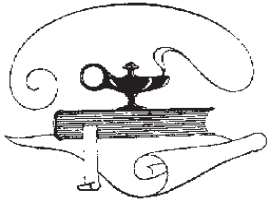


The Lantern



Philosophy Newsletter for Students

Volume 15, Number 1

Fall 2013

Introducing Rosemary Kellison



I am very happy to have joined the Philosophy faculty at UWG this fall. I am really enjoying getting to know the Philosophy students as well as my new faculty colleagues. It is very exciting to be part of the growing major track and minor in Religion. I just completed my Ph.D. in Religion at Florida State University in Tallahassee in May. I received my Master's degree from the same program after completing my undergraduate education in Comparative Studies and International Studies at Ohio State. I'm hoping that my training in a Religion department will bring a new and interesting perspective to the study of religion at UWG.

The subfield in which I received my doctorate is called religious ethics, and it's a discipline that brings together the descriptive work of critically analyzing the moral thought and practice of religious traditions and the normative work of engaging in moral reflection. For that reason, I'm very happy to have found myself in a Philosophy program, where I think students will be eager to take on both aspects of the religious ethics project. My own work has dealt with theoretical questions about the proper relationship between these two aims of religious ethics, in the context of comparative analysis of the traditions of Christian and Islamic ethics.

Recently, the particular, more practical area in which I have been attempting to work on these broader questions is the ethics of war. My dissertation, "Responsibility for the Just War: A Feminist-Pragmatist Approach to the Study of Religious Ethics," involves a critical, constructive analysis of

some of the basic categories of the most influential Western tradition of thinking about the ethics of war. I intend to spend much of the next few years engaged in the revision and expansion of this project into a book.

In the meantime, I have been working on some shorter projects. A paper on how the traditional just war criterion of "right intention" might have to be revised in light of recent feminist philosophical work critiquing standard models of agency will appear in an upcoming focus issue on feminist ethics in the *Journal of Religious Ethics*. A second article, in which I argue for an understanding of the just war tradition as authoritative and yet subject to the authority of present interpreters, building on insights from pragmatist thinkers like John Dewey and Robert Brandom, will be published in the same journal. Finally, next month I will present a new working paper in which I explore how just war thinkers might address the relatively new psychological diagnosis of "moral injury" in veterans returning home from Afghanistan and Iraq. I'm looking forward to becoming part of this community and talking with many of you about issues like these, in classes and in more casual conversations.

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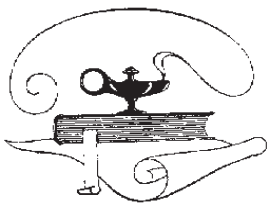
PHILOSOPHY HONORS SOCIETY

The Georgia Iota chapter of Phi Sigma Tau is West Georgia's philosophical link to the world of honor societies. The chapter consists of students who have demonstrated outstanding academic achievement and a sincere interest in philosophy. Founded to recognize and reward philosophical scholarship, the chapter provides both an academic and a social environment for its members.

Criteria for Membership:

- ◆ a 3.0 overall GPA,
- ◆ the completion of at least two philosophy courses,
- ◆ a GPA higher than 3.0 in all Philosophy courses taken,
- ◆ the completion of 45 hours of coursework.

For more information, go to <http://www.westga.edu/~pst> or contact Dr. Lane (rlane@westga.edu) if you are interested in applying for membership.



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.

On-Time Registration Dates for Currently Enrolled Students:

- Current *Seniors* & all *Graduate students* – Oct. 28
- Current *Juniors* ss# ending in 00–49 – Oct. 29
- Current *Juniors* ss# ending in 50–99 – Oct. 30
- Current *Sophomores* ss# ending 00–49 – Oct. 31
- Current *Sophomores* ss# ending 50–99 – Nov. 1
- Current *Freshmen* ss# ending 50–74 – Nov. 4
- Current *Freshmen* ss# ending 25–49 – Nov. 5
- Current *Freshmen* ss# ending 00–24 – Nov. 6
- Current *Freshmen* ss# ending 75–99 – Nov. 7

Open Registration—Begins November 11–December 15. Registration reopens December 19 at 8:00 AM, and ends each session on the last day of drop/add.**

PHILOSOPHER'S WISDOM

“Whenever a theory appears to you as the only possible one, take this as a sign that you have neither understood the theory nor the problem it was intended to solve.”

~Karl Popper

Phil 2010-01 Introduction to Philosophy
TR 8:00-9:20 a.m. TLC 1200

Dr. Gary Senecal

This course will look to address the introductory questions that arise amidst all preliminary philosophical inquiry. Among these questions, we will examine specifically ontological inquiries (what is true/what is the ground truth of the natural world) epistemological inquiries (how we know what is true/how we see what is true), inquiries regarding the human being's relationship to the divine, and, most importantly, value inquiries (what is the meaning of life). Emphasis will be placed on understanding each thinker within historical context. The student will develop an understanding of the historical tradition of Western philosophy, as well as a grasp of the basics of each figured covered. We will receive a gloss of much without necessarily exhausting any particular thinker, question, system, paradigm, philosophy, etc. The thinkers covered will span the history of Western Philosophy and include Plato, Aristotle, Marcus Aurelius, Aquinas, Descartes, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Dostoevsky, and Heidegger, among others. Required for philosophy majors. May count for credit in Core Area C2.

Phil 2010-02 Introduction to Philosophy
TR 11:00 a.m.-12:20 p.m. TLC 1200

Dr. Brian McNeil

Philosophy is traditionally defined as the search for wisdom or understanding. While contemporary scholars may disagree on the precise delineation of the term, nearly all regard it as critical inquiry into the most fundamental questions facing human beings. These questions touch upon such important topics as: the fundamental nature of being (metaphysics), the nature of knowledge itself (epistemology), and the distinction between right and wrong (virtue ethics). In effect, the discipline of philosophy seeks to replace mere opinions on these matters with actual truths. A great deal of academic philosophy involves examining those answers posited by historically relevant thinkers in response to the above lines of inquiry. Accordingly, this course will survey some of the most important figures in the tradition of Western Philosophy—from the ancient Greeks all the way through the twentieth century. Specific emphasis will be placed on understanding each philosopher within the applicable historical context. Students will be asked to develop an understanding of the historical progression of Western Philosophy along with the basic theories advanced by each thinker covered. This course will trace the dialogue concerning metaphysical, epistemological, ethical, and existential problems through the Ancient, Medieval, and Early/Late Modern periods. The aim is not only to gain an understanding of—and appreciation for—myriad proposed solutions to such problems, but also to help guide students in their analysis of these issues so as to facilitate the effective formulation of their own views concerning the world and their place in it. Required for philosophy majors. May count for credit in Core Area C2.

Phil 2010-03 Introduction to Philosophy
TR 12:30-1:50 p.m. TLC 1200

Dr. Shoni Rancher

Required for philosophy majors. May count for credit in Core Area C2.

Phil 2010-04 Introduction to Philosophy
TR 2:00-3:20 p.m. TLC 1200

Dr. John Wolfe

Same as above. Required for philosophy majors. May count for credit in Core Area C2.

Phil 2010-05 Introduction to Philosophy
TR 3:30-4:50 p.m. TLC 1200

Dr. John Wolfe

Same as above. Required for philosophy majors. May count for credit in Core Area C2.

Phil 2010-25H Introduction to Philosophy
MWF 10:00-10:52 a.m. Paff 309

Dr. Janet Donohoe

This course takes an historical look at major philosophical questions through the primary texts of such important philosophers as Plato, Aristotle, Boethius, Descartes, Nietzsche, Camus, and Arendt. Students are exposed to questions of what it means to be a human being, how to live the good life, what we can know, why we are here, whether there is a God, why there is evil in the world, and whether anything at all has meaning. Through the texts we learn not only the way that philosophers address these questions, but we also learn what it means to engage in philosophical thought and how the process of thinking philosophically can change our understanding of our own existence. Required for philosophy majors. May count in Core Area C2.

Phil 2020-01 Critical Thinking
MWF 11:00-11:52 a.m. Paff 109

Dr. Walter Riker

In this course students learn to recognize and evaluate several different kinds of arguments. Students practice their developing skills by analyzing several influential contemporary arguments for and against different uses of animals (e.g.,

for food, research, entertainment, and companionship). This course satisfies the Oral Communication component of the Core Curriculum, so students will discuss these issues in both formal and informal settings. Required for philosophy majors. May count for credit in Core Area B1.

Phil 2020-02 Critical Thinking
MW 2:00-3:20 p.m. Paff 109

Dr. John Wolfe

Required for philosophy majors. May count for credit in Core Area B1.

Phil 2020-03 Critical Thinking
MW 3:30-4:50 p.m. Paff 109

Dr. John Wolfe

Required for philosophy majors. May count for credit in Core Area B1.

Phil 2020-04 Critical Thinking
TR 9:30-10:50 a.m. Paff 109

Dr. Mark Tietjen

This course addresses the basics of how to think critically and how to evaluate arguments. Students will learn to identify both well known argument forms and well known fallacies in reasoning. They will explore the importance of clear definitions, the role of emotion in argumentation, and how critical thinking skills might be useful in analyzing contemporary issues in politics, science, and religion. Students will apply skills they learn to philosophical texts and also to their particular major fields of study. Required for philosophy majors. May count for credit in Core Area B1.

Phil 2020-05 Critical Thinking
TR 11:00 a.m.-12:20 p.m. Paff 109

Dr. Mark Tietjen

Same as above. Required for philosophy majors. May count for credit in Core Area B1.

Phil 2020-06 Critical Thinking
TR 2:00-3:20 p.m. Paff 109

Dr. Shoni Rancher

Required for philosophy majors. May count for credit in Core Area B1.

Phil 2030-01 Introduction to Ethics
TR 9:30-10:50 a.m. TLC 1200

Dr. Robert Lane

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 capital punishment? 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. Required for all philosophy majors and minors. May count for credit in Core Area C2.

Phil 2130-01 Introduction to World Religions
TR 2:00-3:20 p.m. TLC 1301

Dr. Rosemary Kellison

This course revolves around two central questions: what is religion, and why does the first question matter? To answer these questions, we will begin by discussing the importance of categories and definitions of religion. We will then turn to a survey of some of the world's major religious traditions, including: indigenous religious traditions, Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and selected new religious movements. There will be a special focus on contemporary issues facing these traditions as well as a broader consideration of the relationship between religion and modernity. May count for credit in Core Area E4.

Phil 3110-01 Modern Philosophy
MWF 10:00-10:52 a.m. Paff 109

Dr. Walter Riker

This course in the history of Western philosophy examines the metaphysical and epistemological theories of influential 17th and 18th century philosophers. We will examine work by Rene Descartes (1596-1650), John Locke (1632-1704), David Hume (1711-1776), and Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), among others. We will also examine work in Feminist Philosophy that responds to or challenges the modern philosophers and their influence on contemporary thought in the West.

Phil 3160-01 Philosophy in Literature and Film
MWF 11:00-11:52 a.m. Paff 308

Dr. Janet Donohoe

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

Phil 4120-01 Professional Ethics
MWF 2:00-2:52 p.m. Paff 308

Dr. Walter Riker

The “professions” are traditionally understood to be those occupations that require extensive training, significant intellectual work, and service to society. Members of the professions often serve clients—people who hire or come to them just for their special knowledge—and have a great deal of autonomy in how they do their work. The list of professions includes physician, lawyer, members of the clergy, engineers, accountants and others in business, nurses, and several others. In this course, we will examine ethical issues common to these occupations as professions, including, but not limited to, the following: When, if ever, are members of the professions morally permitted to withhold services from clients? When, if ever, are they morally permitted, or even morally required, to deceive a client for the client’s own good? To what extent is informed consent possible in the professional/client relationship, given the asymmetries in knowledge that cause clients to seek the help of professionals in the first place? When, if ever, are members of the professions morally permitted or required to violate a client’s confidentiality and reveal to others what they learn from or about a client? When, if ever, can someone violate the confidentiality of an employer? Should a person ever be barred from entering the professions for reasons of character? Does professional training cause morally regrettable but nevertheless necessary deformations of a person’s character?

Phil 4130-01 Feminist Philosophy
TR 11:00 a.m.-12:20 p.m. Paff 308

Dr. Rosemary Kellison

Feminists argue in favor of 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.

Phil 4160-01 Symbolic Logic
TR 12:30-1:50 p.m. Paff 308

Dr. Robert Lane

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.

Phil 4230-01W Philosophy of Religion
TR 2:00-3:20 p.m. Paff 308

Dr. Mark Tietjen

This course examines philosophical arguments about such religious questions as the existence of God, the problem of evil, the relationship between faith and reason, and the relationship between science and religion.

Phil 4385-01 Special Topics: Religion, Ethics, and War
TR 9:30-10:50 a.m. Paff 308

Dr. Rosemary Kellison

When asked about the relationship between ethics and war, humans have typically given one of three responses. The first, characteristic of political realism, is that war is a situation to which ordinary human morality does not apply. The second, typically called pacifism, is that morality forbids the possibility of war in any circumstances. The third, most popular, response is that morality may sometimes require resort to war in order to defend justice, but that the resort to and use of armed force should be regulated by moral rules. In this course, we will critically examine religious thinking about war falling into each of these three categories. Our focus will be on the Western tradition, but we will also consider non-Western perspectives, particularly the Islamic tradition on the ethics of war.

Upcoming Undergraduate Conferences

It's time to start thinking about term papers, and when you do, keep in mind that there are several undergraduate philosophy conferences that usually take place in Georgia in the spring. The call for abstracts for one of those conferences is listed here. Others to keep an eye out for are the Kennesaw State University conference, the Clayton State University conference, and the Georgia State University conference. These conferences frequently have deadlines in January. Talk with your philosophy professors if you are interested in participating in any of these conferences.

2014 Meeting of the South Carolina Society for Philosophy

Furman University

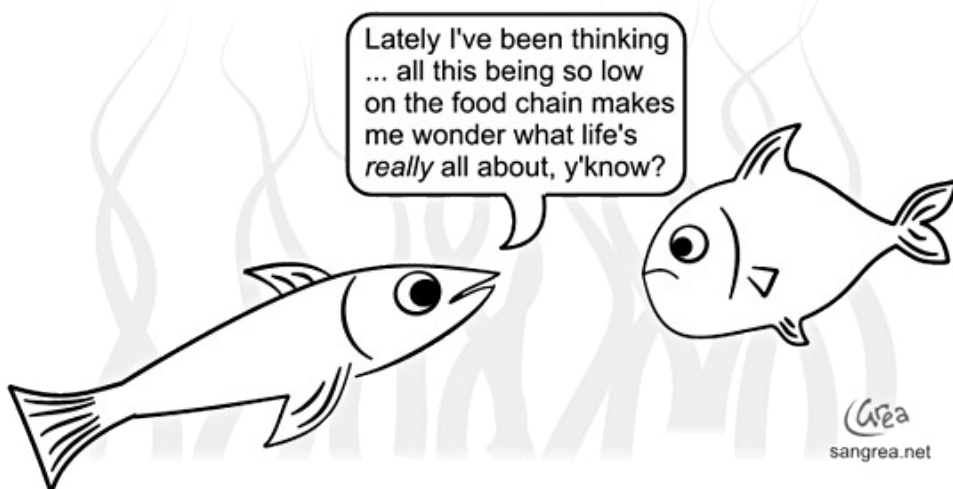
Greenville, South Carolina

Conference date: February 14–15, 2014

Abstract submission deadline: December 1, 2013

Paper submission deadline: January 5, 2014

New announcements about upcoming conferences can always be found on the philosophy department website at www.westga.edu/~phil.



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. The Society is a registered student organization that meets every other week for lively discussions of philosophical topics. In the past, discussion topics have ranged from the role of technology in our lives, to the apparent incompatibility between determinism and the belief in human free will, to the question whether man is naturally good or bad. 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. Meetings are typically held every other Friday in Pafford 309. If you would like more information about the Society's meetings or other activities, or to be added to the Society's email list, contact Dr. Riker (wriker@westga.edu) or check out the Society's Facebook page.