

**HPS Undergraduate Courses**  
**Spring 2027 (Term 2274)**

**HPS 0517 Thinking About the Environment (29489)**

**T 6:00-8:30**

**Rose Gatfield-Jeffries**

The goal of HPS 0517, thinking about the environment, is to promote clear and rigorous thinking about environmental issues such as nuclear power, global warming, acid rain, or the use of chemical pesticides. Deciding where to stand on such issues depends on being able to evaluate both scientific and philosophical arguments. We aim to help students develop the skills needed to find the best available information on an environmental issue, and to make informed judgments about what conclusions, and what actions, are warranted on the basis of that information.

**HPS 0611 Principles of Scientific Reasoning (24210)**

**H 6:00-8:30**

**Kiki Timmermans**

This course will provide students with the skills to understand and assess scientific claims that confront them in daily life. Special attention will be given to reasoning based on samples, evaluating hypotheses and causal claims, as well as common mistakes in scientific reasoning.

**HPS 0612 Mind and Medicine**

**TH 4:00-5:15**

**Margaret Farrell (28633)**

**TH 8:00-9:15**

**Ibrahim Haydar (28634)**

**TH 2:30-3:45**

**Margaret Farrell (25247)**

**TH 1:00-2:15**

**Margaret Farrell (26059)**

**TH 2:00-2:50**

**Dana Matthiessen (31209)**

**TH 3:00-3:50**

**Dana Matthiessen (31218)**

This survey course will provide an entry-level introduction to the fields of philosophy of medicine and philosophy of psychiatry. Through readings, lecture and discussions, we will explore contemporary and historical philosophical topics concerning the health

professions and health sciences that go beyond traditional bioethical problems, which may include: concepts of disease and mental disorder, classification and kinds in medicine and psychiatry, explanation in medicine and psychiatry, diagnosis and overdiagnosis, medical evidence and evidence-based medicine, alternative medicine and demarcating scientific from pseudoscientific medicine, antipsychiatry and medical nihilism, values in medicine, and medical AI. Students will come away with an understanding of some of the fundamental philosophical problems underlying science and practice in medicine and psychiatry. They will learn to read and write in philosophy, develop and respond to philosophical arguments, and engage in academic-level discussion of ideas in philosophy of medicine and psychiatry. This course is part of a core sequence leading to certification in the Conceptual Foundations of Medicine Certificate Program and is a companion course to HPS 0613 (Morality and Medicine) but may be taken independently.

### **HPS 0613 Morality and Medicine**

**MW 12:00-12:50**

**Nina Atanasova (19878)**

**MW 1:00-1:50**

**Nina Atanasova (27230)**

**TH 11:00-12:15**

**Laura Matthews (27231)**

**MW 3:00-4:15**

**Nina Atanasova (28635)**

**M 6:00-8:30**

**Kamyar Asasi (CGS) (31120)**

This entry-level survey course will examine bioethical issues that arise in contemporary and historical medical research and practice through the lens of ethics, philosophy of science, and other areas of philosophy. Through readings, lecture and discussions, we will analyze traditional bioethical dilemmas surrounding topics which may include: ethical theory and bioethical principles, the doctor-patient relationship, informed consent and medical decision-making, public health ethics, health policy, medical research, end-of-life care, physician-assisted death, reproduction, biotechnology, healthcare justice and genetics. Students will come away with an approach to analyzing bioethical dilemmas and an understanding of the philosophical problems underlying them. They will learn to read and write in bioethics and philosophy, develop and respond to bioethical arguments, and engage in academic-level discussion of bioethical and philosophical ideas. This course is part of a core sequence leading to certification in the Conceptual Foundations of Medicine Certificate Program and is a companion course to HPS 0612 (Mind and Medicine) but may

be taken independently. The course will be of particular interest to pre-medical and pre-health care students.

**HPS 0619 Quantum Karma: Science in Hindu and Buddhist Traditions (31895)**

**Cross listed as RELGST 0780 (31894)**

**TH 4:00-5:15**

**Daniel Heifetz**

We have likely all encountered arguments in which sweeping claims are made about the relationship between religion and science. These claims often generalize on the basis of a limited knowledge of a few locally visible religious traditions. This course offers students an opportunity to explore the way science has interacted with some of the traditions often neglected by these debates. In particular, we will explore how the close relationship between European imperialism and scientific institutions created new parameters for conversations about Hindu and Buddhist traditions. This led intellectuals in these traditions to develop systems of thought that integrate scientific and religious ideas. These ideas played an important role in processes of decolonization, the development of religious nationalism, and the transnational spread of Hindu and Buddhist traditions.

**HPS 0620 Science and Religion (20420)**

**Cross listed as RELGST 0770 (20419) and PHIL 0840 (24429)**

**TH 9:30-10:45**

**Brock Bahler**

The media caricature regarding the debate between science and religion is predictable: the two sides are polar opposites angrily vying for alternative worldviews, the scientist representing secularism and rationality with the religionist representing superstition and ignorance. Such stereotypes are unhelpful and misleading, both historically and practically. This course examines both historical and contemporary articulations regarding the potential complementarity of religion and science, particularly within the Western monotheist faiths. Special attention will be given to a comparative analysis of ancient creation narratives, contributions to science by people of faith, religious responses to evolutionary biology, and the potential problems scientific discovery raises for religious devotion and interpreting religious texts. We will also consider practical, contemporary debates including what neuroscience can tell us about religious practices, how religion might respond to climate change, and how racism and misogyny have historically shaped scientific research.

**HPS 0621 Problem Solving: How Science Works (31223)**

**M 6:00-8:30**

**Diego Cimadam**

This course is intended to provide an introduction to science and scientific thinking for students who have not had much contact with science. Its goal is to explain what is distinctive about the scientific approach and its product, scientific theories. It explores what makes scientific claims reliable and how scientific methods are designed to control our natural tendencies to misread nature. The emphasis will be on quantitative approaches and on showing how the use of number in science greatly extends the reach of our investigative tools.

**HPS 1616 Artificial Intelligence and Philosophy of Science (28639)****MW 4:30-5:45****Caitlin Mace**

This course investigates the problem of mechanizing reasoning. For the case of deductive inference, it draws on work in symbolic logic and computation theory. For the case of inductive inference, it draws on work in confirmation theory from philosophy of science and learning theory.

**HPS 1620 Philosophy of Biology (31224)****W 6:00-8:30****Zach Mayne**

Philosophy of biology will consider foundational conceptual issues in biology like the nature and structure of biological explanation, the possibility of laws in evolutionary theory, the relationship between different causal components of biological processes (genetics and development), the problem of species reality and classification, the explanatory character of ascription of biological function, and the extension of biological explanations to human psychology and culture.

**HPS 1623 Death and the Healthcare Professions (27824)****Cross listed as RELGST 1725 (27823)****M 6:00-8:30****Jonathan Weinkle**

The American culture of the 20th and 21st centuries has been called, not death-defying, but death-denying. It is often said that America is the only place in the world that treats death as optional. Once upon a time, we couldn't have open, public conversations about breast cancer, because the word could not be uttered aloud. In many places, it is just as hard today to have an open, public conversation about death and dying. This phenomenon is not just a social more; it affects the practice of many professions and entire segments of our economy and society. This course will explore our individual and cultural reactions to

mortality, the ways in which dying in today's America is different from dying throughout history or elsewhere in the world, and the responses of a variety of professions, both within the field of healthcare and beyond, to their encounters with people in the various stages of dying. Students will be asked, at turns, to be scientific, philosophical, clinical, analytical, and emotional in encountering the concepts and material presented here. This should be a true interdisciplinary experience.

### **HPS 1624 Development of Scientific Medicine (32177)**

**MWF 10:00-10:50**

**Sloane Wesloh**

This course will explore the history of contemporary scientific medicine, including its sciences (anatomy, physiology, pathology, epidemiology), technologies (diagnostic, surgical, pharmacologic), research methods (clinical trials, biostatistics), and theories and philosophical underpinnings (naturalism, experimentalism, germ theory, the medical model, evidence-based medicine, genetic determinism). Students will come away with an understanding of how the history of medicine illuminates current medical science/practice as well as major topics in the philosophy of medicine and the philosophy of science. Students will read primary historical sources, original research in history of science, and a history of medicine textbook. Classes will consist of a combination of lecture and discussion.

### **HPS 1627 Living with Technology (31225)**

**TH 4:00-5:15**

**Dana Matthiessen**

Modern technology has been praised as a source of new freedoms and condemned as an unnatural instrument of control. But what exactly is technology and why does it provoke these responses? In this course, we will explore such questions from a historical and philosophical perspective. Alongside general views on the concept of technology and its significance to humanity, we will consider historical examples of the transformative effects that technologies have had on how humans understand the natural world and organize their social environments. This will prepare us to apply our understanding to contemporary technologies, which may include considerations of algorithmic bias, surveillance and privacy, online/AI relationships, and more. By the end of the course, students will have a richer understanding of the role of technology in shaping their lives and the lives of others, be able to identify crucial ethical issues surrounding contemporary technology, and have the skills to analyze proposed solutions to these difficult problems.

### **HPS 1670 Philosophy of Neuroscience (28643)**

**TH 1:00-2:15**

**Laura Matthews**

How can neuroscience explain my subjective experiences? How are the mind and brain connected? Do neuroscience and psychology even relate? Is there a problem of consciousness? Can we read minds? These are some of the questions now occupying the minds of both philosophers of neuroscience and many neuroscientists. However, approaching such questions empirically does not reveal the underlying assumptions one might incorporate into one's thinking when formulating questions, developing experiments, and interpreting results. This course will couple metaphysical theories of mind with contemporary research in both cognitive neuroscience and neurobiology. Throughout the class, we will try to answer some of the questions that popularly occupy contemporary philosophy of neuroscience debates, as well as interrogate and identify, philosophically, where and how these questions, including the research they prompt, arose in the first place. Finally, as neuroscience is a largely tool-driven discipline, students will learn about a range of neurotechnologies and explore whether or not these technologies are likely to get us any closer to reading the mind from the brain. Background in neuroscience is not required.

**HPS 1701/1702 Junior/Senior Seminar (10679)**

**M 9:30-11:50**

**Paolo Palmieri**

The goal of this seminar (HPS 1702) will be to introduce you to the cutting-edge research in history and philosophy of science. The seminar is designed to complement the knowledge you have acquired about the classic debates in history and philosophy of science. We will focus on the recent debates in contemporary philosophy of science and on some debates in the history of science that are relevant for philosophy. We will read articles that have been published in the last ten years in the major philosophy of science and history of science journals. We will also read some classic papers that provide a background for the current debates.

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