PHIL 6010: PLATO
TR 9:30-10:45  TIM O’KEEFE
This course will be an in-depth examination of the philosophy of Plato, including his moral psychology, epistemology, ethics, theology, and politics. We will also be looking into the unity of Plato’s thought (or lack thereof)—that is, can the positions put forward in various dialogues be made consistent with one another or not? In addition, we’ll explore methodological challenges posed by Plato’s use of the dialogue form and literary genres like eschatological myths. We will most likely be looking at the following dialogues: Euthyphro, Apology, Protagoras, Gorgias, Citophran, Republic, Theaetetus, (small portions of the) Timaeus and Laws, and the Symposium.

PHIL 6090: TOPICS: CONTINENTAL PHILOSOPHY
TR 2:30-3:45  SEBASTIAN RAND
Heidegger’s Being and Time. Heidegger’s first book was published in 1927 and has been remarkably influential ever since. Against the background of his interpretation of the history of philosophy, Heidegger uses existentialist and phenomenological insights to motivate a new program in “fundamental ontology” beginning with an analysis of the specifically human mode of being. At the core of this program lies a radical understanding of time. We will read as much of this book as we can.

PHIL 6100: EPISTEMOLOGY
MW 12:00-1:15  STEVE JACOBSON
The course covers classical and contemporary topics in epistemology. These may include—the analysis of the concept of knowledge, the problems of the external world, other minds, induction, the Gettier problem, skepticism, foundationalism, coherentism, naturalism, reliabilism, the internalist/externalist debate, contextualism, relativism, and social constructivism.

PHIL 6330: PHILOSOPHY OF MIND
MW 3:00-4:15  DAN WEISKOPF
In this course we will investigate some central philosophical questions about the mind. Among other things, we will ask: Do animals have minds, and how could we understand them if they do? Is the mind something nonphysical? If it is physical, is it anything over and above the brain? How can mental states make things happen in the physical world? How do minds represent events occurring outside of them? How do conscious sensations and experiences arise from unconscious matter? Can we have a science of conscious experience? Finally, how is the mind integrated with the world outside the body, and might our minds be “extended” into the extra-bodily environment?

PHIL 6340: PHILOSOPHY AND COGNITIVE SCIENCE
TR 1:00-2:15  NEIL VAN LEEUWEN
How is information organized in the mind/brain? In this course, we’ll explore the thesis known as modularity, which holds that the mind/brain is organized into separate specialized systems, each with different processing principles and domains of information. One might hold, for example, that the sense modalities—hearing, vision, olfaction, etc.—are processed by separate modules, as Jerry Fodor argues in The Modularity of Mind, which we’ll read at the beginning of the course. But there are other potential examples as well. Theorists have argued that there are separate intuitive “folk” systems in the mind/brain for processing different sorts of information: folk physics, folk biology, and folk psychology, most prominently. Some hold, for example, that intuitive folk physics operates independently of whatever our conscious theories are about the physical world. Thus, the goals of the course are (1) to understand the respective modularity theses precisely, (2) to explore the evidence for them, and (3) to evaluate their merits critically.

PHIL 6700: ETHICS
MW 1:30-2:45  CHRISTIE HARTLEY
Normative ethics is the study of what we should do and how we should be. In this course we will explore some leading theories in contemporary normative ethics, including contractarianism, Kantianism, contractualism, utilitarianism, virtue theory and the ethics of care. We will consider how the theories we study can best be formulated and the most important challenges to each theory.

PHIL 6800: SOCIAL AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY
TR 11:00-12:15  ANDREW J. COHEN
We are in the midst of a difficult election cycle. It seems worth considering what we think a political system ought to be. Noticeably, many in the U.S. think our country is exceptional. “American exceptionalism” was actually a long-standing political policy view. Why? In this class, we will look at various historical and contemporary thinkers to determine the central political values thought to inspire the US political system. Along the way, we will discuss how well our country measures up to the standards those values set. The real focus, however, is seeking to determine what those standards should be.
Metaphilosophy. The perceived lack of success or lack of convergence in answering the time-honored “big questions” of philosophy has caused many skeptics to question its value and its future—Neil deGrasse Tyson, Bill Nye, Marco Rubio, ... your parents. What is philosophy, exactly? Does it have distinctive methods? Why should anyone bother to do it? And what is at stake in the divisions internal to philosophy, between so-called “analytic” and “Continental” philosophers, for instance, or “experimental” and “armchair” philosophers? In this course, we will reflect critically on philosophy itself, assuming there is such a thing, and see what the prospects are for answering these questions.

Kants Ethics. Our seminar will be an intensive study of Kant’s ethics. We’ll examine his *Groundwork, Doctrine of Virtue, and Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*. Our main focus will be on topics such as moral obligation, moral judgment, ethical virtue, duties to self and others, and moral psychology. Depending on time and student interest, we will also explore topics such as gender and virtue, human nature and race, moral education, or contemporary work inspired by Kant’s ethics.

Emotions/Non-linguistic Communication - What are the functions of emotions? Emotions have spent centuries in the uncomfortable position of being considered, as Jon Elster once put it, sand in the machinery of rationality. In more recent times, the pendulum has swung in the opposite direction. The emotions are now widely considered to serve a variety of useful functions, at least in standard circumstances. In this class, we will explore in detail the biological and social functions of emotions. In the first part, we will focus on emotions’ ability to coordinate cognitive and motivational resources in a quick and yet flexible fashion. In the second part, we will focus on emotions’ ability to communicate non-verbal information by being publicly expressed.

Psychologists and neuroscientists are increasingly studying moral judgment and behavior; sometimes neglecting philosophical theorizing about morality. Meanwhile, philosophers sometimes neglect the relevance of this empirical research to debates about morality. We will consider how this gap should be bridged as we study the emerging interdisciplinary field of moral psychology. Topics include: moral intuitions and their psychological sources, the evolution of altruism and moral behavior, judgments about moral responsibility and punishment, and moral disagreement. Readings will be drawn from philosophy (including ‘experimental philosophy’), psychology, and neuroscience.

Law and Ethics: Discrimination, Race, and Religion. Email Dr. Altman for a course description at aaltman@gsu.edu