Philosophy in Action:  
An Internship Adventure

by Amara McNeish, Senior Philosophy Major

This past spring, I was accepted to the Georgia Legislative Internship Program, or GLIP. GLIP allows students from colleges and universities across the state of Georgia to receive firsthand experience with the legislative process in the Georgia General Assembly. After a rigorous selection process, interns are assigned to different offices in the Georgia House of Representatives or the Georgia State Senate. Though each office is different, interns typically have a multitude of tasks to perform each day. Some of my duties included legislative tracking, constituent services, attending committee meetings, media assistance, writing bill summaries, and more.

When a student is selected to serve as an intern, the student will learn about the legislative process from firsthand experience. Bill proposals have to go through an extremely rigorous process of deliberation between House and Senate members before becoming law. Committees, subcommittees, and House and Senate hearings act as a sort of legislative filtration process, where members of the House and Senate vote to pass or reject a bill proposal and offer amendments to bills when necessary. In the House, a bill proposal first goes through a committee (or subcommittee in some cases) where lobbyists and other constituents attend to persuade the members to accept or reject a bill proposal. Like lawyers in a courtroom, lobbyists defend their position and try to persuade the House members (who act as a sort of judge and jury) to agree with their position. If enough votes are made against the bill by the members of the General Assembly in the committee/subcommittee, the bill does not pass through to be heard in the House chamber. However, if the bill does pass through the committee and subcommittee it was assigned to, the bill proposal is sent through to the House chamber to be subject to deliberation from other members of the Georgia House of Representatives. Once the bill proposal makes it to the House and Senate chambers (or also commonly referred to as the “House floor” and the “Senate floor”), the bill proposal is presented by the chairman of the committee that passed the bill proposal to the chambers. If the majority of the members have voted to pass the bill, the bill is then subject to deliberation from members in Senate committees. If the members in the Senate committee pass the bill, it is then sent to the Senate chamber for further deliberation, similar to the process in the House. If the bill has been passed by a majority in the House and a majority in the Senate, the bill is subject to review by the governor. If the governor signs the bill to be enacted, the bill becomes law.  

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Though interns did have many responsibilities to tend to, we were also able to have a lot of fun while working with the representatives and senators. Since many organizations honestly want to further their agendas (whether noble or not), they tend to “butter up” the representatives and senators to “show their appreciation.” This typically comes in the form of catering and nice dinners. Though we are not supposed to show up to such events uninvited, the interns are an integral part of the Georgia General Assembly; and as a result, interns are often more than welcome to join in on the fun. I was invited to so many dinners, from food contests, to delicious quality barbeque and Korean food, and even to open bars (after work of course). I was even invited to the studio of a famous person (who shall not be named), where I had a seat at a fancy table with well-known producers and film directors and enjoyed hors d’oeuvres, filet mignon and salmon, champagne and dessert. There is always fresh lunch being served for free somewhere around the State Capitol, so there was no need to bring lunch at all. Given that I am super picky when it comes to food, it says a lot when I say that every single lunch I had was extremely delicious. Not only did I get paid, but I got free food too! Besides possible weight gain, what could go wrong?

This internship also connected to my studies in philosophy. I had already taken courses on political philosophy and philosophy of law that allowed me to have a more grounded foundation in legal ideology. During the internship, I did some reading on the philosophy of representation, which really helped to give me a more critical perspective on the different minority caucuses that exist in the legislature and what some of their potential strengths and weaknesses are. I read the works of various political theorists, including Iris Marion Young and Jane Mansbridge, in order both to deepen my understanding of what it means to represent as well as to learn about the forms of oppression that lead to the necessity of political representation in society for underrepresented groups.

Serving as an intern also allowed me to think about my future career options and opened many doors of opportunity for me. After my internship at the State Capitol ended, I got accepted to serve as an intern for the Georgia House Democratic Caucus (or GHDC) during the summer, where I learned about the BLUE Institute, founded by the staff of GHDC. BLUE stands for “building leaders, uplifting the electorate,” and the institute is designed to recruit and train young people seeking to become leaders, strategists, and key staff members of Democratic electoral campaigns. I am helping on the partnerships side of the institute and probably would have never gotten the opportunity to do so if it were not for my acceptance into the Georgia Legislative Internship Program. If you are interested in learning about the power structures that surround you and want to further understand your role in politics, GLIP is the program for you. As a young person, it is important to know your power and how to strategize effectively and enact positive change in the world around you. If you share that interest, I suggest that you apply as soon as possible. Feel free to ask me if you have any questions about GLIP or about pursuing an internship opportunity in general!
## Spring 2018 Course Descriptions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Instructor</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PHIL 2010-01: Introduction to Philosophy</td>
<td>Dr. John Garner</td>
<td>MW 11:00am-12:15pm</td>
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<td>Philosophy as an ancient Greek term means love of wisdom. While today the term is taken to mean many things, most scholars would see it as something like “critical inquiry into the most important of life’s questions.” One of the best ways to be initiated into such questions is to undertake a guided study of key thinkers in the Western tradition other traditions. Thus, our readings aim to expose students to the major branches of philosophy in this sense, specifically: ontology (the inquiry into what is or of what is real, as opposed to what is merely apparent); epistemology (the study of what is knowable, the limits of knowing, and how we know); and practical philosophy (the inquiry into value, beauty, and justice). Skills in reading, logic and critical thinking, argument assessment, and cordial but deep discussion are also emphasized. This class is required for philosophy or religion majors and minors and may count for credit in Core area C2. It is a prerequisite for most upper level philosophy courses.</td>
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<td>PHIL 2010-02: Introduction to Philosophy</td>
<td>Dr. Josh Dohmen</td>
<td>TR 9:30am-10:45am</td>
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<td>My aim is to introduce students to some main areas of philosophy (metaphysics, epistemology, social and political philosophy, ethics, aesthetics, and the philosophy of religion), by studying major figures who consider what it means to live a good life based on who we are, what we can know, our relationships to others, and the nature of God or gods. By doing so, we will see the ways in which our different philosophical beliefs are intimately connected. Figures that we will consider include Plato, W.E.B. Du Bois, and Simone de Beauvoir. Required for philosophy or religion majors and minors. May count for credit in Core area C2. Prerequisite for most upper level philosophy courses.</td>
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<td>PHIL 2010-03: Introduction to Philosophy</td>
<td>Dr. Josh Dohmen</td>
<td>TR 11:00am-12:15pm</td>
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<td>PHIL 2010-04: Introduction to Philosophy</td>
<td>Dr. Josh Dohmen</td>
<td>TR 2:00pm-3:15pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>PHIL 2010-25H: Introduction to Philosophy—Honors</td>
<td>Dr. John Garner</td>
<td>MW 9:30am-10:45am</td>
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<td>Same as PHIL 2010-01 above, with the addition of honors-level obligations and privileges.</td>
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<td>PHIL 2020-01: Critical Thinking</td>
<td>Dr. Josh Dohmen</td>
<td>MW 11:00am-12:15pm</td>
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<td>This course aims to introduce students to two different, but related, sets of critical thinking skills. The first are formal skills that help us identify and evaluate arguments. The second are more personal, emotional, and social skills to help us better share our ideas and arguments with others and to help us be more critical of our own beliefs. These skills will be largely introduced by the textbook, Intellectual Empathy. In the end, I hope you will not only be better able to think critically in the sense of understanding arguments, but also in the sense of engaging in self-evaluation while also evaluating others’ arguments and beliefs. Required for philosophy or religion majors and minors. May count for credit in Core area C1.</td>
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<td>PHIL 2020-02: Critical Thinking</td>
<td>Geoffrey Lundeen</td>
<td>TR 12:30pm-1:45pm</td>
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<td>An investigation of logical fallacies and patterns of valid reasoning in primarily oral by also written discourse. Required for philosophy or religion majors and minors. May count for credit in Core area C1.</td>
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<td>PHIL 2020-03: Critical Thinking</td>
<td>Geoffrey Lundeen</td>
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<td>PHIL 2030-01: Introduction to Ethics</td>
<td>Dr. Robert Lane</td>
<td>TR 9:30am-10:45am</td>
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<td>Everyone has beliefs about morality, and to some extent we all agree about what actions are right and wrong; for example, we all agree that murder is wrong and that helping those less fortunate than us is right. But there are many moral questions about which people disagree: is abortion immoral? what about physician-assisted suicide? is it wrong to spend money on expensive cars and homes when people in other parts of the world are dying from malnutrition? do non-human animals have rights? This course will enable you critically to evaluate your own beliefs about concrete ethical issues like these. We’ll also be dealing with more theoretical questions, such as: where does morality come from? (God? society? or somewhere else?); what makes an ethical argument good or bad?; and what general rules or principles ought we to live by? No prior experience in philosophy is necessary, so if you want to start thinking critically about morality, this course is a great place to begin. Fulfills Core Area C2. Required for all philosophy majors. Counts toward the philosophy minor and toward the religion minor.</td>
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<td>PHIL 2030-02: Introduction to Ethics</td>
<td>Carmen Zinn</td>
<td>MW 8:00am-9:15am</td>
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<td></td>
<td>An introduction to the central concepts in ethics and an exploration of such contemporary ethical issues as abortion, genetic engineering, euthanasia, and capital punishment. Required for the major and minor in philosophy.</td>
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PHIL 2030-03: *Introduction to Ethics*  
Same as above.

PHIL 2130-01: *Introduction to World Religions*  
Dr. Rosemary Kellison  
TR 11:00am-12:15pm  
This course revolves around two central questions: how has the world shaped religion(s), and how have religions shaped the world? As we move through an introductory survey of some of the world’s major religious traditions, including indigenous religious traditions, Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and selected new religious movements, we will pay special attention to the ways in which these traditions have been shaped by historical, political, and geographical changes in the world—and will also consider how these traditions and their communities have influenced these changes. Over the course of the semester, we will seek to better understand both the significance and relevance of religion in world history and some of the important philosophical questions addressed within religious communities as well as by those who study them. Required for religion-track majors and minors.

PHIL 2160-01: *Philosophy in Literature and Film*  
Dr. Janet Donohoe  
MW 12:30pm-1:45pm  
Literature and film are often the most fruitful genres for thinking about philosophical themes. Through analysis of these media we can begin to address philosophical questions outside of straightforward philosophical treatises. This semester this course will address the themes of knowledge and tradition in philosophical and literary texts as well as in film. We will attempt to grasp how authors understand the relation of tradition to what we know and how we know it. We ask these questions in an effort to come to a deeper understanding of ourselves as human beings and our own relationship to our traditions. Counts toward the philosophy major and the philosophy minor.

PHIL 3110-01: *Modern Philosophy*  
Dr. John Garner  
MW 2:00pm-3:15pm  
The course offers an examination of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century European philosophers such as Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz, Locke, Berkeley, Hume, and Kant. Our readings will focus on the relationship between, on the one hand, theories of knowledge (e.g. does all knowledge come from experience, or are there a priori principles or concepts, etc.?) and, on the other hand, questions of metaphysics (e.g. is there a God, freedom, or immortality?). The early modern thinkers, their theories (such as empiricism, rationalism, idealism, materialism, etc.), and the puzzles they raised were of decisive influence in the history of Western philosophy and science. Required for all philosophy majors; also counts toward the philosophy minor.

PHIL 3130-01: *Feminist Philosophy*  
Dr. Rosemary Kellison  
TR 9:30am-10:45am  
Feminists argue for the equal dignity of women and against the oppression of women. In this course, we examine how these arguments have been expressed in philosophy. We will consider the ways in which philosophers have contributed to the development of feminist thinking and practice, as well as the ways in which feminists have critiqued philosophy. We will also consider some of the major debates within feminist philosophy. Students will leave this course with a deeper understanding of what is distinctive about feminist philosophy as well as how this tradition has developed and differentiated over time. A second major focus of this discipline-specific writing course is the development of research and writing skills leading to the completion of a sophisticated philosophical essay. Counts toward the philosophy major and the philosophy minor.

PHIL 3160-01W: *Philosophy in Literature and Film*  
Dr. Janet Donohoe  
MW 12:30pm-1:45pm  
Literature and film are often the most fruitful genres for thinking about philosophical themes. Through analysis of these media we can begin to address philosophical questions outside of straightforward philosophical treatises. This semester this course will address the themes of knowledge and tradition in philosophical and literary texts as well as in film. We will attempt to grasp how authors understand the relation of tradition to what we know and how we know it. We ask these questions in an effort to come to a deeper understanding of ourselves as human beings and our own relationship to our traditions. Counts toward the philosophy major and the philosophy minor.

PHIL 4130-01W: *Feminist Philosophy*  
Dr. Rosemary Kellison  
TR 9:30am-10:45am  
Feminists argue for the equal dignity of women and against the oppression of women. In this course, we examine how these arguments have been expressed in philosophy. We will consider the ways in which philosophers have contributed to the development of feminist thinking and practice, as well as the ways in which feminists have critiqued philosophy. We will also consider some of the major debates within feminist philosophy. Students will leave this course with a deeper understanding of what is distinctive about feminist philosophy as well as how this tradition has developed and differentiated over time. A second major focus of this discipline-specific writing course is the development of research and writing skills leading to the completion of a sophisticated philosophical essay. Counts toward the philosophy major and the philosophy minor.

PHIL 4160-01: *Symbolic Logic*  
Dr. Robert Lane  
TR 11:00am-12:15pm  
An introduction to the application of symbolic methods to reasoning, covering sentential logic and predicate logic. Students will learn how to translate ordinary language sentences and arguments into the notation of symbolic logic, determine the truth value of compound sentences, distinguish among various valid and invalid argument forms, and demonstrate whether an argument in symbolic form is valid or invalid. Counts toward the philosophy major and the philosophy minor. Because studying logic is helpful in preparing for the LSAT (Law School Admission Test), this course is strongly recommended for philosophy majors in the Law and Justice track. Counts toward the philosophy major and the philosophy minor.

PHIL 4230-01W: *Philosophy of Religion*  
Dr. Rosemary Kellison  
TR 2:00pm-3:15pm  
In this course, we critically examine philosophical reflections on many of the basic concepts and arguments of religious traditions. We read and analyze philosophical arguments concerning such questions as whether god exists, how god can be defined or understood, why evil and suffering exist, the rationality of religious belief, the relationship between religion and science, and how to explain the world’s religious diversity. The authors we study come from a wide variety of backgrounds, including Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, and nontheistic traditions. A second major focus of this discipline-specific writing course is the development of research and writing skills leading to the completion of a sophisticated philosophical essay. Fulfills a requirement for religion-track majors, and can be used more generally for the philosophy major or minor.
Registration is nearly here!

Remember, if you are a philosophy major, you are required to meet with your advisor before you will be able to register for classes next spring. You may have already heard from your advisor, but if you haven’t, you may want to swing by his or her office to see if you can sign up for a time for advising. The registration schedule is listed below, so be sure to meet with your advisor before your time to register.

Spring 2018 On-Time Registration Dates for CURRENTLY* enrolled students. All registration starts at 12:00 am.

- Current Seniors & all Graduate level students – October 23
- Current Juniors ss# ending in 00-49 – October 24
- Current Juniors ss# ending in 50-99 – October 25
- Current Sophomores ss# ending 00-49 – October 26
- Current Sophomores ss# ending 50-99 – October 27
- Current Freshmen ss# ending 50-99 – October 30
- Current Freshmen ss# ending 00-49 – October 31

*Currently enrolled students are those who are taking courses in the current term – Fall 2017.

Open Registration – Begins November 6, 2017

(Students that are currently serving a one term suspension, are readmitted, or are admitted as a transient must wait until Open Registration to register.)

**IMPORTANT**

See your advisor before your assigned date to register, and your advisor or department will remove your advisement hold.

West Georgia Philosophical Society

Interested in Philosophy?

Join the West Georgia Philosophical Society

West Georgia Philosophical Society is a student organization open to UWG students of any major who want to get together to discuss philosophy in an informal and friendly setting. Currently, the group meets every other Wednesday in TLC 1204.

For more information, visit our Facebook page at https://www.facebook.com/groups/136625026403394/ or email Dr. Garner at jgarner@westga.edu.

PHILOSOPHER’S WISDOM

“When a man irritates you, you must know that it is your own opinion which has irritated you.”

~ Epictetus the Stoic, *The Handbook*
Upcoming Undergraduate Conferences

Remember, if you are interested in submitting something to one of these conferences (or one of the many others not listed here), your philosophy professors are always willing to help you clean up one of your term papers to make it appropriate. Talk to us!

National Conference on Undergraduate Research
University of Central Oklahoma
Conference Date: April 4-7, 2018
Submission Deadline: December 5, 2017

Nature and the Divine in Ancient Greek Thought
University of South Florida
Conference Date: March 2-4, 2018
Submission Deadline: December 17, 2017

Annual Georgia State Student Philosophy Symposium
Georgia State University
Conference Date: February 16, 2018
Submission Deadline: December 22, 2017

Midsouth Undergraduate Philosophy Conference
Rhodes College
Conference Date: March 23-24, 2018
Submission Deadline: January 15, 2018