ETHICS IN SOCIETY (ETHICSOC)

ETHICSOC 105. Philosophy of Disability. 4 Units.
This course is an introduction to the ethical and political issues concerning disability. It aims to provide students with a set of tools to think critically about the connections between our ideas about disability, interpersonal relationships and political institutions. The first part of the course explores different conceptions of disability, and their relationships to ideas such as impairment, disorder, disease, dependence, disadvantage. The second part of the course considers how these conceptions interact with or shape the fundamental ideas around which our interpersonal relationships and common institutions are built. What standards of care and non-interference are reasonable? What does it mean to be independent, free, equal or have political representation? How might these ideas be re-configured if we conceptualize disability differently?
Same as: PHIL 75E

ETHICSOC 106. Human Rights in Comparative and Historical Perspective. 3-5 Units.
This course examines core human rights issues and concepts from a comparative and historical perspective. In the beginning part of the course we will focus on current debates about the universality of human rights norms, considering the foundation of the international human rights regime and claims that it is a product of western colonialism, imperialism, or hegemony. We will then discuss a series of issues where the debates about universality are particularly acute: gender inequality and discrimination, sexual violence, child marriage and forced marriage more generally, and other related topics. We will also consider the way in which issues of gender-based violence arise in the context of internal and international conflicts.
Same as: CLASSICS 116, HUMRTS 106

ETHICSOC 107. Rethinking Meat: An Introduction to Alternative Proteins. 1 Unit.
How do we feed a growing population in the face of climate change? Will Impossible Burgers become the new norm? Are you curious to learn about a frontier in bio- and chemical-engineering? Are you passionate about animal rights, human health, and sustainable agriculture? Learn about the environmental, ethical, and economic drivers behind the market for meat replacements. We’ll take a deep dive into the science and technology used to develop emerging plant, fermentation and cell-based meat alternatives and explore the political challenges and behavioral adaptation needed to decrease meat consumption. Hear from entrepreneurs, researchers, and innovative startups developing sustainable and marketable alternative proteins through weekly guest lectures from industry leaders.
Same as: EARTHSYS 109, EARTHSYS 209, ESS 103, ESS 203

ETHICSOC 109. On Condoned Violence: from Punishment to Pleasure. 4-5 Units.
This course offers students an introduction to issues surrounding the ways in which punishment and violence have been justified in the Western tradition. The readings address condoned violence broadly understood, covering a wide array of practices that produce suffering, but are considered justifiable to one degree or another by states or societies: judicial punishment, incarceration, the death penalty, pornography, and industrial farming practices, among others. We shall not discuss war, but will focus instead on domestic phenomena. By considering how such forms of violence are justified, the course aims to critically approach the notion that human societies are generally moving towards greater kindness and empathy. This seminar will bring together texts from political theory and political philosophy, legal theory, comparative politics, alongside several other cultural attachés. This class is on the Pre-Approved Courses list for the Political Science department.
Same as: PHIL 79Y

ETHICSOC 121. History of Political Philosophy. 4 Units.
Nation-states issue legal commands, and wield overwhelming power to coercively enforce them. On one hand, this allows states to protect people from each other. On the other hand, what protects people from the state, even if is democratic, when it facilitates domination and oppression of some citizens by others? In this course we are introduced to authors grappling with these issues in the evolving canon of Western political philosophy from ancient Greece to the 20th century. This takes us through questions about obligation, the state, consent, rights, democracy, property, free speech, socialism, gender, race. Authors whose arguments we will study and scrutinize include Plato, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Marx, Mill, Wollstonecraft, Douglass, and Rawls, along with critics and commentators.
Same as: PHIL 121, PHIL 221

ETHICSOC 121N. Ethics of Sports. 3 Units.
This seminar will be focused on the ethical challenges that are encountered in sport. We will focus on the moral and political issues that affect the world of sport and which athletes, coaches, sports commentators and fans are faced with. For instance, we will ask questions such as: what is a fair game (the ethics of effort, merit, success)? Is it ethical to train people to use violence (the ethics of martial arts)? Are divisions by gender categories justified and what should we think of gender testing? Is the use of animals in sport ever justified? Which forms of performance enhancements are acceptable in sport (the ethics of drug use and enhancements through technologies)? Should we ban sports that damage the players’ health? Does society owe social support to people who hurt themselves while practicing extreme sports? The class will be structured around small group discussions and exercises as well as brief lectures to introduce key moral and political concepts (such as fairness, equality, freedom, justice, exploitation, etc.). I will also bring guests speakers who are involved in a sport activity at Stanford or who have worked on sports as part of their academic careers. By the end of the seminar, students will have a good understanding of the various ethical challenges that surround the world of sport. They will be able to critically discuss sport activities, norms, modes of assessments and policies (on campus and beyond). They will also be prepared to apply the critical ethical thinking that they will have deployed onto other topics than sports. They will have been introduced to the normative approach to social issues, which consists in asking how things should be rather than describing how things are. They will be prepared to take more advanced classes in ethics, political theory, as well as moral and political philosophy.
Same as: PHIL 21N

ETHICSOC 124G. Introduction to Animal Ethics. 2 Units.
In this introductory course we will engage in an interdisciplinary discussion about the theoretical and applied aspects of animal rights and the ethical treatment of animals. This course will be of interest to a wide range of students: philosophers, political scientists, ecologists, environmental scientists, and biologists. Throughout the course we will focus on the following questions: Do non-human animals have moral status and do we have moral obligations toward them? If so, what grounds the moral status of animals? Are some animals ‘persons’? Do we have the right to eat and farm animals, use them in scientific and cosmetic experiments, display them in zoos and circuses, and keep them as pets? Under what circumstances would these actions be permissible, if at all? Was animal domestication a mistake? Basic familiarity with ethical theory (such as covered by PHIL2) is recommended.
Same as: PHIL 24G
ETHICSOC 130. 20th Century Political Theory: Liberalism and its Critics. 5 Units.
In this course, students learn and engage with the debates that have animated political theory since the early 20th century. What is the proper relationship between the individual, the community, and the state? Are liberty and equality in conflict, and, if so, which should take priority? What does justice mean in a large and diverse modern society? The subtitle of the course, borrowed from a book by Michael Sandel, is "Liberalism and its Critics" because the questions we discuss in this class center on the meaning of, and alternatives to, the liberal idea that the basic goal of society should be the protection of individual rights. Readings include selections from works by John Rawls, Hannah Arendt, Robert Nozick, Michael Sandel, Iris Marion Young, and Martha Nussbaum. No prior experience with political theory is necessary.
Same as: PHIL 171P; POLISCI 130

ETHICSOC 130A. Classical Seminar: Origins of Political Thought. 3-5 Units.
Political philosophy in classical antiquity, centered on reading canonical works of Thucydides, Plato, Aristotle against other texts and against the political and historical background. Topics include: interdependence, legitimacy, justice; political obligation, citizenship, and leadership; origins and development of democracy; law, civic strife, and constitutional change.
Same as: CLASSICS 181, CLASSICS 381, PHIL 176A, PHIL 276A, POLISCI 230A, POLISCI 330A

ETHICSOC 131S. Modern Political Thought: Machiavelli to Marx and Mill. 5 Units.
This course is an introduction to the history of Western political thought from the late fifteenth century through the nineteenth century. We will consider the secularization of politics, the changing relationship between the individual and society, the rise of consent-based forms of political authority, and the development and critiques of liberal concepts of property. We will cover the following thinkers: Machiavelli, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Burke, Mill, and Marx. nnIn Spring 2021, course lectures will be asynchronous. Discussion sections will be synchronous but scheduled to accommodate a range of time zones. There will also be an optional synchronous lecture discussion session each week with Professor McQueen for interested students.
Same as: POLISCI 131L

ETHICSOC 131X. Ethics in Bioengineering. 3 Units.
Bioengineering focuses on the development and application of new technologies in the biology and medicine. These technologies often have powerful effects on living systems at the microscopic and macroscopic level. They can provide great benefit to society, but they may also be used in dangerous or damaging ways. These effects may be positive or negative, and so it is critical that bioengineers understand the basic principles of ethics when thinking about how the technologies they develop can and should be applied. On a personal level, every bioengineer should understand the basic principles of ethical behavior in the professional setting. This course will involve substantial writing, and will use case-study methodology to introduce both societal and personal ethical principles, with a focus on practical applications.
Same as: BIOE 131

ETHICSOC 133. Ethics and Politics of Public Service. 3-5 Units.
Ethical and political questions in public service work, including volunteering, service learning, humanitarian assistance, and public service professions such as medicine and teaching. Motives and outcomes in service work. Connections between service work and justice. Is mandatory service an oxymoron? History of public service in the U.S. Issues in crosscultural service work. Integration with the Haas Center for Public Service to connect service activities and public service aspirations with academic experiences at Stanford.
Same as: CSRE 178, PHIL 175A, PHIL 275A, POLISCI 133, PUBLPOL 103D, URBANST 122

ETHICSOC 134. Ethics for Activists. 5 Units.
Activists devote sustained effort and attention toward achieving particular goals of social and political change. Do we have an ethical obligation to be activists? And how should those who do choose to be activists (for whatever reason) understand the ethics of that role? Questions discussed in this course may include: When is civil disobedience appropriate, and what does it entail? Should activists feel constrained by obligations of fairness, honesty, or civility toward those with whom we disagree? Are there special ethical considerations in activism on behalf of those who cannot advocate for themselves? What is solidarity and what does it require of us? Students in this course will develop skills in analyzing, evaluating, and constructing logical arguments about ethical concerns related to activism, but class discussions will also address the potential limitations of logical argument in ethical and political reasoning.
Same as: POLISCI 134

ETHICSOC 134R. The Ethics of Elections. 5 Units.
Do you have a duty to vote? Should immigrants be allowed to vote? Should we make voting mandatory? How (if at all) should we regulate campaign finance? Should we even have elections at all? In this course, we will explore these and other ethical questions related to electoral participation and the design of electoral institutions. We will evaluate arguments from political philosophers, political scientists, and politicians to better understand how electoral systems promote important democratic values and how this affects citizens' and political leaders' ethical obligations. We will focus, in particular, on issues in electoral design that have been relevant in recent US elections (e.g. gerrymandering), though many of the ethical issues we will discuss in this course will be relevant in any electoral democracy.
Same as: POLISCI 132A

ETHICSOC 135. Citizenship. 5 Units.
This class begins from the core definition of citizenship as membership in a political community and explores the many debates about what that membership means. Who is (or ought to be) a citizen? Who gets to decide? What responsibilities come with citizenship? Is being a citizen analogous to being a friend, a family member, a business partner? How can citizenship be gained, and can it ever be lost? These debates figure in the earliest recorded political philosophy but also animate contemporary political debates. This class uses ancient, medieval, and modern texts to examine these questions and different answers given over time. We pay particular attention to understandings of democratic citizenship but look at non-democratic citizenship as well. Students will develop and defend their own views on these questions, using the class texts as foundations. No experience with political philosophy is required or expected, and students can expect to learn or hone the skills (writing / reading / analysis) of political philosophy.
Same as: PHIL 135X; POLISCI 135

ETHICSOC 135F. Deliberative Democracy and its Critics. 3-5 Units.
This course examines the theory and practice of deliberative democracy and engages both in a dialogue with critics. Can a democracy which emphasizes people thinking and talking together on the basis of good information be made practical in the modern age? What kinds of distortions arise when people try to discuss politics or policy together? The course draws on ideas of deliberation from Madison and Mill to Rawls and Habermas as well as criticisms from the jury literature, from the psychology of group processes and from the most recent normative and empirical literature on deliberative forums. Deliberative Polling, its applications, defenders and critics, both normative and empirical, will provide a key case for discussion.
Same as: AMSTUD 135, COMM 135, COMM 235, COMM 335, POLISCI 234P, POLISCI 334P
ETHICSOC 135R. The Ethics of Democratic Citizenship. 5 Units.
We usually think about democratic citizenship in terms of rights and opportunities, but are these benefits of democracy accompanied by special obligations? Do citizens of a democracy have an obligation to take an interest in politics and to actively influence political decision making? How should citizens respond when a democracy’s laws become especially burdensome? Do citizens of a democracy have a special obligation to obey the law? In this course, we will read classical and contemporary political philosophy including Plato’s Crito and King’s “Letter from a Birmingham Jail” to explore how political thinkers have understood and argued for the ethics of citizenship. Students in this course will draw on these materials to construct their own arguments, and to identify and assess implicit appeals to the ethics of citizenship in popular culture and contemporary public discourse, from The Simpsons to President Obama’s speeches.
Same as: POLISCI 135D

ETHICSOC 136R. Introduction to Global Justice. 4 Units.
This course explores the normative demands and definitions of justice that transcend the nation-state and its borders, through the lenses of political justice, economic justice, and human rights. What are our duties (if any) towards those who live in other countries? Should we be held morally responsible for their suffering? What if we have contributed to it? Should we be asked to remedy it? At what cost? These are some of the questions driving the course. Although rooted in political theory and philosophy, the course will examine contemporary problems that have been addressed by other scholarly disciplines, public debates, and popular media, such as immigration and open borders, climate change refugees, and the morality of global capitalism (from exploitative labor to blood diamonds). As such, readings will combine canonical pieces of political theory and philosophy with readings from other scholarly disciplines, newspaper articles, and popular media.
Same as: INTNLREL 136R, PHIL 76, POLISCI 136R, POLISCI 336

ETHICSOC 145. The Ethics of Migration. 4 Units.
How should states treat immigrants and would-be immigrants? On what grounds can immigration be justly restricted, and through what means? This module engages with these complex questions by offering a broad overview of key issues in the ethics of migration and their relation to public policy. Guided by the tools of contemporary political philosophy, you will reflect closely upon a series of pressing issues including the basis of the state’s right to exclude non-citizens, the prospect of open borders and their tensions with egalitarian justice, the human right to free movement, and the rights of refugees and undocumented migrants.

ETHICSOC 146. Political Thought in Modern Asia. 5 Units.
The study of political theory in the United States has been accused of being Western-centric: We tend to focus on intellectual traditions from Plato to NATO, while ignoring the vast world of non-Western societies and the ways they think about politics and public life. How do Chinese thinkers conceptualize human rights and good governance? How do Indian intellectuals reconcile democracy and inherited hierarchies in Hinduism? How do Islamic scholars view the relationship between religious authority and secular authority? Should we regard liberal democracy, or Western civilization, more broadly, as representing the universal value guiding every society? Or, should we learn from non-Western ideas and values so as to solve problems plaguing Western societies? How can competing visions of good life coexist in a globalized and increasingly pluralistic world? This course aims to answer these questions by exploring three Asian traditions and their perspectives on politics: Confucianism, Hinduism, and Islam. We will focus on the modern period (19th-21st centuries) and the ways intellectuals in these societies respond to the challenge of modernity and Western superiority. Special attention is given to how these intellectuals conceive of the relationship between modernity and their respective traditions: Are they compatible or mutually exclusive? In which ways do intellectuals interpret these traditions so as to render them (in)compatible with modernity? We will read academic articles written by Anglophone scholars as well as original texts written by non-Western thinkers. No knowledge of non-Western languages is required.
Same as: POLISCI 235N

ETHICSOC 151. The First Amendment: Freedom of Speech and Press. 4-5 Units.
The First Amendment: Freedom of Speech and Press (7084): Introduction to the constitutional protections for freedom of speech, press, and expressive association. All the major Supreme Court cases dealing with issues such as incitement, libel, hate speech, obscenity, commercial speech, and campaign finance. There are no prerequisites, but a basic understanding of American government would be useful. This course is crosslisted in the university and undergraduates are eligible to take it. Elements used in grading: Law students will be evaluated based on class participation and a final exam. Non-law students will be evaluated on class participation, a midterm and final exam, and non-law students will participate in a moot court on a hypothetical case. Non-law students will also have an additional one hour discussion section each week led by a teaching assistant. Cross-listed with Communication (COMM 151, COMM 251) and Political Science (POLISCI 125P). Class time will be 11:10-12:40 on Mondays and Wednesdays.
Same as: COMM 151, COMM 251, POLISCI 125P

ETHICSOC 155. The Ethics And Politics of Effective Altruism. 4-5 Units.
What should I do? How should I live? These are the central questions that practical ethics seeks to answer. “Effective altruism” (EA), a growing school of thought and popular social movement, offers a clear and attractive response. It holds that we should try to do the best that we can for the world, and that we should do so on the basis of careful reasoning and reliable evidence. In a short amount of time, effective altruism has become a popular theoretical framework for thinking about our duties to others, and for navigating difficult practical questions. How much do I owe to others? To whom do I have obligations? How should I choose amongst different strategies for discharging these obligations? The course examines the theoretical assumptions behind effective altruism, its internal debates, external criticisms, and rival alternatives. We explore these questions in part by focusing on certain case studies that highlight different elements of the EA approach: organ donation, career choice, animal treatment, and global poverty. Guest lecturers, representing prominent advocates and critics of effective altruism, may also be added to the schedule, pending availability.
ETHICSOC 173. Introduction to Feminist Philosophy. 4 Units.
If feminism is a political practice aimed at ending patriarchy, what is the point of feminist philosophy? This course provides an introduction to feminist philosophy by exploring how important theoretical questions around sex and gender bear on practical ethical and political debates. The first part of the course will examine some of the broader theoretical questions in feminist philosophy, including: the metaphysics of gender, the demands of intersectionality, and feminist critiques of capitalism and liberalism. Questions will include: How should we understand the category 'woman'? How does gender intersect with other axes of oppression? Is capitalism inherently patriarchal? The second part of the course will address more applied topics of ethical and political debate, such as: objectification, pornography, consent, markets in women's sexual and reproductive labor, and the institution of marriage.
Same as: FEMGEN 173R, PHIL 90R

ETHICSOC 174. Ethics in a Human Life. 4 Units.
Ethical questions pervade a human life from before a person is conceived until after she dies, and at every point in between. This course raises a series of ethical questions, following along the path of a person's life - questions that arise before, during, and after she lives it. We will explore distinctive questions that a life presents at each of several familiar stages: prior to birth, childhood, adulthood, death, and even beyond. We will consider how some philosophers have tried to answer these questions, and we will think about how answering them might help us form a better understanding of the ethical shape of a human life as a whole.
Same as: HUMBIO 174A, PHIL 74A

ETHICSOC 174B. Universal Basic Income: the philosophy behind the proposal. 3 Units.
Universal basic income (or UBI) is a regular cash allowance given to all members of a community without means test, regardless of personal desert, and with no strings attached. Once a utopian proposal, the policy is now discussed and piloted throughout the world. The growth of income and wealth inequalities, the precariousness of labor, and the persistence of abject poverty have all been important drivers of renewed interest in UBI in the United States. But it is without a doubt the fear that automation may displace workers from the labor market at unprecedented rates that explains the revival of the policy in recent years, including by many in or around Silicon Valley. Among the various objections to the proposal, one concerns its moral adequacy. Isn't it fundamentally unjust to give cash to all indiscriminately rather than to those who need it and deserve it? Over the years, a variety of scholars have defended the policy on moral grounds, arguing that UBI is a tool of equality, liberal freedom, republican freedom, gender equity, or racial equity. Many others have attacked UBI on those very same grounds, making the case that alternative policy proposals like the job guarantee, means-tested benefits, conditional benefits, or reparations should be preferred. Students will learn a great deal about political theory and ethics in general but always through the specific angle of the policy proposal, and they will become experts on the philosophy, politics and economics of UBI. The seminar is open to undergraduate and graduate students in all departments. There are no pre-requisites.
Same as: ETHICSOC 274B, PHIL 174B, PHIL 274B, POLISCI 134E, POLISCI 338

ETHICSOC 174E. Egalitarianism: A course on the history and theory of egalitarianism and anti-egalitarianism. 4 Units.
Egalitarianism is a conception of justice that takes the value of equality to be of primary political and moral importance. There are many different ways to be an egalitarian - it all depends on what we take to be the currency of egalitarian justice. Are we trying to equalize basic rights and liberties, or resources, opportunities, positions, status, respect, welfare, or capabilities? Is equality really what we should try to achieve in a just society? Or should we just make sure everyone has enough? Why do egalitarians think that such society would still be unjust; and how do they proceed to argue for equality? This class will introduce students to egalitarian and anti-egalitarian thought by looking both at the history of egalitarian thinking and at contemporary accounts in defense of equality. It will provide an in depth introduction to the concepts that are used when inequalities are discussed by philosophers, economists, scientists and politicians. The class will attest of the varieties of approaches and perspectives to equality. For instance, we will learn from the 19th century debate on racial inequalities to understand how anti-egalitarian discourses are constructed; we will look into Rousseau's conception of social equality in the Second Discourse and the Social Contract; and we will engage with contemporary egalitarian theories by studying Rawlsian and post-Rawlsian forms of egalitarianism.
Same as: PHIL 174E, PHIL 274E, POLISCI 138E

ETHICSOC 175B. Philosophy of Law. 4 Units.
This course will explore foundational issues about the nature of law and its relation to morality, and about legal responsibility and criminal punishment. Prerequisite: graduate student standing in philosophy or, for others, prior course work in philosophy that includes Philosophy 80.
Same as: PHIL 175, PHIL 275

ETHICSOC 175W. Philosophy of Law: Protest, Punishment, and Racial Justice. 4 Units.
In this course, we will examine some of the central questions in philosophy of law, including: What is law? What gives law its authority? Must we obey the law? If so, when and why? How should we understand and respond to unjust laws? When is civil disobedience morally permissible? Is civil disobedience ever morally required? What is punishment for? What are prisons for? What is the case for reparations?
Same as: CSRE 175W, PHIL 175W, PHIL 275W
ETHICSOC 175X. Philosophy of Public Policy. 4 Units.
From healthcare to voting reforms, social protection and educational policies, public policies are underpinned by moral values. When we debate those policies, we typically appeal to values like justice, fairness, equality, freedom, privacy, and safety. A proper understanding of those values, what they mean, how they may conflict, and how they can be weighed against one another is essential to developing a competent and critical eye on our complex political world. We will ask questions such as: Is compulsory voting justified? Should children have the right to vote? Is affirmative action just? What is wrong with racial profiling? What are the duties of citizens of affluent countries towards migrants? Do we have a right to privacy? Is giving cash to all unconditionally fair? This class will introduce students to a number of methods and frameworks coming out of ethics and political philosophy and will give students a lot of time to practice ethically informed debates on public policies. At the end of this class, students should have the skills to critically examine a wide range of diverse policy proposals from the perspective of ethics, moral and political philosophy. There are no prerequisites. Undergraduates and graduates from all departments are welcome to attend.
Same as: PHIL 175B, PHIL 275B, POLISCI 133E, POLISCI 235E, PUBLPOL 177

ETHICSOC 176. Political Philosophy: The Social Contract Tradition. 4 Units.
(Graduate students register for 276.) What makes political institutions legitimate? What makes them just? When do citizens have a right to revolt against those who rule over them? Which of our fellow citizens must we tolerate? Surprisingly, the answers given by some of the most prominent modern philosophers turn on the idea of a social contract. We will focus on the work of Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, and Rawls.
Same as: PHIL 176, PHIL 276, POLISCI 137A, POLISCI 337A

ETHICSOC 178M. Introduction to Environmental Ethics. 4-5 Units.
How should human beings relate to the natural world? Do we have moral obligations toward non-human animals and other parts of nature? And what do we owe to other human beings, including future generations, with respect to the environment? The first part of this course will examine such questions in light of some of our current ethical theories: considering what those theories suggest regarding the extent and nature of our environmental obligations; and also whether reflection on such obligations can prove informative about the adequacy of our ethical theories. In the second part of the course, we will use the tools that we have acquired to tackle various ethical questions that confront us in our dealings with the natural world, looking at subjects such as: animal rights; conservation; economic approaches to the environment; access to and control over natural resources; environmental justice and pollution; climate change; technology and the environment; and environmental activism.
Same as: ETHICSOC 278M, PHIL 178M, PHIL 278M, POLISCI 134L

ETHICSOC 179W. Du Bois and Democracy. 4 Units.
In this course, we will work together to develop a detailed and comprehensive understanding of the political philosophy of W. E. B. Du Bois, giving special attention to the development of his democratic theory. We will do so by reading a number of key texts by Du Bois as well as contemporary scholarship from philosophy and cognate fields.
Same as: CSRE 179W, PHIL 179W, PHIL 279W

ETHICSOC 182. Ethics, Public Policy, and Technological Change. 5 Units.
Examination of recent developments in computing technology and platforms through the lenses of philosophy, public policy, social science, and engineering. Course is organized around four main units: algorithmic decision-making and bias; data privacy and civil liberties; artificial intelligence and autonomous systems; and the power of private computing platforms. Each unit considers the promise, perils, rights, and responsibilities at play in technological developments. Prerequisite: CS106A.
Same as: COMM 180, CS 182, PHIL 82, POLISCI 182, PUBLPOL 182

ETHICSOC 185M. Contemporary Moral Problems. 4-5 Units.
This course is an introduction to contemporary ethical thought with a focus on the morality of harming others and saving others from harm. It aims to develop students' ability to think carefully and rationally about moral issues, to acquaint them with modern moral theory, and to encourage them to develop their own considered positions about important real-world issues. In the first part of the course, we will explore fundamental topics in the ethics of harm. Among other questions, we will ask: How extensive are one's moral duties to improve the lives of the less fortunate? When is it permissible to inflict harm on others for the sake of the greater good? Does the moral permissibility of a person's action depend on her intentions? Can a person be harmed by being brought into existence? In the second part of the course, we will turn to practical questions. Some of these will be familiar; for example: Is abortion morally permissible? What obligations do we have to protect the planet for the sake of future generations? Other questions we will ask are newer and less well-trodden. These will include: How does the availability of new technology, in particular artificial intelligence, change the moral landscape of the ethics of war? What moral principles should govern the programming and operation of autonomous vehicles?
Same as: PHIL 72, POLISCI 134P

ETHICSOC 187. The Ethics, Law and Politics of Artificial Intelligence. 4 Units.
This course explores cutting-edge disputes in the ethics, law and politics of artificial intelligence. We will examine the relation between foundational questions about fairness, autonomy, corporate responsibility, and the value of human life; and practical questions about the ethical design and regulation of emerging technologies. Topics include superintelligence and existential risk, explainable intelligent systems, nudging and targeted advertising, and algorithmic fairness.
Same as: PHIL 78E

ETHICSOC 190. Ethics in Society Honors Seminar. 4 Units.
For students planning honors in Ethics in Society. Methods of research. Students present issues of public and personal morality; topics chosen with advice of instructor.
Same as: PHIL 178

ETHICSOC 195. Ethics in Society Workshop. 1 Unit.
Workshop for Ethics in Society seniors completing their honors thesis.

May be repeated for credit.

ETHICSOC 193I. Philosophy of the Covid-19 Pandemic. 1 Unit.
The coronavirus pandemic has brought philosophical questions about morality, politics, and bioethics into sharp relief. These include questions about how to balance personal freedom and collective interests, how to allocate medical resources, and issues of justice in the treatment of essential workers among other topics. This class provides a setting for in-depth, group discussion of these questions and more. It will bring together 10-20 students to read articles, hear from guest lecturers, and deliberate about these issues. The goal is to engage students in philosophy as an accessible, interpersonal practice of questioning concepts and refining our beliefs about the world around us. Prior study of philosophy is not needed. Although rooted in philosophy, this class will examine topics through the lens of economics, public policy, law, psychology, and more. Readings are drawn from both formal texts and thought-pieces/op-eds from mainstream publications. To apply for the class, please fill out this form by Friday September 4th, 2020 at 11:59pm PST https://forms.gle/iqtuQLLRuUv6V5cK7.
ETHICSOC 20. Introduction to Moral Philosophy. 5 Units.
What should I do with my life? What kind of person should I be? How should we treat others? What makes actions right or wrong? What is good and what is bad? What should we value? How should we organize society? Is there any reason to be moral? Is morality relative or subjective? How, if at all, can such questions be answered?

Intensive introduction to theories and techniques in contemporary moral philosophy.
Same as: PHIL 2

ETHICSOC 200A. Ethics in Society Honors Thesis. 1-5 Unit.
Limited to Ethics in Society honors students, who must enroll once in 200A, once in 200B, and once in 200C in their senior year. Students enrolling in 200A for less than 3 units must get approval from the faculty director.

ETHICSOC 200B. Ethics in Society Honors Thesis. 1-5 Unit.
Limited to Ethics in Society honors students, who must enroll once in 200A, once in 200B, and once in 200C in their senior year. Students enrolling in 200B for less than 3 units must get approval from the faculty director.

ETHICSOC 200C. Ethics in Society Honors Thesis. 1-5 Unit.
Limited to Ethics in Society honors students, who must enroll once in 200A, once in 200B, and once in 200C in their senior year. Students enrolling in 200C for less than 3 units must get approval from the faculty director.

ETHICSOC 204. Introduction to Philosophy of Education. 3 Units.
How to think philosophically about educational problems. Recent influential scholarship in philosophy of education. No previous study in philosophy required.
Same as: EDUC 204

ETHICSOC 217X. Free Speech, Academic Freedom, and Democracy. 3 Units.
The course examines connected ideas of free speech, academic freedom, and democratic legitimacy that are still widely shared by many of us but have been subject to skeptical pressures both outside and inside the academy in recent years. The course explores the principled basis of these ideas, how well they might (or might not) be defended against skeptical challenge, and how they might be applied in particular controversies about the rights of students, instructors, and researchers.
Same as: EDUC 217, PHIL 278C

ETHICSOC 223T. Theories and Practices of Civil Society, Philanthropy, and the Nonprofit Sector. 5 Units.
What is the basis of private action for public good? How are charitable dollars distributed and what role do nonprofit organizations and philanthropic dollars play in civil society and modern democracy? In the "Philanthropy Lab" component of this course, students will award $100,000 in grants to local nonprofits. Students will explore how nonprofit organizations operate domestically and globally as well as the historical development and modern structure of civil society and philanthropy. Readings in political philosophy, history, political sociology, and public policy. Political Science majors who are taking this course to fulfill the WIM requirement should enroll in POLISCI 236S.
Same as: POLISCI 236, POLISCI 236S

ETHICSOC 234. Democratic Theory. 5 Units.
Most people agree that democracy is a good thing, but do we agree on what democracy is? This course will examine the concept of democracy in political philosophy. We will address the following questions: What reason(s), if any, do we have for valuing democracy? What does it mean to treat people as political equals? When does a group of individuals constitute "a people," and how can a people make genuinely collective decisions? Can democracy really be compatible with social inequality? With an entrenched constitution? With representation? With representation?
Same as: PHIL 176P, POLISCI 234

ETHICSOC 245I. Deliberative Discussions. 1 Unit.
Deliberative Discussions - spurred at the initiative of the ASSU Undergraduate Senate - aims to help depolarize our campus by offering the opportunity for students of different backgrounds, beliefs, and experiences to meet regularly and share in a process of mutual exchange. Rooted in the understanding that polarization can consist of both ideological and social distance, Deliberative Discussions will focus on what is necessary for respectful and deliberative listening and allow students to practice engaging diverse perspectives.
Participants will learn about and from one another as they acquire skills and tools that will help them to transform contentious debates into meaningful exchange. Discussion topics will be informed by participant preference. For questions about enrolling, email Collin Anthony (canthony@stanford.edu).

ETHICSOC 251I. Effective Altruism - How can we have the biggest positive impact?. 1 Unit.
This course will introduce students to Effective Altruism - a social movement and philosophy attempting to maximize positive social impact, along with critiques and questions raised by the philosophy. The course will feature lectures, discussions and workshops to think through how we can increase our impact with our careers, time, donations and other resources.

ETHICSOC 274B. Universal Basic Income: the philosophy behind the proposal. 3 Units.
Universal basic income (or UBI) is a regular cash allowance given to all members of a community without means test, regardless of personal desert, and with no strings attached. Once a utopian proposal, the policy is now discussed and piloted throughout the world. The growth of income and wealth inequalities, the precariousness of labor, and the persistence of abject poverty have all been important drivers of renewed interest in UBI in the United States. But is it without a doubt the case that automation may displace workers from the labor market at unprecedented rates that explains the revival of the policy in recent years, including by many in or around Silicon Valley. Among the various objections to the proposal, one concerns its moral adequacy: Isn't it fundamentally unjust to give cash to all indiscriminately rather than to those who need it and deserve it? Over the years, a variety of scholars have defended the policy on moral grounds, arguing that UBI is a tool of equality, liberal freedom, republican freedom, gender equity, or racial equity. Many others have attacked UBI on those very same grounds, making the case that alternative policy proposals like the job guarantee, means-tested benefits, conditional benefits, or reparations should be preferred. Students will learn a great deal about political theory and ethics in general but always through the specific angle of the policy proposal, and they will become experts on the philosophy, politics, and economics of UBI. The seminar is open to undergraduate and graduate students in all departments. There are no pre-requisites.
Same as: ETHICSOC 174B, PHIL 174B, PHIL 274B, POLISCI 134E, POLISCI 338

ETHICSOC 278M. Introduction to Environmental Ethics. 4-5 Units.
How should human beings relate to the natural world? Do we have moral obligations toward non-human animals and other parts of nature? And what do we owe to other human beings, including future generations, with respect to the environment? The first part of this course will examine such questions in light of some of our current ethical theories: considering what those theories suggest regarding the extent and nature of our environmental obligations; and also whether reflection on such obligations can prove informative about the adequacy of our ethical theories. In the second part of the course, we will use the tools that we have acquired to tackle various ethical questions that confront us in our dealings with the natural world, looking at subjects such as: animal rights; conservation; economic approaches to the environment; access to and control over natural resources; environmental justice and pollution; climate change; technology and the environment; and environmental activism.
Same as: ETHICSOC 178M, PHIL 178M, PHIL 278M, POLISCI 134L
ETHICSOC 280. Transitional Justice, Human Rights, and International Criminal Tribunals. 3-5 Units.
(Formerly IPS 280) Historical backdrop of the Nuremberg and Tokyo Tribunals. The creation and operation of the Yugoslav and Rwanda Tribunals (ICTY and ICTR). The development of hybrid tribunals in East Timor, Sierra Leone, and Cambodia, including evaluation of their success in addressing perceived shortcomings of the ICTY and ICTR. Examination of the role of the International Criminal Court and the extent to which it will succeed in supplanting all other ad hoc international justice mechanisms and fulfill its goals. Analysis focuses on the politics of creating such courts, their interaction with the states in which the conflicts took place, the process of establishing prosecutorial priorities, the body of law they have produced, and their effectiveness in addressing the needs of victims in post-conflict societies. Same as: HUMRTS 103, INTLPOL 280, INTNLREL 180A

ETHICSOC 36X. Dangerous Ideas. 1 Unit.
Ideas matter. Concepts such as revolution, tradition, and hell have inspired social movements, shaped political systems, and dramatically influenced the lives of individuals. Others, like immigration, universal basic income, and youth play an important role in contemporary debates in the United States. All of these ideas are contested, and they have a real power to change lives, for better and for worse. In this one-unit class we will examine these "dangerous" ideas. Each week, a faculty member from a different department in the humanities and arts will explore a concept that has shaped human experience across time and space. Some weeks will have short reading assignments, but you are not required to purchase any materials. Same as: ARTHIST 36, COMPLIT 36A, EALC 36, ENGLISH 71, FRENCH 36, HISTORY 3D, MUSIC 36H, PHIL 36, POLISCI 70, RELIGST 36X, SLAVIC 36, TAPS 36

ETHICSOC 371R. Inequality: Economic and Philosophical Perspectives. 5 Units.
The nature of and problem of inequality is central to both economics and philosophy. Economists study the causes of inequality, design tools to measure it and track it over time, and examine its consequences. Philosophers are centrally concerned with the justification of inequality and the reasons why various types of inequality are or are not objectionable. In this class we bring both of these approaches together. Our class explores the different meanings of and measurements for understanding inequality, our best understandings of how much inequality there is, its causes, its consequences, and whether we ought to reduce it, and if so, how. This is an interdisciplinary graduate seminar. We propose some familiarity with basic ideas in economics and basic ideas in contemporary political philosophy; we will explain and learn about more complex ideas as we proceed. The class will be capped at 20 students. Same as: PHIL 371D, POLISCI 431L

ETHICSOC 374R. Science, Religion, and Democracy. 3-5 Units.
How should conflicts between citizens with science-based and religion-based beliefs be handled in modern liberal democracies? Are religion-based beliefs as suitable for discussion within the public sphere as science-based beliefs? Are there still important conflicts between science and religion, e.g., Darwinian evolution versus creationism or intelligent design? How have philosophy and recent theology been engaged with such conflicts and how should they be engaged now? What are the political ramifications? This is a graduate-level seminar; undergraduates must obtain permission of the instructors. Same as: PHIL 374F, RELIGST 374F

ETHICSOC 378B. Unequal Relationships. 2-4 Units.
Over the past three decades, a relational egalitarian conception of equality has emerged in political philosophy. Proponents of the view argue that the point of equality is to establish communities where people are able to stand and relate as equals. This entails building societies free from a variety of modes of relating that are thought to be detrimental to our status as moral equals. The list of those inegalitarian relationships is long and includes oppression, domination, exploitation, marginalization, objectification, demonization, infantilization, and stigmatization. The relational approach to equality departs from the more distributive conceptions of equality that were offered in the 70s and after. The theories of justice proposed in response are still comparatively underdeveloped and need further elaboration, but they all concur in rejecting both the overly distributive paradigm and the preoccupation with individual responsibility central to most other egalitarian accounts. This graduate seminar will introduce students to the rich literature on equality in contemporary political philosophy, with a special focus on identifying and scrutinizing unequal relationships. Each week will be centered on a specific type of such unequal relationship, trying to understand how it operates, what social function it serves, and what makes it specifically harmful or wrongful to groups and individuals. Although there are no formal pre-requisites, this class is primarily designed for students considering writing a thesis in political or moral theory as well as for students in other disciplines who want to advance their understanding of equality as a moral value. Seniors in philosophy and political science with a substantial training in political theory will also be considered and should email the PI to communicate their interest. 2 unit option only for Phil PhDs beyond the second year. Same as: PHIL 378B, POLISCI 338B

ETHICSOC 432X. Selections in Modern Political Thought. 3-5 Units.
This graduate-level seminar explores selections from the canon of Western political thought from the late fifteenth through nineteenth centuries. Throughout the course, we will engage in close textual readings of individual thinkers and consider some of the larger questions raised by political modernity. This offering will focus on American political thought from the Puritan era through the turn of the 20th century. We will pay special attention to dissenting voices and to texts that address the settler empire, slavery, and the color line. Thinkers covered will include: John Winthrop, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, " brutus" William Apess, Henry David Thoreau, John C. Calhoun, David Walker, Abraham Lincoln, Frederick Douglass, and W.E.B. Du Bois. Same as: POLISCI 432R

ETHICSOC 79. Ethics and Leadership in Public Service. 3-4 Units.
This course explores ethical questions that arise in public service work, as well as leadership theory and skills relevant to public service work. Through readings, discussions, in-class activities, assignments, and guest lectures, students will develop a foundation and vision for a future of ethical and effective service leadership. This course serves as a gateway for interested students to participate in the Haas Center’s Public Service Leadership Program. Same as: CSRE 126C, EDUC 126A, URBANST 126A

ETHICSOC 95. Leadership Challenges in Public Service. 4-5 Units.
This course will examine the responsibilities and challenges for those who occupy leadership roles in public service, broadly defined to include work in government, non-profit organizations, academia, and philanthropy, whether as a full-time career or part-time volunteer. Topics will include characteristics and styles of leadership, organizational dynamics, forms of influence, decision making, diversity, social change, and ethical responsibilities. Class sessions will include visitors who have occupied prominent leadership roles. Readings will include excerpts of relevant research, problems, exercises, and case studies. This course serves as a gateway for students participating in the Public Service Leadership Program, coordinated through the Haas Center. The class will be capped at 40 students. Same as: PUBLPOL 111