**2021/2022**

**Institute of Philosophy**

**University of Bialystok (Poland)**

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| **Course Title** | **ECTS credits** | **Hrs** | **Semester** | **Course Instructor** |
| **Mental representation** | 4 | 30 | winter or summer | Dr Krystyna Bielecka |
| **Philosophy of mind** | 4 | 30 | winter or summer | Dr Krystyna Bielecka |
| ​**Cognitive science of science** | 4 | 30 | winter or summer | Dr Witold Hensel |
| ​**Epistemology** | 4 | 30 | winter or summer | Dr Witold Hensel |
| ​**Philosophy of science** | 4 | 30 | winter or summer | Dr Witold Hensel |
| ​**Problems of Christianity** | 4 | 30 | winter or summer  | Dr prof. Zbigniew Kaźmierczak, prof. UwB |
| **Religion and the Modern Science** | 4 | 30 | winter or summer | Dr prof. Zbigniew Kaźmierczak, prof. UwB |
| **Philosophy of Capitalism** | 4 | 30 | winter or summer | Dr Bartosz Kuźniarz |
| **Contemporary Social Theory** | 4 | 30 | winter or summer  | Dr Bartosz Kuźniarz |
| **The Main Issues of Bioethics** | 4 | 30 | winter or summer | Dr prof. Joanna Smakulska, prof. UwB |
| **Feminist Bioethics** | 4 | 30 | winter or summer | Dr Monika Rogowska-Stangret |
| **Posthuman Ethics** | 4 | 30 | winter or summer | Dr Monika Rogowska-Stangret |
| **Introduction to New Materialisms** | 2 | 15 | winter or summer | Dr Monika Rogowska-Stangret |
| **Theories of thinking beyond the anthropocentric paradigm** | 2 | 15 | winter or summer | Dr Monika Rogowska-Stangret |

**Courses’ short descriptions**

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| Course Title | Course Instructor | Short description | Suggested literature (selection) |
| Mental representation | dr Krystyna Bielecka | The problem of the role of mental representation in cognition and its nature is one of the main issues in philosophy of mind and cognitive sciences. In this course, we will discuss classical theories of mental representation, such as the one defended by Jerry Fodor, and modern theories of mental representation, such as teleosemantics, whose foundations are found in the work of Ruth G. Millikan. Some examples from cognitive science, such as spatial navigation of rats in a maze or mental images, will be analyzed in order to better understand the nature of mental representation, its role and applications in contemporary philosophy and cognitive sciences. | M.H. Bickhard, *The interactivist model*, „Synthese” 166(3), 2008, p. 547-591; J.A. Fodor, *A theory of content and other essays*, Cambridge 1992; R.G. Millikan, *Biosemantics*, [w:] *White Queen psychology and other essays for Alice*, Cambridge 1995, p. 83-123. |
| Philosophy of mind | dr Krystyna Bielecka | This course will discuss classical problems of philosophy of mind, such as the nature of mind, the mind/body problem, folk psychology, the relation between human and non-human minds, connections between mind and language, as well as modern issues, such as the extended mind and its role in environment or whether cognition can be distributed and enacted as enactivism or theories of distributed cognition.  |  |
| Cognitive science of science | dr Witold Hensel | Scientific investigation is a cognitive endeavor that involves a wide range of cognitive skills and activities. These skills and activities can be studied at various levels of organization, from several perspectives and using a wide range of methods. The idea of the course is to explore selected problems relevant to understanding science from several perspectives, including those of logic, philosophy, history, sociology, psychology and neuroscience. These problems are, among others: Is science rational? What makes one a good scientist? Why psychology is facing a reproducibility crisis? | There is no textbook for this course.  |
| Epistemology | dr Witold Hensel | The aim of the course is to introduce students to the most important problems, theories and debates in epistemology. These include: conceptions of truth, definitions of knowledge, kinds of justification, the problem of induction, the structure of justification and the limits of knowledge. | Audi, R. (2011). *Epistemology: A Contemporary Introduction to the Theory of Knowledge*. New York: Routledge. BonJour, L. (2009). *Epistemology: Classic Problem and Contemporary Responses*. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers. |
| Philosophy of science | dr Witold Hensel | An introduction to the classic and contemporary problems of general philosophy of science with forays into the philosophy of the special sciences. The main theme of the course is the realism debate in its many guises.  | Ladyman, J. (2002). *Understanding Philosophy of Science*. London: Routledge. Kuipers, T. (ed.) (2007). *Handbook of the Philosophy of Science: General Philosophy of Science – Focal Issues*. Amsterdam: Elsevier. Agazzi, E. (ed.) (2017). *Varieties of Scientific Realism: Objectivity and Truth in Science*. Cham: Springer. Wray, K.B (2018). *Resisting Scientific Realism*. Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press. |
| Problems of Christianity | prof. Zbigniew Kaźmierczak | The lecture is focused on the content of the Christian doctrine, its consistency as well as its relationship to modern science. As far as the Catholic doctrine goes, questions are asked about the historical and psychological role of the primacy of the pope. The roots of the ascetical ideal in the Catholic church are critically examined. The lecture discusses the psychological consequences of some traumatic elements of the Catholic doctrine, namely the celibacy conceived of as the imitation of Christ as well as the redemptive idea of human suffering. Can we talk about an ecclesiological neurosis when we study the social and intellectual impact of the Christian Church? |  |
| Religion and the modern science | prof. Zbigniew Kaźmierczak | The lecture is focused on the Darwinian theory of evolution and its significance for religious thought in various world religions, mainly in Christianity however. The question is posed to what extent does Darwin contradict religious dogmas? Generally, the lecture critically discusses the thesis that science has a necessarily destructive influence on religious thinking. Does science by itself force us to be atheists? Another question is the question of God and the possibilities of proving his existence on the basis of scientific assumptions. The particular philosophies of new atheists are discussed (D. Dennett, R. Dawkins, S. Harris). |  |
| Philosophy of Capitalism | dr Bartosz Kuźniarz | This course is about capitalism: the social system in which we live. We start with prehistory, reflecting on the significance of the cognitive and the agricultural (agrarian, Neolithic) revolutions for modern economic life. How does the life of hunter-gatherers explain our penchant for chocolate and chips, as well as the content of the first chapters of Genesis? Next, we take a look at the origins and specificity of what Karl Marx called the accumulation of capital. Is capitalism a secular extension of Protestantism or Judaism? What exactly is money? What happened to capitalism after the countercultural revolution of the 1960s – Woodstock and the hippies? Why has the internet changed almost everything in the case of capitalism? Can capitalism be replaced? We end with a journey into the future and the posthumanist dimension of capitalism. Why do we need economic growth? It is possible that contrary to popular belief the ultimate beneficiary of economic growth is not the self-interested individual known as the economic man, but some new, superhuman form of being? |  |
| Contemporary Social Theory | dr Bartosz Kuźniarz | What has the net and Google done to us? We have reached the stage in which we have access to all information in all places at all times. All you need is a phone with Internet connection. Paradoxically, it didn’t make us any wiser. We lack adequate theory – for it is precisely good theory that allows us to extract relevant data and see regularities and structures in the seeming information chaos of the surrounding world. During the course, students learn some of the contemporary social theories (Bataille, Habermas, Bourdieu, Luhmann, Lyotard, Jameson, Boltanski, Flusser), acquiring the sensitivity necessary to understand the complex phenomena and processes that make up the fabric of modern society. |  |
| The Main Bioethical Issues | Prof. Joanna Smakulska | The course aims to present the main problems of bioethics which is an interdisciplinary field that borders on biology, medicine, philosophy, sociology and psychology. In a wider perspective, it is a branch of ecological ethics, which in its deliberations covers all forms of life. The lectures will concern issues related to the rights and interests of animals, indicate the differences in approach to nature in shallow and deep ecology. A narrower approach to bioethics is medical ethics, which has practical aims in a situation of increasing divergence between scientific progress and traditional morality. Discussing specific bioethical problems, such as, for example, abortion or transplantation, will illustrate the growing conflict between perceptions of human life in terms of value and quality. | Articles on bioethics in English, e.g.: Gonzalo Villanueva, *Against Animal Liberation? Peter Singer and His Critics*;Bobbie Farsides, *Is there such a thing as a life not worth living?* |
| Feminist Bioethics | dr Monika Rogowska-Stangret | The seminar devoted to grasping the feminist approach to bioethics is designed to develop three main thematic areas. First, we will focus on the specificity of feminist approach to ethics. Second, we will reflect on ways, in which feminist reflection on values enters into dialogue with biology and medicine (feminist science and technology studies). Third, we will analyze specific phenomena such as (trans)gender, race, reproductive rights and reproductive technologies, genetics, epigenetics, so called “environmental diseases”, questions of animals in research and of the environment (including the problem of Anthropocene). | D. Haraway, *Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective*, “Feminist Studies” 14(3), 1988, pp. 575-599;D. Haraway, *When Species Meet*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis 2008; *Gender: Matter*, ed. S. Alaimo, Macmillan Interdisciplinary Handbooks, Farmington Hills, MI: Macmillan Reference USA, 2017; S. Alaimo, *Bodily Natures: Science, Environment, and the Material Self*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington 2010; M. Puig de la Bellacasa, *Matters of Care: Speculative Ethics in More than Human Worlds*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis 2017. |
| Posthuman Ethics | dr Monika Rogowska-Stangret | The course is aimed at looking at different conceptualizations of posthuman ethics. We will analyze and reflect on work by e.g. Stacy Alaimo (transcorporeal ethics for bodies-environments), Karen Barad (quantum approach to ethics), Rosi Braidotti (posthuman ethics of becoming-imperceptible, nomadic ethics, ethics of joy), Claire Colebrook (ethics involved in rethinking the meaning of extinction and life beyond anthropocentrism and the human), Donna Haraway (the concept of response-ability), Michael Marder (plant-inspired ethics), Timothy Morton (ethics based on efforts to rethink relations between human and non-human), Deborah Bird Rose and Thom van Dooren (ethics in times of extinction), Joanna Żylińska (minimal ethics). | S. Alaimo, *Bodily Natures: Science, Environment, and the Material Self*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington 2010; C. Colebrook, *Death of the PostHuman: Essays on Extinction*, Vol. 1, Open Humanities Press, Ann Arbor 2014; C. Colebrook, *Sex After Life: Essays on Extinction*, Vol. 2, Open Humanities Press, Ann Arbor 2014; J. Żylińska, *Minimal Ethics for the Anthropocene*, Open Humanities Press, Ann Arbor 2014; T. Morton, *Dark Ecology: For a Logic of Future Coexistence*, Columbia UP, New York 2018; R. Braidotti, *The Posthuman*. Polity Press, Cambridge 2013; M. Marder, *On the Verge of Respect. Ontological and Phenomenological Investigations into Plant Ethics*, Epoché: A Journal for the History of Philosophy 18(1), 2013: 247-265; M. Marder, *Plant-Thinking: A Philosophy of Vegetal Life*, Columbia UP, New York 2013; *Extinction Studies. Stories of Time, Death, and Generations*, Ed. D. Bird Rose, T. van Dooren, M. Chrulew. Columbia UP, New York 2017. |
| Introduction to New Materialisms | dr Monika Rogowska-Stangret | The seminar is aimed at reflecting on the new materialisms as theoretical trend in contemporary philosophy. In particular, we will struggle to grasp its genealogies (e.g. poststructuralism, feminist science and technology studies, corporeal philosophy), main concepts (e.g. *zoe*, agency, human and non-human, naturecultures, politics), methodologies (e.g. agential realism, quantum methodologies) and possible horizons of future developments.  | D. Coole, S. Frost (eds.), *New materialisms: Ontology, Agency, and Politics*, Duke University Press, Durham, London 2010; R. Dolphijn, I. van der Tuin, *New Materialism: Interviews and Cartographies*, Open Humanities Press, Ann Arbor 2012; I. van der Tuin, Generational Feminism: New Materialist Introduction to a Generative Approach, Lexington Books, London 2015. |
| Theories of thinking beyond the anthropocentric paradigm | dr Monika Rogowska-Stangret | The course is devoted to grasping the meaning and sense of thinking in the context of anthropo-de-centering theories (e.g. new materialisms, posthumanism). The creation of flat ontologies, human-non-human agencies, naturecultures and demands to move beyond the anthropocentric paradigm are all shifting our understanding of thinking: what would thinking be if not purely human activity? How this reformulated concept of thinking might influence philosophy? What could philosophy become? How does thinking beyond the anthropocentric paradigm influence our ethics and politics? We will search answers in works by e.g. M. Puig de la Bellacasa (“thinking with care”), Brian Massumi (*thinking-feeling*), Brian Massumi and Erin Manning (*thought in the act*) or Michael Mardera (*plant-thinking*). | M. Puig de la Bellacasa, *Matters of Care: Speculative Ethics in More than Human Worlds*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis 2017; B. Massumi, *The Thinking-Feeling of What Happens A Semblance of a Conversation*, “Inflexions” 1(1), 2008; B. Massumi and E. Manning, *Thought in the Act: Passages in the Ecology of Experience*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis 2014; M. Marder, *Plant-Thinking: A Philosophy of Vegetal Life*, Columbia UP, New York 2013. |