**COURSE DESCRIPTIONS**

**GRADUATE COURSES, Spring 2020**

**Recent Anglo- American: History of Speech Act Theory**

Deborah Tollefsen

Philosophy 4422/6422, CL 333

Monday 2:30-5:30

<Theoretical>

We do things with words. We insult, we question, we promise, we joke, we accuse, and so on. Historically, the “action-character” of language was minimized and thought to represent a non-standard use of language. Thomas Reid is thought to be an exception. He discusses various “social operations” and “social acts” in the context of language use. But it is not until the early 20th century that philosophers of language begin to explore the multiple uses of language. This course will explore the history of “Speech Act” Theory, from its beginning in the work of Frege and Russell (who pointed out that the surface structure of sentences does not always track their logical structure), to Wittgenstein (who introduced the notion of meaning as use), through the work of ordinary language philosophers such as J.L. Austin. The last quarter of the semester will focus on contemporary applications of speech act theory in the following areas: debates regarding the harm of pornography, debates regarding the harm of derogatory speech, and debates regarding the nature of group speech acts.

Tentative course requirements:

1. Undergraduates: 10-12 page paper, 5 reading summaries
2. Graduate Students: 15-20 page paper, 5 reading summaries, presentation

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| **Recent Continental Philosophy** |  |

Shaun Gallagher

PHIL 4441/6441, CL 333

R 2:30-5:30

<Theoretical>

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course focuses on phenomenology, especially the phenomenology of the body in Merleau-Ponty, and criticisms of his philosophy from the perspective of race (e.g., Fanon) and gender (e.g., Iris Young). We will also consider embodied skilled performance, including Dreyfus and his critics with applications to athletics and the performing arts (dance, acting and musical performance). (This is a hybrid course – some sessions will be online; most will be in class).

**Texts**

Most texts that we will consider will be available online.

**Requirements**:

1. A one-page research proposal and bibliography. 10%
2. A 12-15 page research paper. 70%
3. Class and online participation: 20%

**Seminar in Classical Philosophy**

Aristotle’s Metaphysics

Tim Roche

Phil 7201/8201, CL 333

M 5:35-8:35

<History>

**Course Description**

A recent book begins with the words “No work of philosophy is more important than Aristotle’s *Metaphysics*. No work of philosophy is more difficult for both beginners and experienced philosophers.” Some might question these claims, but no one who has studied the history of philosophy could reasonably say they are far from the truth. The tremendous influence of Aristotle’s *Metaphysics* on the history of philosophy is enough to support the first proposition. The fact that brilliant philosophers still argue fiercely about the proper interpretation of key components of the work lends support to the second.

In this course, we endeavor to understand the main problems considered in Aristotle’s *Metaphysics* and his attempts to solve them. The word “metaphysics” becomes part of our language with the discovery of the 14 books written by Aristotle dealing with problems connected with being or substance (*ousia*). The original editors of these books did not find a title for them, but since they found them preceded by a treatise entitled *Physics*, they chose to refer to them as *Tōn Meta ta Phusika* ([Discussions] After [or Beyond] the Physics). A good portion of the semester will be devoted to working out the lessons of the enormously complicated discussions of the central books of the work *— Z*, H, and Θ. But we will also read most of the treatise and consult important recent secondary literature on Aristotle’s account of primary substance and its connections with the notions of form, matter, essence, the universal, the particular, actuality, potentiality, unity, identity, science, understanding, the nature and explanation of change, god, and the study of being *qua* being. Three interpretive problems will claim much of our attention. One is the problem concerning the very nature of the inquiry conducted in the *Metaphysics*, an inquiry Aristotle refers to as "first philosophy." Is it the specific science of theology, the more general inquiry into the nature of being as such, or is it, somehow, both? Alternatively, is Aristotle inconsistent in his answers to the most basic question we can ask about his investigation in the *Metaphysics*, namely, what is metaphysics? A second problem concerns the identity of Aristotle's crucially important notion of "primary substance." For he seems to cast doubt on the identification of primary substance with any of the most likely candidates: universal character, matter, form, or the compound of matter and form. Our third puzzle is whether form is universal, particular, or both. Difficulties seem to arise no matter what answer we give.

**Texts:**

*Aristotle. Metaphysics*. C.D.C. Reeve, trans., Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 2016. ISBN: 978-1-62466-439-7.

Other writings, including excerpts from Aristotle’s *Categories*, will be uploaded to the content section of the eCourseware site for the seminar.

**Requirements:**

Class participation, midterm paper (or class presentation), final research paper.

**Seminar: Major Figures**

**Deleuze and Guattari’s *What is Philosophy?***

Mary Beth Mader

PHIL 7203/8203, CL 333

T 2:30-5:30

<Theoretical>

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The seminar will consist in a close reading of Deleuze’s last book, co-authored with Félix Guattari, *What is Philosophy?* [*Qu’est-ce que la philosophie? [1991]*]. Some of the main topics addressed in the course will be the theory of the concept, conceptual personae, and the authors’ thought on science, art, philosophy and relations between these fields. The first part of the course will be devoted to background material of use for a general introduction to Deleuze’s thought. A significant portion of the course treats key historical and contemporary source texts to which Deleuze and Guattari refer in the book.

**Requirements**

*Seminar paper*. Students will write one 20-page seminar paper. (70%)

*Presentations*. Students will make two 10-15-minute presentations: (1) presentation on topic of your choice between weeks 3 and 10; (2) a presentation of a shortened version of the final paper. (10% each)

*Participation*. Regular, vocal participation in seminar sessions is expected of all. (10%)

Assessment will be made using the plus/minus grading scale.

**Seminar: Social and Political Philosophy**

**Social Issues in Contemporary Pragmatism**

Lindsey Stewart

PHIL 7541/8541, CL 333

R 5:35-8:35

<Practical>

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course will cover social issues in contemporary American pragmatism, with a specific focus on race, gender, and region. What kinds of resources has pragmatist thought lent to those struggling to define and bring about liberation? We will begin with early 20th century engagement with pragmatism by black philosophers (W. E. B. Du Bois, Alain Locke, Anna Julia Cooper, and Zora Neale Hurston). We will so study works by figures in the later 20th century, such as Cornel West’s *Prophesy Deliverance,* José Medina’s *The Epistemology of Resistance,* Elizabeth Anderson’s *The Imperative of Integration,* Eddie Glaude’s *In a Shade of Blue,* Paul Taylor’s *Black is Beautiful*,and Patricia Hill Collin’s recent *Intersectionality as Critical Social Theory.*

**COGNITIVE SCIENCE SEMINAR**

Pavlik

PHIL 7514/8514, FIT 405

W 2:20-5:20

<Theoretical>

Please contact Dr. Pavlik for the course information.