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TM13_DIP_FIL

Teach Mob – Visiting Professors ***Academic year 2016/2017***

2nd Term
COURSE TITLE Metaphysics: <i>Things, Properties, Modalities, and Kinds</i>
Scientific area M-FIL/01
Department of Philosophy and Education Science
Language used to teach: English
Teaching Commitment: 36 hours
Course summary The course will cover the history of metaphysics focusing on three key ideas at present widely discussed: (1) three forms of reduction called undermining, overmining, and duoming. Many philosophers actually reduce things downward to their constituent pieces, upward to their effects, or both simultaneously. Though knowledge seems to require such forms of reduction, it is important to remember that philosophy's birth corresponds to a resistance to knowledge, as in Socrates' unironic claim that he knew nothing and had never been anyone's teacher. (2) The idea of indirect causation, beginning with the "emanations" of neo-Platonic philosophy and taking an even more dramatic form in the occasionalism of early Islam and of 17th century Europe, for which God was seen as the sole causal mediator in the world. Though such theism may now be out of fashion, indirect causation remains central to the philosophies of Hume and Kant, in which God is simply replaced by the human mind as the universal causal mediator. (3) The troubled relation between the discrete and the continuous, a well-known issue today in physics and mathematics, lying at the basis of Western philosophy as well. Aristotle's major works, the <i>Physics</i> and the <i>Metaphysics</i> , are excellent treatises on the continuous and the discrete, respectively. Much later the same will be true of important works by Henri Bergson.
Learning objectives The course aims to teach students how to address foundational questions about the way we think reality and how to relate these questions to other academic disciplines and to describe problems in metaphysics that impact our understanding of the world and our relation to it. Students will become familiar with three key ideas in the history of metaphysics and with key moments of contemporary metaphysics. It will help students to develop their capacity to formulate articulately, analyze lucidly and evaluate cogently the philosophical (metaphysical and ethical) or the anti-philosophical aspects of salient issues in contemporary life and culture (Theories of individuals, theories of property, theories of possibility and necessity, theories of natural kinds).
Tutorship activities
Lab activities
Other activities besides the course: i.e. seminars and conferences addressed to PhD students and research fellows, dissemination conferences 1) Advanced seminar for PhD students, research fellows and colleagues on the content of the course, especially focused on the intersection between classical and contemporary metaphysics.

2) One dissemination conference.

The conference will address new waves in contemporary metaphysics.

Visiting Professor Profile

The ideal profile must have:

- A scientific production in the areas of Metaphysics and Contemporary Philosophy
- An outstanding international profile in the contemporary philosophy.
- Experiences in the supervision of PhD students in philosophy.
- Experiences as Visiting Professor at international Universities.

Contact person at the Department

Tiziana Andina – tiziana.andina@unito.it