



## Philosophy Program Bids Happy Retirement to Dr. Auble

*From Burdett Wantland*

Congratulations to Dr. Joel Auble on his retirement. Joel came to West Georgia College from Troy State in Alabama in the early 1970's. He joined our three and one-half member philosophy department to teach

courses in philosophy and one course in world religions. It soon became obvious that Joel was not only a capable teacher but also aesthetically talented. He is a known musician. He is a capable vocalist and his barbershop quartet would rate with many professional groups. His favorites are Irish songs and when he or his group sing these well known ballads the audiences respond in delight. Besides musical abilities Joel has

participated in several West Georgia and Carrollton Community plays. As an entertainer Dr. Auble has contributed much to nurture the spirit of the community.

Besides a professional relationship Joel and I have formed a durable friendship. We are both interested in discussing basic existential and religious questions. Throughout the years we have traveled together to several conferences and seminars in pursuit of our queries. We both like to swim for exercise and we formed a faculty swim group which met regularly for several years (until recently when the WG pool was closed permanently). Occasionally, Joel invites me along on a golf outing with the intention of teaching me the game. So far, he has not been successful with this project.

In the world of academe it may be rare to establish

long term relationships of trust and affection. It is a bonus when colleagues are able to do this. I count my thirty three years in the philosophy department a memorable experience because of my relationship to Dr. Auble who is three in one: teacher, entertainer, and friend.

With Warm Regards,

—Burdett Wantland, Retired Professor of Philosophy

*From President Sethna*

A few years ago, on the occasion of his retirement, I wrote in this newsletter about my swimming colleague, Burdett Wantland, who I said I would miss because he was at about my level in swimming proficiency (to be kind, let's just say, not at the competitive swimming level :-)).

Today, also with regret, I write about my swimming colleague, Joel Auble, who is at the other end of the spectrum in his swimming ability! I can start swimming at 7 a.m., and Joel can come half an hour later, and by the time we are done at 8 a.m., he has swum farther and faster, and made us all look bad in the process.

Joel, the philosopher, the professor, the singer, the swimmer, the all-rounder—we will miss you.

Thank you very much for your service to the University of West Georgia!  
—Beheruz N. Sethna, President

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## Philosophy Awards to be Presented

### Interested in Philosophy? Join the West Georgia Philosophical Society

Interested in Philosophy? Enjoy open discussions on every imaginable topic? Then you should join The Philosophical Society. Reincarnated in the fall of 2003, the society is now a registered student organization and meets every other week to discuss everything philosophical. Meetings involve discussions, paper presentations, community service projects, movie nights, and the occasional night out. Previous discussion topics have ranged from “Morality” to “Just War Theory” to “What makes a good society”. Members of the society have also been involved in canned food drives, bake sales, and trivia nights at local restaurants. All students, regardless of their background or experience are invited to join. This semester meetings will be held every other Monday at 3:30 pm in TLC 1204. For more information, check out the philosophy bulletin board outside Humanities 154 or the Society’s website at [www.westga.edu/~philsoc](http://www.westga.edu/~philsoc). If you have any questions, contact the society at [philsoc@westga.edu](mailto:philsoc@westga.edu) or the advisor (Dr. Lane: [rlane@westga.edu](mailto:rlane@westga.edu)).

This year that Philosophy program will be presenting its annual awards in conjunction with the English program at the English and Philosophy Awards ceremony on March 30, 2005 at 3:00 in the atrium of the TLC building. Awards will be presented to the following awardees:

Gordon Watson Award: Michelle Fellows

Philosophy New Major Award: Jake Earl

Philosophy Program Service Award: Brian Larkin

West Georgia Philosophical Society Essay Prize: Kristina Swim

Students who presented papers at conferences also will be recognized during the program. These are Michelle Fellows, Brian Larkin, Karen Reed, and Kristina Swim. In addition Karen Reed and Kristina Swim will be recognized for their participation in this year’s auditions for Big Night. The 2004–05 inductees and new officers of Phi Sigma Tau, Georgia Iota Chapter, will be introduced at the awards program. They are Melissa Christopher, Michelle Fellows, Brian Larkin (President), Natalie Powell, Karen Reed, Tamara Ringgard, Graham Sutherland, Satoshi Tanabe, and Nicole Walker (Vice-President).

All Philosophy majors, minors and religion minors are invited to attend this event. Cookies and punch will be served. Please help us honor all our outstanding philosophy students by coming to show our communal support.

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### *Retirement continued from page 1*

#### *From Anne Richards*

Joel is a multi-talented colleague who became a master at multi-tasking before the term became a buzzword. He is an accomplished educator, musician, athlete and singer who moves gracefully from one arena to another.

In addition to teaching an array of Philosophy courses, he has taken on leading and memorable roles in community and campus theatre productions ranging from Dracula to the Professor in “My Fair Lady” to a member of the barbershop quartet in the “Music Man.” He’s handled intensely dramatic roles as well as light-hearted comedy without skipping a beat. He’s as comfortable swimming as he is running, as adept with a guitar as he is a set of golf clubs. He’s versatile as a singer too—whether we’re talking barbershop harmonies, oldies from the sixties, Spanish dance tunes, Irish folksongs, or anything else. I understand that he and Ben Kennedy (retired from History Department) once took a trip to Ireland with Joel’s guitar in tow. They hiked and stopped in pubs to sing some tunes along the way.

His campus office is a distinctive, cozy and inviting space. It demonstrates his love for reading, his aesthetic sensibilities and his capacity for creating an ambiance conducive to learning and a meaning-filled life.

He may be retiring from West Georgia, but we expect to have continued opportunities to celebrate and enjoy his presence in the community for many years to come.

—Anne Richards

## Summer 2005 Courses in Philosophy

### Session IV, July 1 through July 26

**Phil 2110-01: Critical Thinking**

Dr. Jay Alberg

**MTWRF 3:00-5:15, Humanities Room 209**

*Required for Philosophy Majors. Required for the Minor in Religion. May count for credit in Core Area B1.*

It seems a little obvious to say that no one can do your thinking for you, but that insight guides this class. The emphasis of the class is on student activity. A wide variety of exercises are given, both inside and outside the classroom, so that students develop the skills they need for critical thinking. The students learn to identify the conclusion of a piece of reasoning, as well as the reasons given in support of that conclusion. They also learn to make explicit the assumptions of the author. Having learned to identify the conclusion, the reasons, and the structure of an argument, the students are in a position to make judgments about the validity and soundness of the arguments, as well as constructing some of their own. This is an ideal class for sharpening your studying skills.

## Fall 2005 Courses in Philosophy

**Phil 2100-01: Introduction to Philosophy**

Staff

**MWF 9:00-9:50, TLC Room 1200**

*Required for Philosophy Majors. Required for the Minor in Religion. May count for credit in Core Area C.*

This course takes an historical look at major philosophical questions through the primary texts of such important philosophers as Plato, Aristotle, Boethius, Descartes, Kant, Camus and Foucault. Students are exposed to questions of what it means to be a human being, how to live the good life, what we can know, and why we are here.

**Phil 2100-02: Introduction to Philosophy**

Staff

**MWF 10:00-10:50, Humanities Room 312**

*Required for Philosophy Majors. Required for the Minor in Religion. May count for credit in Core Area C.*

Description same as above.

**Phil 2100-03: Introduction to Philosophy**

Staff

**MWF 11:00-11:50, Humanities Room 227**

*Required for Philosophy Majors. Required for the Minor in Religion. May count for credit in Core Area C.*

Description same as above.

**Phil 2110-01: Critical Thinking**

Staff

**MWF 2:00-2:50, Humanities Room 227**

*Required for Philosophy Majors. Required for the Minor in Religion. May count for credit in Core Area B1.*

It seems a little obvious to say that no one can do your thinking for you, but that insight guides this class. The emphasis of the class is on student activity. A wide variety of exercises are given, both inside and outside the classroom, so that students develop the skills they need for critical thinking. The students learn to identify the conclusion of a piece of reasoning, as well as the reasons given in support of that conclusion. They also learn to make explicit the assumptions of the author. Having learned to identify the conclusion, the reasons, and the structure of an argument, the students are in a position to make judgments about the validity and soundness of the arguments, as well as constructing some of their own. This is an ideal class for sharpening your studying skills.

**Phil 2110-02: Critical Thinking**

Staff

**MW 3:30-4:45, Humanities Room 227**

*Required for Philosophy Majors. Required for the Minor in Religion. May count for credit in Core Area B1.*

Description same as above.

**Phil 2110-LCL: Critical Thinking**  
**TR 2:00-3:15, Humanities Room 227**

**Dr. Jay Alberg**

*Required for Philosophy Majors. Required for the Minor in Religion. May count for credit in Core Area BI.*  
Description same as above.

**Phil 2120-01: Introduction to Ethics**  
**TR 8:00-9:15 am, TLC 1200**

**Dr. Robert Lane**

Required for Philosophy Majors. Required for the minor in Religion. May count for credit in Core Area C.  
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 euthanasia immoral? what about causing non-human animals pain? is it wrong to spend money on expensive cars and homes when people in other parts of the world are dying from malnutrition? 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?; what makes an ethical argument good or bad?; and what general rules or principles ought we to live by? We will be paying special attention to the issue of morality in our post-Darwinian society: if humanity evolved from other animal species, what does this imply about human dignity and morality?

**Phil 3100-01: Ancient and Medieval Philosophy**  
**MWF 11:00-11:50, Humanities Room 206**

**Staff**

*Required for Philosophy Majors.*

An exploration of such philosophers as the pre-Socratics, Plato, Aristotle, Epictetus, Augustine, Aquinas, and Ockham.

**Phil 4110-01W: Philosophy of Law**  
**TR 2:00-3:15, Humanities Room 227**

**Dr. Robert Lane**

*Required for Pre-Law Track.*

This course will explore selected philosophical issues relevant to the law and criminal justice. Questions addressed may include: what is law?; what is the purpose or function of a system of laws?; and, what moral duty do we have to obey the law?

**Phil 4160-01: Symbolic Logic**  
**TR 11:00-12:15, Humanities Room 206.**

**Dr. Robert Lane**

*Pre-requisite: Phil 2110 is recommended.*

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 the validity or invalidity of arguments in symbolic form. If time allows, we will also cover selected philosophical problems related to symbolic logic. Because Symbolic Logic enhances one's abilities in skills necessary for the LSAT, philosophy majors in the Pre-Law track are strongly encouraged to take this course.

**Phil 4230-01: Philosophy of Religion**  
**MWF 2:00-2:50, Humanities Room 206**

**Staff**

*Required for Religion Track.*

This course offers a challenging survey of a few of the most important philosophical debates about religion from ancient times to the beginning of the twenty-first century. Among the main topics discussed will be: the problem of defining "religion" as a philosophical and a cultural phenomenon; arguments for the existence of God(s); the problem of reconciling scientific and religious worldviews; the rationality of religious belief; and the question of whether a religious outlook remains a genuine option for educated inhabitants of our multicultural and "postmodern" age. Historical and sociological observations will regularly enter our discussion, but this is in the end a philosophy course.

**Phil 4300-01W: Senior Seminar**  
**MWF 1:00-1:50, TLC 2237**

**Dr. Jay Alberg**

*Required for Philosophy Majors of senior standing.*

The theme of this year's seminar is Mimesis: Its History and Import. Already with Plato the relationship between poetry and philosophy was described as "that ancient quarrel". Much of the quarrel concerns the notion of "mimesis" or imitation, that is art produces imitations of imitations of the forms. With Aristotle the valence shifted somewhat, as he declared that what separates humans from animals is their greater capacity for imitation. As with so much else, the rest of the history of this concept is marked by these two positions. We will use Kendall L. Watson's *Mimesis as Make Believe: On the Foundation of Representational Arts* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1993) as our textbook. Once we have grasp of the issues involved in a philosophical appreciation of mimesis, each student will be expected to choose a topic for a research paper that covers some significant aspect of mimesis from either a historical or systematic viewpoint. Each student will give a seminar presentation on their chosen topic.

## New Tracks in Philosophy

Beginning fall semester 2005, the Philosophy Program is instituting a new approach to the philosophy major. The new approach involves three different tracks that philosophy majors can select from in order to focus their education more closely to their interests. The three tracks are a general philosophy track, a pre-law track, and a religion track.

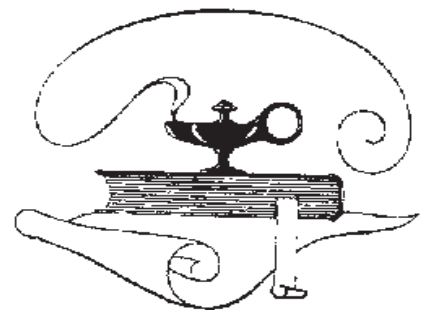
**The general philosophy track** is essentially the same as the current philosophy major and is focused on preparing students for a whole host of careers in business or medicine or publishing as well as for graduate study in philosophy.

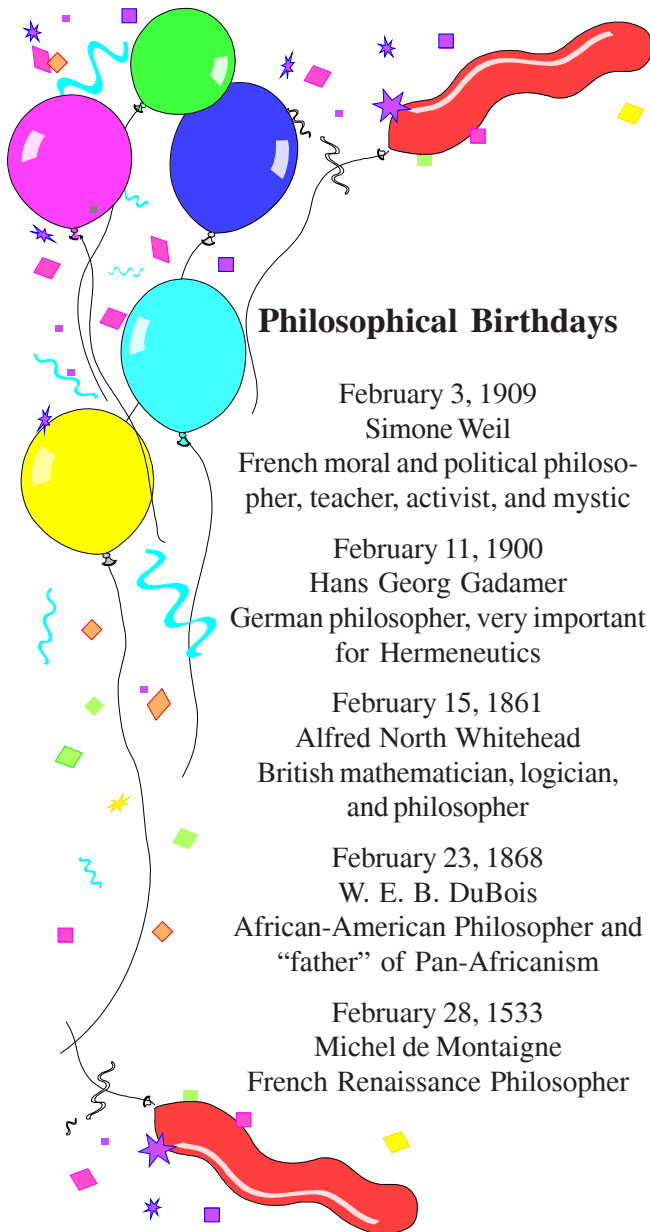
**The pre-law track** provides an excellent background for students who are interested in pursuing careers in law or law-related fields. The track requires students to take Political Philosophy, Philosophy of Law, Professional Ethics, and highly recommends that students take Symbolic Logic as preparation for the LSAT.

**The religion track** allows students to focus their course work on religious studies. Required courses include Philosophy of Religion, Religious Texts, and World Religions. This track provides excellent background and preparation for students interested in seminary, graduate study in theology or religion, or careers in church-related work.

## Meeting of the Minds

Have you ever thought about what it really means to be in love? Have you wondered what scholars have had to say about love and what it means to love? Many philosophers have thought about these things and they are getting together this semester to share with you what they've determined. Here is a rare opportunity to hear from the philosophers themselves! This year's meeting of the minds is an exciting conversation about love between philosophers through the ages. Philosophers in attendance will be: Simone de Beauvoir as played by Mindy Lindstrom, Montaigne played by Ethan Held, Schopenhauer played by Brian Larkin, Nietzsche as played by Jake Earl, Kierkegaard played by Matt Lewis, and Krishnamurti played by Josh Eaton. The script is being written by Karen Reed and directed by Michelle Fellows. The event will take place on Thursday, April 7, 2005 at 7:00 pm in Kathy Cashen Hall. All members of the university and Carrollton community are welcome to attend. Attendance is free of charge. For more information please contact Dr. Janet Donohoe, [jdonohoe@westga.edu](mailto:jdonohoe@westga.edu), 678-839-4743.





### Philosophical Birthdays

February 3, 1909  
Simone Weil

French moral and political philosopher, teacher, activist, and mystic

February 11, 1900  
Hans Georg Gadamer

German philosopher, very important for Hermeneutics

February 15, 1861  
Alfred North Whitehead  
British mathematician, logician, and philosopher

February 23, 1868  
W. E. B. DuBois

African-American Philosopher and “father” of Pan-Africanism

February 28, 1533  
Michel de Montaigne

French Renaissance Philosopher

### Philosopher’s Wisdom

In memory of Jacques Derrida  
who died October 8, 2004

“Is the most distressing, or even the most deadly infidelity, that of a possible mourning which would interiorize within us the image, idol or ideal of the other who is dead and lives only in us? Or is it that of the impossible mourning which ... refuses to take the other within oneself, as in the tomb of some narcissism?”

—from *Memoires for Paul De Man*

## Department of Philosophy

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Please direct any questions or comments about this newsletter to Dr. Janet Donohoe, 678-839-4743.