



PHI 101 - Basic Issues in Philosophy

This course is an introduction to a wide variety of philosophical issues. We will engage problems in metaphysics (the theory of reality), ethics and politics (the theory of right and good), and epistemology (the theory of knowledge). And we will consider the development of these issues in the history of philosophy.

A variety of class formats is central to the course. While there will be some lecture (as is appropriate), there will also be class discussion, possibly "Roundtable" discussions, panel debates or oral presentations. Required graded assignments include several argumentative papers and one or two exams. As with most humanities courses, grades in this course are largely earned through careful completion of written assignments.

Students are expected to be serious about learning something and open to becoming involved in significant philosophical inquiry.

PHI 104 - Ideal of Democracy

The purpose of The Ideal of Democracy is to think seriously and critically about the nature and moral justification of democracy and democratic institutions. Conceptions of democracy that are explicit or implicit in the civic traditions and diverse cultures in the United States will provide the primary basis for discussion, though some attention will also be paid to the origins and history of democracy and to its practice in other societies. Students will be introduced to the methodology of moral reasoning and to various conceptions of the person and of human nature that underlie ethical ideals relating to democracy. They will also see how to interpret and integrate work done in a variety of disciplines (e.g., law, economics, political science, history) that bears on the resolution of the fundamental moral questions concerning the justification of democracy that provide the unifying focus for the course. They will also be expected to think in a reasoned way about what their own responsibilities are as citizens in a democratic society.

PHI 112 - Language, Logic and Math

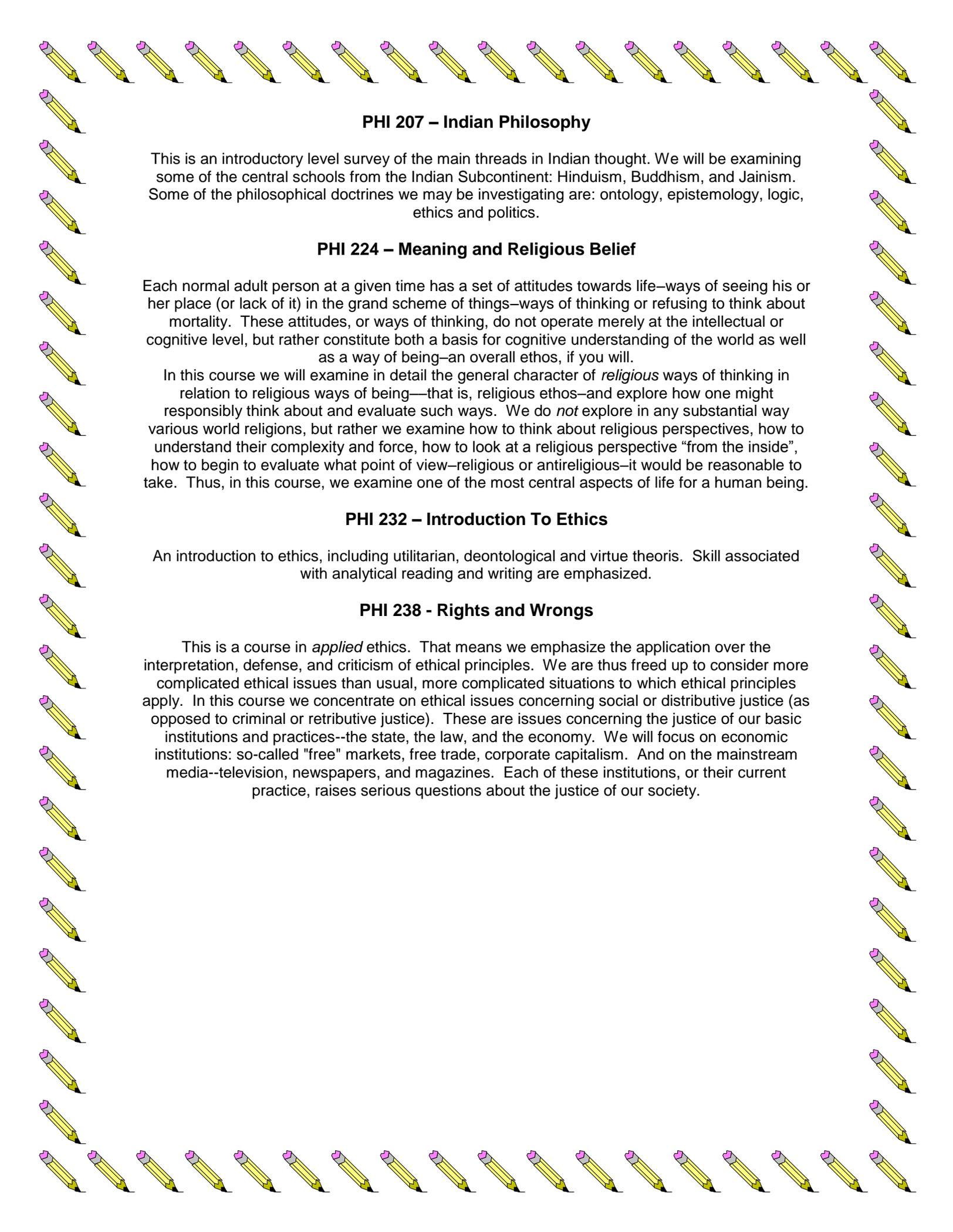
This is a course in modern symbolic logic. The fundamental objective of the course is to provide you with the abilities with which to understand and to apply the principles of formal reasoning. Not only are these principles essential to rational discourse, they are the basis of both mathematical reasoning and (symbolic) computation. Among the issues to be explored are: the nature of arguments, statements, truth, and formal systems; the relation between language (formal and natural), signs, and the world; logical relations and properties; deduction vs. induction; and techniques for evaluating arguments.

PHI 150 – Science and Human Culture

Are men sexually unfaithful because of their genes? Are women "naturally" good mothers? Are certain "races" more aggressive or violent than others? Does race have anything to do with IQ?

Recently, science has begun to play an increasingly important role in explaining how human society works. Sociobiologists propose to extend the same principles of evolutionary biology that apply to all species to human beings and thereby explain both our psychological make-up and our social organization.

This course will begin with an examination of the criteria scientists themselves use to judge the adequacy of scientific theories and scientific explanations. Next, we will investigate the role society (with all of its biases and prejudices) plays in defining what counts as good science and what counts as bad or biased science. At this point, students will be prepared to read and analyze some modern scientific (biological, sociobiological, and evolutionary-psychological) accounts of human society. We will study these scientific theories about culture in light of what we have learned about the role of culture in shaping scientific knowledge.



PHI 207 – Indian Philosophy

This is an introductory level survey of the main threads in Indian thought. We will be examining some of the central schools from the Indian Subcontinent: Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism. Some of the philosophical doctrines we may be investigating are: ontology, epistemology, logic, ethics and politics.

PHI 224 – Meaning and Religious Belief

Each normal adult person at a given time has a set of attitudes towards life—ways of seeing his or her place (or lack of it) in the grand scheme of things—ways of thinking or refusing to think about mortality. These attitudes, or ways of thinking, do not operate merely at the intellectual or cognitive level, but rather constitute both a basis for cognitive understanding of the world as well as a way of being—an overall ethos, if you will.

In this course we will examine in detail the general character of *religious* ways of thinking in relation to religious ways of being—that is, religious ethos—and explore how one might responsibly think about and evaluate such ways. We do *not* explore in any substantial way various world religions, but rather we examine how to think about religious perspectives, how to understand their complexity and force, how to look at a religious perspective “from the inside”, how to begin to evaluate what point of view—religious or antireligious—it would be reasonable to take. Thus, in this course, we examine one of the most central aspects of life for a human being.

PHI 232 – Introduction To Ethics

An introduction to ethics, including utilitarian, deontological and virtue theoris. Skill associated with analytical reading and writing are emphasized.

PHI 238 - Rights and Wrongs

This is a course in *applied* ethics. That means we emphasize the application over the interpretation, defense, and criticism of ethical principles. We are thus freed up to consider more complicated ethical issues than usual, more complicated situations to which ethical principles apply. In this course we concentrate on ethical issues concerning social or distributive justice (as opposed to criminal or retributive justice). These are issues concerning the justice of our basic institutions and practices--the state, the law, and the economy. We will focus on economic institutions: so-called "free" markets, free trade, corporate capitalism. And on the mainstream media--television, newspapers, and magazines. Each of these institutions, or their current practice, raises serious questions about the justice of our society.



PHI 246 – Feminist Philosophies

This course is an introduction to feminist scholarship in philosophy. Philosophy has provided some vital tools for scrutinizing social beliefs about gender relations, race, class, sex, sexuality, epistemic credibility, justice, politics, and even rationality! As a research program feminist philosophy has a number of distinct projects including (1) uncovering the gendered, raced, Western/colonial, heteronormative, or able-bodied presuppositions and biases of the Western academic philosophical canon; (2) raising new questions from the standpoint of marginalized groups; and (3) transforming the discipline by introducing new approaches to traditional questions in ethics, politics, metaphysics and epistemology.

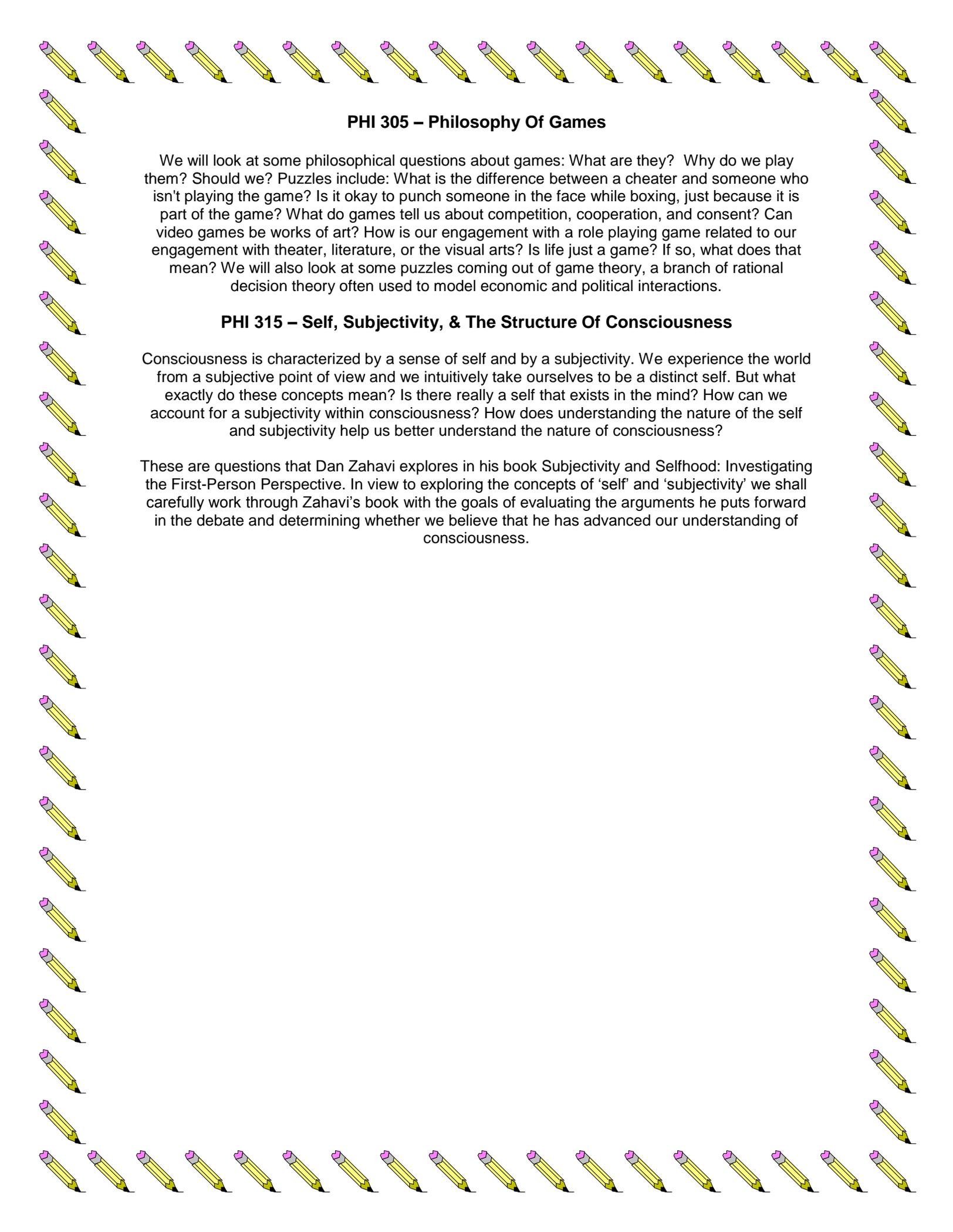
The course is aimed at two basic student populations: philosophy students with little or no exposure to feminism and gender studies, and women's and gender studies students who with limited exposure to philosophy. Feminist Philosophies introduces all students to some of the basic concepts grounding many discussions in the discipline. We will explore key theoretical concepts and philosophical arguments that feminists have developed in response to the forms of oppression that are the subject of feminist scholarship and that animate feminist activism. In particular the course will focus on four thematic clusters including: oppression, privilege and resistance; sex/gender identity; embodiment; and questions of social justice. Special attention will be paid to women of color's contributions to these debates.

PHI 251 – Visions Of The Self

Human beings have an insatiable desire to understand the universe around them. Yet what is the nature of the cognitive agent who is capable of these inquiries? For thousands of years poets, philosophers, and theologians have drawn on the introspective data of experience in order to understand the nature of "self". In the Modern period, we know there are rich and complex mechanisms lying well below the surface which introspection reveals. Thus the study of the self has emerged as a major enterprise incorporating a huge variety of data, data drawn from both the "inside" – what it "feels like" to be a person–, and the "outside" – from external points of view such as those characterizing the social and physical sciences. This course is an in-depth study of philosophical issues surrounding these various modes of inquiry. We will draw upon philosophically relevant data arising in fields as diverse as cognitive, experimental, and clinical psychology, literature, psychiatric medicine, neurophysiology, computer science and artificial intelligence, and philosophy itself. This inquiry will confront students with puzzling questions that have wide-ranging practical implications, both personally and socially, including: What is the Mind? Is it a kind of mental stuff, is it physical or is it fundamentally computer software? What is the proper theory of "personal Identity"? What makes the 80 year-old woman "the same person" as the three year old toddler? What is the philosophical significance (ethical, metaphysical, etc.) of certain mental and physical disorders (e.g. multiple personality, dementia, body-alienation, commissurotomy)? What properties must something possess to be a "person"? Could a machine or an animal or an alien be a person? Are "persons" self-contained, atomistic agents or does the integration of the self so depend on connections to other selves that the drawing of boundaries between selves becomes problematic? To what extent do the various conceptions of the self lead to different accounts of our moral and social responsibility to ourselves and others?

PHI 254 – Ancient Philosophy

This course introduces students to Ancient Greek and Roman Philosophy, focusing on reality, knowledge, the self, and the good life.



PHI 305 – Philosophy Of Games

We will look at some philosophical questions about games: What are they? Why do we play them? Should we? Puzzles include: What is the difference between a cheater and someone who isn't playing the game? Is it okay to punch someone in the face while boxing, just because it is part of the game? What do games tell us about competition, cooperation, and consent? Can video games be works of art? How is our engagement with a role playing game related to our engagement with theater, literature, or the visual arts? Is life just a game? If so, what does that mean? We will also look at some puzzles coming out of game theory, a branch of rational decision theory often used to model economic and political interactions.

PHI 315 – Self, Subjectivity, & The Structure Of Consciousness

Consciousness is characterized by a sense of self and by a subjectivity. We experience the world from a subjective point of view and we intuitively take ourselves to be a distinct self. But what exactly do these concepts mean? Is there really a self that exists in the mind? How can we account for a subjectivity within consciousness? How does understanding the nature of the self and subjectivity help us better understand the nature of consciousness?

These are questions that Dan Zahavi explores in his book *Subjectivity and Selfhood: Investigating the First-Person Perspective*. In view to exploring the concepts of 'self' and 'subjectivity' we shall carefully work through Zahavi's book with the goals of evaluating the arguments he puts forward in the debate and determining whether we believe that he has advanced our understanding of consciousness.