates and can sometimes dominate and inadvertently intimidate, and we also agree that having at least ONE upper-level course which they are graduate-student-free would be an enriching and educationally valuable experience for undergraduates.

- It will be good for the sense of community among students and is considered a “high-impact practice”. Because Philosophy is an especially flexible Major and does not have “sequenced” courses of the sort found in math and the sciences, our Majors have less of a “cohort” experience than students in some other Majors. The Capstone Course, especially with its small, seminar-style format, would help provide that beneficial sense of community. Indeed, one of the most common reasons students cited on the survey for wanting a Capstone Course was that it will build camaraderie. They commented, for example, that it would "be helpful to interact with other senior philosophy majors"; that it would "bring like-minded students together"; that it would "help build better relationships since most people who take this course would be in the same boat"; and so on.

- Our requirements for the Major are low relative to those of Philosophy Departments at other universities. Typical Philosophy programs require 10-15 courses for a Major. (We underwent program review this year and found, for example that our “comparable” program, Cincinnati, requires 12 courses; and that our “aspirational” program, UC Davis, requires 13). By having only nine requirements, we are putting our students at a disadvantage relative to students at other universities with respect to applying for graduate programs. Given that over 20% of our students indicated that they intend to go to graduate school in Philosophy on our student surveys, this is a substantial worry for us.

- Our Major requirements will remain flexible and will continue to be conducive to timely graduation despite the additional requirement. Because our undergraduate program is at the floor relative to other Wayne State programs as far as number of courses required for the major, we have plenty of room to add a single course to our requirements without it being a burden for students. The increase will still make it possible, for example, for students to: (a) finish in 4 years with room for 10-12 elective courses in their schedule; or even (b) finish in 3 years in order to pursue the new LawStart degree.
New Courses

**NOTE ON NEW COURSES:** The Department is proposing to add a total of five new Philosophy courses. However, it should be noted that this will not create any additional burden on our teaching resources. Three of the five courses (Existentialism; Philosophy of Sex and Gender; and Philosophy of Human Rights) are ones that we have already been offering under “Special Topics” headings, so adding them to the course bulletin will not require that more course be staffed; it will just better advertise to students what we already do. Likewise, the other two courses will not require us to offer any “extra” courses: Research Training will be offered like a Directed Study, and the Capstone Course in Philosophy will be a variable content/topic course taught by a different faculty member each semester in place of a 5000-level course that they would have otherwise taught.**

Capstone Course in Philosophy (PHI 5900)

**Proposal** Create a new variable credit (3-4) course, PHI 5900: Capstone Course in Philosophy (see Appendix B for further course description and learning outcomes).

**Explanation** PHI 5900 will satisfy the new Capstone Course requirement for the Philosophy Major (see above for details about the new requirement)

Research Training (PHI 4995)

**Proposal** Create a new course, PHI 4995: Research Training (see Appendix C for course description and learning outcomes).

**Explanation** Program assessment, in combination with a survey that we conducted among our undergraduate students, has revealed that one way in which our department could better serve our students is with respect to research. Many of our students are less involved in undergraduate research—and in particular, less involved in faculty research projects—than they would like to be. PHI 4995 is designed as a step toward improving that situation. The course will work like a Directed Reading, in that a student will work individually with a faculty member, but it is distinct from a Directed Reading its function and objectives, which will be research-focused. In particular, the course will aim to do two things: (1) provide students with an opportunity to engage in a research project of their own that overlaps with, or is directly the service of; the faculty member's own research; and (2) enhance students' own research skills and methods in the process.
Existentialism (PHI 3450)

**Proposal**  
Create a new 3-credit course, PHI 3150: Existentialism (see Appendix D for course syllabus and learning outcomes).

**Explanation**  
On recent surveys, many students expressed strong interest in having a regular course on Existentialism, and one of our faculty members, Sean Stidd, is a specialist in Existentialist philosophy. The new course will respond to student demand and make better use of our faculty’s expertise.

Philosophy of Human Human Rights (PHI 3290)

**Proposal**  
Create a new 3-credit course, PHI 2350: Social Justice and Human Rights (see Appendix E for course description and learning outcomes).

**Explanation**  
On recent surveys, many students expressed strong interest in having a course related to social justice issues and human rights. We have already been teaching a version of the course as a recurring Special Topics course. The new course will respond to student demand and do a better job of indicating to students what we offer.

Philosophy of Sex and Gender (PHI 5260)

**Proposal**  
Create a new 3-credit course, PHI 5260: Gender and Sexuality (see Appendix D for course description and learning outcomes).

**Explanation**  
This course is already offered as a Special Topics course by Dr. Corvino and is popular. Adding it as a separate course responds to student interest and allows us to better advertise one of our Department’s strengths in the university bulletin and on our website.
Appendix A: Summary of Changes to Departmental Honors Requirements

Summary

Our previous Departmental Honors in Philosophy required the following (in addition to completion of the requirements for the regular B.A. in Philosophy):

A minimum of 15-credits of Honors-designated course work, including:
- PHI 4870: Honors Directed Reading (4 credits)
- PHI 4890: Honors Proseminar (4 credits)
- One 4000-level course offered through the Honors Program (3 credits)
- At least four additional credits in Honors-designated course work

The Department has amended its requirements as follows (these changes have already been made through the Honors College):

A minimum of 15-credits of Honors-designated course work, including:
- PHI 4890: Honors Thesis (3 credits)
- One 4000-level course offered through the Honors Program (3 credits)
- At least six additional credits of Honors-designated coursework in Philosophy
- Additional credits of Honors-designated coursework as needed to reach the 15-credit minimum

Explanation

There are two main differences between the current requirements and the proposed requirements.

1. The first difference concerns the number of requirements necessary for completion of the Honors Thesis. The previous requirements made the Honors thesis a 2-course, 2-semester, and 8-credit undertaking (students must take 4870 in one semester and 4890 in the next semester, and the two courses jointly constitute the process of completing the thesis). The new requirements have made the Honors thesis a 1-course, 1-semester, 3-credit undertaking.

2. The second difference concerns Honors-designated coursework in Philosophy. According to the previously requirements, the only Honors-designated in Philosophy that students were required to earn were the 8 credits associated with completion of the Honors thesis. According to the new requirements, students must earn the 3-credits in Philosophy that are associated with the Honors thesis, plus six additional Honors-designated credits in other Philosophy courses.
There are at least four reasons why we amended the requirements in these ways:

- The 2-semester, 8-credit requirement for the Honors thesis made the Honors sequence unduly inflexible for students, in that it was sometimes an obstacle to timely degree completion to have to spread out the thesis-writing over two consecutive semesters. The 1-semester requirement makes it more flexible for students.

- The 2-semester requirement for the Honors thesis sometimes caused complications for, or limited the options of, our students when the faculty member with whom they wanted to work on their Honors thesis was on leave and unavailable during either the Fall or the Winter semester. The 1-semester requirement makes it easier for students to work consistently with the faculty member of their choice.

- We found that an 8-credit requirement was disproportionate to the amount of time and work that students actually invest in an Honors thesis project. A proposed 3-credit requirement better represents the time and work necessary for a well-executed research project.

- We felt that students would be well-served by earning Honors-option credits in regular Philosophy courses. The previous requirements did not require them to do any work in Philosophy aside from the Honors thesis. The new requirements require them to earn 6 Honors-option credits in Philosophy courses.
Appendix B: Course Proposal for PHI 5900

Course Title: Capstone Course in Philosophy

Number: PHI 5900

Credits: Variable credits (3-4).

Description: A seminar-like course with varying topics that is open only to upper-level undergraduate students.

Prerequisite: Students must have completed at least 75 total undergraduate credits and at least 15 credits in Philosophy.

Syllabus: Will vary by topic.

Learning Outcomes

Learning Outcomes will vary by topic, but will include:

- The abilities to engage in oral discussion of Philosophy at an advanced undergraduate level.
- The ability to write philosophical essays at an advanced undergraduate level.
- The ability to engage in critical reading and thinking skills at an advanced undergraduate level.
Appendix C: Course Proposal for PHI 4995

Course Title  Research Training
Number      PHI 4995
Credits      Variable credits (1-4).
Description  A directed research course arranged between individual students and faculty members. Students will receive training in research methods and practices and engage in a research project under the supervision of a faculty member.
Syllabus     Arranged between individual students and faculty members.

Learning Outcomes

- The ability to organize a major research project.
- The ability to locate and recognize academic sources in Philosophy relevant to a given topic.
- Increased familiarity with the research methods and practices that are distinctive of Academic Philosophy.
- Increased familiarity with professional processes in Philosophy (e.g. submission of abstracts to conferences, attendance at conferences and workshops, etc.).
- The ability to write a research paper that is informed by the standards of Academic writing in Philosophy.
Appendix D: Syllabus for Existentialism

PHI 3450: Existentialism

I. Introduction: By the late nineteenth century many European thinkers believed that their historic moral, religious, and philosophical systems were no longer plausible and that science, while impressive in its theoretical and technological advances, gave no real guidance for how we ought to live and act and what we ought to (or could) authentically value. In one way or another the existentialist thinkers, reacting to what they took to be the alienation, absurdity, and emptiness of their time and the total freedom of commitment that opened up, tried to philosophize out of lived human subjective experience – our ‘existence’ conceived not merely logically but as the way we experience ourselves living and acting in the world.

As much a cultural condition as a school of thought, existentialism has been one of the more enduringly influential popular movements in philosophy and continues to speak to many people in the United States today. We will be doing lots of short readings and a few longer ones, dipping into art and literature as well as philosophy to get a fuller picture of the central ideas and themes of the existentialist thinkers. Along with Sartre, Camus, and Heidegger we will look at de Beauvoir, Buber, Ortega y Gassett, the proto-existentialists Kierkegaard and Nietzsche, important philosophical contemporaries like Arendt and Russell, artists and writers like Dostoevsky, Rilke, Kafka, Beckett, Rothko, and Ginsberg, and many more. The class will be lively and wide-ranging and students should finish it with a greater appreciation both of existential philosophy and its connections to many other areas of contemporary thought and culture.

II. Format: We will meet twice each week for lecture and discussion with the full class. I encourage all of you to ask questions and to advance your own views honestly while respecting the feelings of others. Don’t be afraid to ask even very basic questions about what I or our authors are trying to say – vocabulary and ideas sometimes get confusing in philosophy classes. One way to come up with good questions for the classroom is to read actively at home beforehand and make notes about things you disagree with or do not understand. Please be respectful of the classroom environment. I will expect students to arrive at class on time, stay awake during the sessions, and involve themselves with whatever we’re doing together. No cell phones should ever go off during class. Please do not eat or drink in the classroom. I reserve the right to lower the attendance grade (see below) of students who arrive late, leave early, or create severe distractions. In order to have fun talking about philosophy we need to create a space without immoderate disturbances.

If you have a documented disability that requires accommodations, you will need to register with Student Disability Services for coordination of your academic accommodations. The Student Disability Services (SDS) office is located at 1600 David Adamany Undergraduate Library in the Student Academic Success Services department. SDS telephone number is 313-577-1851 or 313-577-3365 (TDD only). Once you have your accommodations in place, I will be glad to meet with you privately during my office hours to discuss your special needs. Student Disability Services’ mission is to assist the university in creating an accessible community where students with disabilities have an equal opportunity to fully participate in their educational experience at Wayne State University.
III. Texts and Readings. The following books should be available for purchase at the campus Barnes and Noble:
A. Walter Kaufmann, ed., Existentialism from Dostoevsky to Sartre
B. Paul MacDonald, ed., The Existentialist Reader
C. Eugene Rose, Nihilism

There will be several readings assigned that are not in these books, but they will either be printed out for you or linked to from Blackboard. The Kaufmann you need right away as there are readings out of this book for over the first weekend.

In addition, one of the course assignments will be to investigate some existentialist literature of your own choosing, drawn from the following list: Samuel Beckett, Waiting for Godot; Albert Camus, The Plague; Kate Chopin, The Awakening; Fyodor Dostoevsky, Crime and Punishment; Ralph Ellison, Invisible Man; Allen Ginsberg, Howl; Joseph Heller, Catch-22; Zora Neale Hurston, Their Eyes Were Watching God; Franz Kafka, The Trial; Octavio Paz, Identical Time; Rainer Marie Rilke, Duino Elegies; or Tom Stoppard, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead (but only if you already read or saw Hamlet).

These books/plays/poems are not at the bookstore but they are in wide circulation and you can find them cheap at used bookstores or even cheaper at libraries. You will need to pick one to write a paper on later in the course.

Readings for the next class will be assigned during each class session. It is therefore important to be in class for every session, or as close to it as you can manage. Please email me for the readings if you miss class. However, you will not go too far wrong if you just pick something out of one of the anthologies to look at that interests you, in the event that you miss class.

IV. Learning Outcomes: Students should be able to
• Read a philosophical essay by an existentialist author and have a general idea of what conclusions they are aiming for and the reasons they offer in support of those conclusions.
• Recognize existentialist themes in poems, novels, and plays.
• Articulate and explain some of the main philosophical positions of the major existentialist and proto-existentialist thinkers. This should include Heidegger, Sartre, de Beauvoir, and Camus and may also include Arendt, Buber, Husserl, Jaspers, Kierkegaard, Marcel, Merleau-Ponty, Nietzsche, Ortega y Gasset, and Weil, as well as numerous literary authors and later philosophers influenced by the existentialist tradition.
• Understand some of the major themes of existentialist thought and how they relate to philosophy, literature, and culture, including but not limited to the absurd, angst, authenticity, freedom, individualism, nihilism, phenomenology, and subjectivity.
• Identify some of the important historical, cultural, and philosophical developments that led into and arise out of existentialist thought.
• Communicate their philosophical views or objections clearly and effectively in a class discussion.
• Write a clear essay in which they summarize and evaluate the views and arguments of an existentialist philosopher and/or literary author.

VI. Assignments and Grading. New reading assignments will be given at each class and should be completed before the next class meeting. These writings will provide a basis for our class discussion and exams, and some of them will provide sources for your papers as well. Pay special attention while reading to the arguments your author ventures: are they valid? Persuasive? Why or why not? What premises does your author use to support his or her conclusions, and do they
really provide grounds for them? Don’t get freaked out if you feel that you just can’t understand something in the reading: some of it is difficult. But please do try to figure out what it is that you don’t understand, so that we can discuss it in class – you are not the only one suffering from confusion! Please feel free to ask questions about anything and everything. Asking questions and participating well in class discussions will improve your overall grade.

Written assignments for the course include four thesis papers spread out over the course. Your grade will be calculated as follows:

**Attendance and Class Participation 20%**

**Four Papers 20% each**

Individual assignments will be given a letter grade, and these grades will be averaged according to the percentages above. You will need to turn in all three papers to get a passing grade in the course. Grammar, spelling, and writing style are important in philosophy papers, but the most important thing is that you present your own ideas and arguments clearly. Late papers will be penalized in proportion to their lateness. Don’t copy anyone else’s work - plagiarism on any written assignment will automatically earn a failing grade for the course. Please make sure you cite all sources used with appropriate references. If you use the internet, cite every webpage you use and note which quotations in your paper came from each. Please ask me if you are unsure whether your use of a source or method of citation constitutes plagiarism. Copying your assignment from an outside source is a waste of my time and yours and will cause you to fail the course: please don’t.

**VII. Description of Assignments.**

A. **Attendance and Class Participation:** Your attendance will be graded as a percentage of total classes attended, on the normal scale (90% A-, 80% B-, etc.) You can earn substantial extra credit for good class participation. People who arrive late or leave early will only receive credit for attending half a class.

B. **Papers:** During the semester you will be asked to write a 5 full page paper on a chosen topic four times. Topic lists will be provided; students may write on course-relevant topics of their own devising with instructor permission. The papers will be due later on in the months of September, October, November, and December respectively, with the final paper due by email at the scheduled final exam period on December 19. Topic sheets should be handed out at least three classes in advance of when the paper is due.

All your papers should be thesis papers, meaning that they defend some definite claim about the teachers we are reading and/or their views, which you state in your opening paragraph, try to defend and support in various ways throughout the body of your paper, and restate, perhaps in a modified form to reflect your discussion, in your concluding paragraph. Papers will be graded both on how well you understand the issues and readings you are discussing and on the quality and creativity of your discussion and the arguments you make to defend your point of view. Poor or incomplete assignments will receive correspondingly lower grades.

Three of these papers will have philosophical topics; the fourth will be on an existentialist author of your choosing and will primarily focus on the statement you think that work makes about the human condition and how it relates to the work of one existentialist philosopher we read for the course. This will either be the third or the fourth paper due for the course.
Appendix E: Syllabus for Philosophy of Human Rights

PHI 3290: Philosophy of Human Rights

Course Description

This course addresses the central issues in the philosophy of human rights. We will discuss questions on the foundation, content, and application of human rights. The course examines different approaches to the foundation of human rights and considers whether human rights have one unique foundation or plural foundations. In regard to the content of human rights, our main task is to identify rights that have the feature of universality. Should the list contain only negative rights (e.g. the right against slavery) or include positive rights (e.g. the right to subsistence)? The universality of one of the most contested rights – the right to democracy – will be examined. We will also consider categories of right-holders (e.g. women and LGBT) whose concerns fail to be addressed by the established human rights framework. The course also examines the relativist challenge against the global implementation and enforcement of human rights. How do universalists defend the application of a single set of moral and political norms to all societies in a pluralist world? Can international human rights law apply to societies that uphold values incompatible with human rights? We will also examine the role of human rights in determining the legitimacy of states and justice of war.

Required Text


Course Requirements

- Exams (40%): There will be two essay exams. A set of study questions (from which exam questions are drawn) will be provided. There will be no make-up exams without a documented excuse stating an emergency.
- Class participation (20%): Everyone is expected to attend every class and participate in discussions of assigned readings.
- 10-15 page term paper (40%): Written paper topics are due on Thursday, March 7th. Any issue that appears in the readings or raised during class discussions can be a paper topic. If you want comments on a draft of your term paper, please send it to me by Thursday, March 28th as an attachment in Word. The final paper is due on Thursday, April 18th.
I. Moral Foundation

• Martha Nussbaum, “Capabilities and Human Rights” (Hayden, 212-234).
• Abdullahi An-Na’im, “Human Rights in the Muslim World” (Hayden, 315-334).

II. Negative v. Positive Rights

• Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Hayden, 353-358).
• Maurice Cranston, “Human Rights, Real and Supposed” (Hayden, 163-173).

III. Women’s Rights

• Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (Hayden, 660-668).
• Susan Moller Okin, “Is Multiculturalism Bad for Women?” *Is Multiculturalism Bad for Women?* [Handout]

**MIDTERM EXAM: Thursday, February 21st**

IV. Democratic Rights


V. Gay, Lesbian and Minority Rights

• Martha Nussbaum, “Lesbian and Gay Rights” (Hayden, 574-597).
VI. Relativist Challenge


VII. International Human Rights Law


VIII. War and Humanitarian Intervention


FINAL EXAM: Thursday, April 25, 1:20-3:50PM
Appendix F: Syllabus for Philosophy of Sex and Gender

PHI 5260: Philosophy of Sex and Gender

Professor John Corvino, Ph.D.  E-mail: j.corvino@wayne.edu
Department of Philosophy  Phone: (313) 577-2475
5057 Woodward (Maccabees), Rm. 12202.3  Hours:

Description:

Sex is a crucial and pervasive aspect of human life, yet it rarely receives much attention in academic settings. This course remedies that omission by investigating ethical and conceptual issues surrounding sex, gender, and sexual orientation. Specific topics include conceptual analysis of sex, gender, and sexual orientation; sexual perversion, natural law, consent, marriage, adultery, “casual” sex, polygamy and polyamory, prostitution, and pornography.

This course includes frank discussions of sex.

This course places considerable emphasis on good writing. Although most of the papers are short, you should expect to do a substantial amount of work on them if you desire good grades.

Learning Outcomes:

The successful student in this course will…

- learn major themes in contemporary philosophical debates about sex, gender, and sexual orientation
- increase skill at developing and evaluating arguments
- increase understanding of human diversity in sexual orientation, gender, and sexual expression
- increase skill at clear and concise expression in writing

This course requires your consistent, careful preparation and active participation.

Required Texts:

- various other materials provided

Evaluation:

- Roughly half of your final grade will be determined by your various short papers (500-word maximum). At least eight short papers must be handed in. See last page of syllabus for detailed description of the papers.

- Roughly half of your final grade will be determined by your term paper (3000-word maximum). Due April 14.

- Class participation may increase or decrease your final grade by half a letter grade. This class will be conducted seminar-style, and your regular thoughtful involvement is essential.
Policies and Procedures

1. **Attendance:** You are required to attend class sessions regularly (and on-time) and are responsible for the material covered therein. Classes may cover material that is not in the text; therefore, when you are absent, you should obtain notes from a classmate.

2. **Office Hours:** I encourage you to visit my office to ask questions, to expand on issues raised in class, or to discuss philosophy in general. I am happy to make appointments if regular hours are inconvenient.

3. **Grading:** The following are rough criteria for each of the five grade ranges; plusses and minuses will be assigned proportionately (i.e. 90-92=A-; 87-89=B+; 83-86=B; 80-82=B-; and so on).
   - **A:** (90-100) demonstrates exceptional understanding of material (including details), contributes frequently and insightfully to class discussion, writes in a clear and compelling manner, shows considerable amount of original thought.
   - **B:** (80-89) demonstrates above-average understanding of material (including details), contributes frequently and positively to class discussion, writes in a clear and cogent manner, shows some original thought.
   - **C:** (70-79) typically understands material but occasionally misses important points, contributes to class discussion, writes in a moderately clear manner.
   - **D:** (60-69) frequently misses important points, rarely contributes to class discussion, writes in a generally unclear or confused manner.
   - **F:** (failing; below 60) demonstrates serious misunderstanding of material, writes at a level unacceptable for college students.

4. **Drops and Withdrawals:** University policy imposes the following deadlines:
   - Friday January 17: Last day for tuition cancellation for courses dropped.
   - Sunday, February 2: Last day to drop without having course appear on academic record; after this date, students are assigned a WP, WF, or WN for courses from which they officially withdraw. Withdrawals after this date require a request on Pipeline and professor’s approval.
   - Sunday, March 23: Last day to withdraw with professor’s approval.
   
   Note that the X grade can no longer be assigned; if you stop attending without withdrawing, you will receive an F. Students who receive approval to withdraw after the fourth week will receive a WP (withdrawal with a passing grade earned to date), WF (withdrawal with a failing grade earned to date), or WN (withdrawal with no grade earned to date).

5. **Scholastic Dishonesty:** I strictly enforce University policies on scholastic dishonesty. Violators face penalties ranging from failure in the course to dismissal from the University. See me if you are uncertain about what constitutes acceptable use and citation of research materials, and consult the Dean of Students’ Office (DOSO) website for university guidelines. (Note: your short papers need only include a parenthetical page number when citing assigned readings.)

6. **Paperwork:** Barring unforeseen circumstances, I will typically hand back all work within one week of receiving it. You should keep a hard copy of all work returned.

7. **Blackboard:** All students are expected to maintain e-mail accounts and to monitor Blackboard, the course’s website (blackboard.wayne.edu). Please use this site for course-related matters only.

8. **Students with Disabilities:** Students with disabilities should register with the Student Disability Services Office (formerly EAS), 313-577-1851, and see me regarding any needed accommodations.

9. **Respect:** This course will cover clashing viewpoints on sensitive topics. An attitude of mutual respect is crucial. Also, members of the class may occasionally share personal information in the course of class discussion. Unless told otherwise, you should treat these revelations as confidential.
Tentative Course Outline:

The following outline is tentative, since the interests and needs of the class will influence the direction of the course. I will announce specific assignments in class. Readings marked with a * will be provided via Blackboard or in class; all other readings are from the Power/Halwani/Soble anthology.

I. Sex and Perversion (Weeks 1-3)
Christina, “Are We Having Sex Now or What?”
Soble, “The Analytic Categories of the Philosophy of Sex”

Nagel, “Sexual Perversion”
Moulton, “Sexual Behavior: Another Position”
Goldman, “Plain Sex”

Morgan, “Sex in the Head”
Soble, “On Jacking Off, Yet Again”
Portmann, “Chatting is Not Cheating”

II. Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (Weeks 4-6)
Corvino, “Social Constructionism” (entry from EPS) *
Plato, selection from Symposium *

Boswell, “Revolutions, Universals, and Sexual Categories” *

Halperin, “Sex Before Sexuality”*
Mohr, “The Thing of It Is” (selection from Gay Ideas)*
Wilkerson, “What Is ‘Sexual Orientation’?”*

Bettcher, “Trans Women and the Meaning of ‘Woman’”
Overall, “Trans Persons, Cisgender Persons, and Gender Identities”
Vernallis, “Bisexual Marriage”

III. Marriage (Weeks 7-9)
Girgis, “Making Sense of Marriage?”*
Corvino, “The Definition of Marriage”*

Kurtz, “Beyond Gay Marriage: The Road to Polyamory”
Corvino, “Same-Sex Marriage: They’ll Just Never Get It”*

Calhoun, “In Defense of Same-Sex Marriage”
Card, “Gay Divorce: Thoughts on the Legal Regulation of Marriage”
Warner, selection from The Trouble with Normal* March 10-14 Spring Break

IV. Objectification and Consent: Theoretical Issues (Weeks 10-11)
Mappes, “Sexual Morality and the Concept of Using Another Person”
Klepper, “Sexual Exploitation and the Value of Persons”

Cahill, “Why ‘Derivatization’ is Better than “Objectification””

Wertheimer, “Consent and Sexual Relations”
West, “The Harms of Consensual Sex”
Benatar, “Two Views of Sexual Ethics: Promiscuity, Pedophilia, and Rape”

V. Objectification and Consent: Applied Topics (Weeks 12-15)
Nussbaum, “Taking Money for Bodily Services”
Halwani, “On Fucking Around”

Pineau, “Date Rape: a Feminist Analysis”
Baber, “How Bad Is Rape? –II”
Brison, “Surviving Sexual Violence”

Mason-Grant, “Pornography As Embodied Practice”
Power, “Cheap Thrills: A Call for More Pornography”
Guidelines for Short Papers

Roughly half of your grade in this class will come from short (500-word maximum) papers. There are two types of such papers—summaries and critical discussions—and you must do at least four of each. Furthermore, you must hand in at least one paper for each of the five units of the course.

(1) Summaries: These provide a coherent overview of either (a) the reading as whole or (b) some significant argument within the reading. Instead of a play-by-play report (e.g. “First, she writes…then she writes…then she writes”) of every single point, aim for a concise presentation of the main points in an integrated summary. These will be graded primarily for clarity (including grammar and mechanics) and accuracy. **They are due on the day the reading is to be discussed.**

(2) Critical discussions: These are not merely summaries (although they will require some summary); instead, they are evaluations of arguments within the readings. They may address the overall argument or any sub-argument. One way to do these is to offer a thoughtful criticism of an author’s argument; another is to defend the author against some criticism offered elsewhere. In either case, you will be taking some stance on the reading (or portion thereof) that you discuss and backing that stance up with philosophical argument. These will be graded not only on their clarity and accuracy but also on their rigor (including originality and plausibility). **They are due within one week of the reading’s being discussed in class.**

Please be clear on what these papers are not. First, they are not “reflection papers” where you simply jot down your opinions without engaging in careful analysis. And they are not research papers: you need not consult any literature other than the readings assigned, although if you do so, be sure to cite it appropriately.

Guidelines for both types of papers:

**All papers are to be 500-words maximum (strictly enforced), typed, double-spaced, left-justified only, neatly formatted, stapled, and free of spelling and grammatical errors. Your name should appear on the back of the last page of the paper only. You should include a word count at the end of the paper. Citations to assigned readings may be provided by a simple page number in parentheses. Consult “Tips on Writing” on Blackboard for pointers.**

Remember: (a) you must hand in at least 8 of these papers; (b) at least four must be summaries and four must be critical discussions, and (c) you must hand in at least one for each unit.

You may hand in more than eight if you like; your short-paper grade will be an average for all handed in, with some credit being given for improvement over the course of the semester.

**Do not hesitate to ask me if you have any questions concerning these papers.**