Graduate Courses » Fall 2008

517 Introduction to Logic for Advanced Students

Section	Day	Time	Instructor	Room	Reg Number
517	Th	9-11:50 AM	John Corcoran	Park 141	387788

This course provides the advanced student with the background concepts, goals, and results of modern mathematical and philosophical logic in sufficient breadth and depth to qualify the student to use logic in doctoral research (in philosophy, linguistics, cognitive science, etc.), to teach beginning logic courses, and to pursue more advanced courses having logic as a prerequisite. It also serves as an introduction to the axiomatic method presupposed by other courses. The intended audience includes intellectually mature graduate students with little or no previous logic and more advanced graduate students seeking mastery of fundamentals. Most examples come from geometry and number theory. Workshop-style lectures, notes, weekly reports, weekly exercises, student presentations, two (2) half-term exams. No final exam.

No prerequisites but graduate-level intellectual maturity and interest presupposed. Class participation expected. Mathematical maturity not required: no deep metatheorems will be proved.

Required Books: 1. Cohen & Nagel, *Introduction to Logic,* Hackett (paper). 2. Tarski, *Introduction to Logic and Methodology.* Dover (paper). 3. *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* (hardcover with CD-ROM).
Optional Books (in order of relevance):
1. Lemmon, *Beginning Logic.* Hackett (paper). 2. Church, *Introduction to Mathematical Logic*. Princeton UP (paper). 3. Hughes, *Philosophical Companion to First-order Logic*. Hackett (paper). 4. Crossley, *What is Mathematical Logic?* Dover (paper). 5. Suppes, *Introduction to Logic.* Dover (paper).
All available on Lockwood Reserve, from the UB Bookstore, and from Talking Leaves.

528 Philosophy of Language

Section	Day	Time	Instructor	Room	Reg Number
528	Th	1-2:50 PM	David Braun	Park 141	014346

The tentative topic of this course is questions. We will study the semantics of both interrogative sentences, such as 'Who is Thomas Edison?', and ascriptions of knowledge of questions, such as 'Mary knows who Thomas Edison is'. We will also discuss the alleged context-relativity of knowing-who, and the connections among questions and answers, knowing-how and abilities, and knowing-who and *de re* belief. The course will emphasize current research.

531 Problems in Ontology

Section	Day	Time	Instructor	Room	Reg Number
531	W	3-4:50 PM	Thomas Bittner	Park 141	203889

The topic of the class is Ontology for Geographic (Spatial) Information Science. This is an introductory class. The curriculum is conceived with no special prerequisites. The course will introduce the students to formal ontology and its applications in geography, archeology, ecology, and medicine. The course will cover fundamental issues of the ontology of space and time as well as specific aspects of the ontology of geographic space, geographic objects, and the geography of the human body. Alternatively, the course will also introduce the students to ontology as a discipline of information science and knowledge representation. As part of the course the students attend a workshop on problems in ontology. The students will get a first-hand experience of how interdisciplinary ontology research that is conducted at the National Center of Ontology Research (NCOR) is successfully applied in areas including biology and bio-medicine. Every student is required to write a paper of approximately 8-10 pages and to present this

paper in a 20 min talk in class. In their papers the students will present an ontology of some aspects of their area of expertise. An abstract of the paper should be submitted by the end of the first month the semester. A first draft of the paper should be submitted by mid-semester. The final version should be submitted by the end of the semester.

564 Aristotle

Section	Day	Time	Instructor	Room	Reg Number
564	T	5-6:50 PM	Jiyuan Yu	Park 141	170356

This seminar aims at a critical understanding of the ideas and arguments of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*. The *Nicomachean Ethics* is about how one can live his or her life well through the cultivation of moral character. It has been the most important classic in ethics, and has been the model in contemporary revival of virtue ethics. The major theories we study include happiness, moral virtue, moral education, emotion, practical wisdom, friendship, pleasure, contemplation, etc. We will also examine the epistemological, metaphysical and psychological foundations of Aristotle's ethics and the relation between his ethics and contemporary virtue ethics.
Text: *The Complete Works of Aristotle: The Revised Oxford Translation* (ed. By J.Barnes, Princeton, 2 vols.). If you have Greek, consult Oxford classical texts or Loeb.

566 Medieval Philosophy

Section	Day	Time	Instructor	Room	Reg Number
566	W	5-6:50 PM	Jorge Gracia	Park 141	453029

This course will concentrate on three issues that were at the core of medieval philosophy: the problem of universals, the problem of individuation, and the problem posed by the relation between faith and reason in knowledge. Other problems, such as the nature of freewill and determinism, and the arguments for the existence of God might be introduced, but only to illustrate positions taken by authors with respect to the central problems discussed in the course. Readings will be from the central figures in medieval philosophy: Abelard, Anselm, Augustine, Aquinas, Scotus, Ockham, and Suarez. Most readings will be from primary sources and will require attention and care because of the technical vocabulary, but they will be relatively brief. There will not be student presentations, but students are expected to participate actively in class discussion. A problems approach to the historical materials will be used to help students acquire both historical and philosophical understandings. Students will have two choices for written work: one take-home exam and one short paper, or two take-home exams.

575 Introduction to Cognitive Science

Section	Day	Time	Instructor	Room	Reg Number
575	TTh	9:30-10:50 AM	William Rapaport	Capen 10	007030

An introduction to cognitive science, an interdisciplinary approach to the computational study of human cognition. Methodology, assumptions, and research problems of cognitive science and such cognitive-science disciplines as anthropology, artificial intelligence, linguistics, neurosciences, philosophy, psychology, etc. Emphasis will be placed on joint efforts of these disciplines in investigating issues in the nature of the mind, intelligence, language, perception, memory, etc. Students will be encouraged to participate in colloquia sponsored by the Center for Cognitive Science.
Prerequisites: Graduate standing, or permission of instructor.

596 Graduate Dissertation Seminar

Section Day Time Instructor Room

596	T	7-9 PM	Neil Williams	Park 141

This course will be a required course for all philosophy graduate students who have completed their coursework and are now either preparing a thesis topical or writing thesis chapters. Students may enroll more than once, and are encouraged to do so, but if space is limited priority will be given to students working on topicals. The aim is to help students complete their dissertations in a more timely manner, and achiever greater success with career placement.

Typically offered in the Fall of each year, this course is a writing intensive course with a central presentation component. Course content is entirely dictated by the dissertation topics students are engaged in?students will be presenting original work in preparation for thesis prospectus or dissertation chapters. All students will get exposure to the issues covered by their peers, and gain useful presentation skills and practice. Students will be instructed in how to improve their presentation skills, and will receive oral feedback from their peers, and oral and written feedback from the instructor. Attendance is mandatory (within reason); all students will present at least once, more times if enrollment permits. The course will be graded Pass/Fail.

This course will be a required course for all graduate students; graduate students who will be starting their 5th year (or beyond) in the 2008-9 school year will be exempt this requirement, but are still welcome to enroll.

598 Ecological and Environmental Restoration

Section	Day	Time	Instructor	Room	Reg Number
598	T	2-4:50 PM	Kenneth Shockley	Park 141	007825

This course will examine humanistic, social, and technological dimensions of ecological restoration from Native American Ecocentric, multicultural and analytic perspectives. This examination will incorporate the inherently multidisciplinary nature of ecological restoration. The relationship between restoration and human ecology, including matters of culture, social context, and situated knowledge, will be emphasized. Current and recent case studies will be analyzed, and the applicability of policies associated with those case studies considered. The underlying notions of restoration, sustainability, adaptation, and ecosystem will be critically examined, both conceptually and normatively.

637 Three Dimentionalsim--Four Dimensionalism

Section	Day	Time	Instructor	Room	Reg Number
637	W	1-2:50 PM	Maureen Donnelly	Park 141	280291

In this course we will compare three-dimensionalist and four-dimensionalist ontologies, including both worm theory and stage theory (the two main variants of Four Dimensionalism). Among other things, we will consider: i) alternate formulations of the distinction between Three Dimensionalism and Four Dimensionalism; ii) specific metaphysical problems that one or the other position is supposed to solve; iii) arguments that Three Dimensionalism and Four Dimensionalism are (in some sense) equivalent; and iv) recent adaptations of Three Dimensionalism and Four Dimensionalism to a relativistic spatiotemporal framework. Readings for this course will include works by David Lewis, Judith Jarvis Thomson, Mark Heller, Peter van Inwagen, Theodore Sider, and Katherine Hawley. Grading will be based on weekly written assignments on the readings, one class presentation, and one paper.