

**GRADUATE SEMINAR COURSES  
FALL 2017**

Department of Philosophy  
Colorado State University

**PHIL501.001      Prof. Andre Archie  
crn 78857**

**Seminar: Topics in History of Philosophy  
Mon Wed, 3:00p – 4:15p, Eddy 108**

***Plato's Republic***

The central question when reading Plato's *Republic* is: How should we read Plato's dialogues? How we read them has much to do with what we suppose philosophy is. Each new philosophical approach gives us a different Plato, but my operating assumption is that we can be guided by the dialogues themselves in determining how they should be read. We should begin by recognizing that Plato writes dialogues rather than treatises. So he does not just announce his positions. We should also notice that Plato is not a direct participant in the dialogues. We should also notice that the dialogues do not have heavyweights conversing. That is, the dialogues do not present us major philosophers in discussion. Rather there is a big-time philosopher in discussion with lesser figures. So the dialogues are not like a philosophy conference or highly professional interchange but a pedagogical interaction. Some immediate conclusions about the dialogues or possibilities for them that these considerations may suggest to us: **1.** They avoid saying anything definite, and they try out different positions. Plato often hedges or takes back. (There may be some political and epistemological necessity for the dialogue form.) **2.** Questioning has no closure. Education must be ever upward. **3.** Philosophy takes its rise from ordinary conversation. We may say as well, in Aristotle's terminology, that dialectic begins from the *endoxa*. In exploring topics the dialogues suggest that we begin from ordinary views and seek to refine them. **4.** The dialogues allow us to put philosophical views in connection with various characters that might hold them. Doctrines thus come into connection with the lives and characters of those who might hold them. **5.** The dialogue confronts us with multiple perspectives. There are the perspectives of the various speakers, of various listeners to the conversation, and of the reader of the dialogue.

The goal of this seminar is to help you become sophisticated or adequate readers of Plato's *Republic*. A way of doing this is to have us take very seriously the content of the dialogue. The content is the conversation and argumentation that occurs within it. My goal for the seminar is to work through the entire *Republic*, with added emphasis on the relationship between political philosophy and the epistemological books.

**PHIL535.001      Prof. Moti Gorin  
crn 78858**

**Seminar in Metaphysics  
Mon, 4:30p – 7:20p, Eddy 120**

Do human beings have free will? Is the existence of free will compatible with a deterministic universe, that is, a universe in which every event (or every macro-level event)—including human choices and actions—is determined by the state of the universe at an earlier time and the laws of nature? What kind of freedom must we have in order for us to be the kind of beings we seem to ourselves to be, that is, agents whose actions are in some fundamental sense “up to us,” such that we are morally responsible for our choices and actions? If it turns out that we lack the sort of free will required for moral responsibility, what should we say about our practices of praising, blaming, rewarding, and punishing? Have developments in neuroscience shown free will to be an illusion?

This seminar will explore these questions, among others. Though we briefly will cover some figures from the history of philosophy, we will focus most of our attention on work done over the last century, up to and including recently published work.

**PHIL564.R01      Prof. Bernie Rollin**  
**crn 67769**

**Seminar in Animal Rights**  
**Thu, 3:30p – 6:00p, Eddy 120**

It was not until the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century that society began to concern itself with the treatment and moral status of animals. The first animal ethics books were written in the 1970s By Peter Singer and Bernard Rollin, and since then the literature has increased exponentially. In this class, we develop a theory of animal ethics that follows from what we believe of human ethics. We then apply the theory to the major use of animals in society, including animal agriculture, animal research and testing, animals in entertainment, and use of animals as companions. In the course of our discussion we examine numerous basic issues such as what animal mind is and how we can know it; the significance of death to animals; and animal ethics in contrast with environmental ethics.

**PHIL565.001      Prof. Philip Cafaro**  
**crn 78859**

**Seminar in Environmental Philosophy**  
**Tue, 6:00p – 8:50p, Eddy 120**

This seminar is built around answering the question: what is an adequate environmental ethics for the Anthropocene Era? Topics explored will include geoengineering, species extinction and the moral considerability of nonhuman beings, population ethics, and consumption and wealth as they relate to living good lives. Participants will write a short (mid-term) paper and a longer (end-of-term) paper, and take turns introducing the readings and helping guide class discussions.