

UConn | COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES

COMMITTEE ON CURRICULA AND COURSES

Proposal to Add a New Undergraduate Course

Last revised: September xx, 2013

1. Date: 15 April, 2014
2. Department requesting this course: Philosophy
3. Semester and year in which course will be first offered: Fall 2015

Final Catalog Listing

Assemble this after you have completed the components below. This listing should not contain any information that is not listed below!

PHIL 2410. Know Thyself

Three credits. Prerequisite: At least one of PHIL 1101, 1102, 1103, 1104, 1105, 1106, 1107.

Nature, value and limitations of self-knowledge; introspection, unconscious phenomena, self-deception, affective forecasting, interaction of neurophysiological and psychological explanations of behavior. Western as well as non-Western (specifically Buddhist) perspectives on the self. Readings from classical and contemporary sources. Content Area 1.

Items Included in Catalog Listing

Obligatory Items

1. Standard abbreviation for Department, Program or Subject Area: PHIL
2. Course Number: 2xxx
3. Course Title: Know Thyself
4. Number of Credits: 3
5. Course Description (second paragraph of catalog entry): Nature, value and limitations of self-knowledge; topics include introspection, unconscious phenomena, self-deception, affective forecasting, and the interaction of neurophysiological and psychological explanations of behavior. Western as well as non-Western (specifically Buddhist) perspectives on the self will be examined. Readings from classical and contemporary sources.

Optional Items

6. Pattern of instruction, if not standard:
7. Prerequisites, if applicable:
 - a. Consent of Instructor, if applicable: n/a
 - b. Open to sophomores/juniors or higher: yes
8. Recommended Preparation, if applicable:
9. Exclusions, if applicable:
10. Repetition for credit, if applicable:

11. Skill codes "W", "Q" or "C":
12. University General Education Content Area(s), if any: 1
a. If Content Area 1, specify a CLAS area, A-E: D
b. Justification for inclusion in CLAS area, A-E:

Socrates held that the unexamined life is not worth living, and reflection on this dictum has continued for the two-plus millennia since he made this remark. A continuing theme of the course is the examination of the remark's significance and plausibility, and throughout the focus is on assessing arguments for this and related positions as well as examining those positions in light of questions about morality and life's meaning more broadly.

The final 3.5 weeks of the course will focus on Buddhist approaches to the self according to which there is in some sense no self to know. We will interpret classical arguments aiming to disprove the existence of selves and examine their significance. The class will also cultivate meditative practices (both during class (briefly) and outside of class) in order to understand the Buddhist perspective(s) on these issues.

13. S/U grading: permitted.

Justification

1. **Reasons for adding this course:** No course of this kind is currently offered by Philosophy, or any related department such as Psychology or Linguistics.
2. **Academic merit:** In preparing future citizens to occupy positions of responsibility, universities are charged with helping students to cultivate themselves as persons and not just as thinkers. Helping students to better understand themselves, as well as to appreciate the significance and limitations of such self-knowledge, contributes to this enterprise. We also enhance our students as persons by enabling them to engage with thinkers from the last two millennia of Western and non-Western traditions who have addressed issues of self-knowledge. 'Know Thyself' aims to further our university's mission along these lines. In addition, because it is a Philosophy course, the emphasis throughout the semester is on the construction and analysis of arguments in favor of controversial positions. As such, the course aims to sharpen out students' critical acumen.
3. **Overlapping courses:** None that we know of.
4. **Number of students expected:** 30
5. **Number and size of sections:** n/a
6. **Effects on other departments:** Instructor intends to propose this course as a way of satisfying one of the requirements for the Cognitive Science major. If that proposal is approved, the course will be of interest to students in Philosophy, Psychology, Linguistics, and PNB among other majors. Consulted: Psychology and Cognitive Science.
7. **Effects on regional campuses:** n/a
8. **Staffing:** Faculty member
9. **Dates approved by**
Department Curriculum Committee: February, 2014.
Department Faculty: Lionel Shapiro
10. **Name, Phone Number, and e-mail address of principal contact person:**
Mitchel Green; (434) 327-2059; Mitchell.green@uconn.edu

Syllabus

A syllabus for the new course must be attached to your submission email.

Please see attached syllabus from when this course was last offered, at the Univ. of Virginia in spring 2013.