

*Course descriptions for courses offered, Gonzaga-in-Florence, Fall 2008*  
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***PHIL 416 Marxism***

The texts for this course are: Robert Tucker, ed., *The Marx-Engels Reader* 2/e (Norton, 1978); Raya Dunayevskaya, *Marxism and Freedom* (Humanity Books, 2000); and Antonio Gramsci, *The Antonio Gramsci Reader: Selected Writing 1916-1935* (NYU Press, 2000). This course will have a dual focus on the thought of Karl Marx and on the thought of Antonio Gramsci in relation to Marxism. The thought of Karl Marx has been notoriously subject to a variety of mutually inconsistent interpretations, many of them insufficiently grounded in Marx's own thought taken as a whole. Rather than relying on secondhand readings (even those of such canonical figures as Engels and Lenin), the primary emphasis of this course will be on reading Marx himself. In contrast to the universe of what became "orthodox Marxism" through the course of the twentieth century—most prominently Marxism-Leninism and dialectical materialism—the Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci undertook a seminal rereading and creative reconstruction of the Marxian intellectual tradition. The key to our course as a whole will be the reading of Marx as a philosopher of human freedom and of the Marxian project as a project of human liberation. Course requirements include (1) mandatory class attendance; (2) brief reading quizzes; and (3) three reflective essays (four to six pages in length) on assigned topics.

***PHIL 301 Ethics***

The text for this course is James Sterba, ed., *Ethics: Classical Western Texts in Feminist and Multicultural Perspectives* (OUP, 2000). Although this anthology is aging, it is unique in offering the best of both worlds in the debate about the canon. Students in this course will be introduced to several of the more prominent moral philosophies of the European philosophical tradition and at the same time consider their value and relevance for an increasingly globalized world in which patriarchy is receding. As learners, we will grapple together with issues of gender, race, and class while we undertake our investigation into the best heritage of European thought. In a broadly historical approach, we will consider in turn the Aristotelian ethics of virtue, the Thomistic natural law, the Humean critique of the classical tradition, Kant's defense of the Moral Law against Hume, nineteenth-century utilitarianism, and John Rawls's reconstruction of classic social-contract theory. At some greater length, we will consider contemporary or neo-Aristotelian representations of virtue ethics, particularly Alasdair MacIntyre and his critics. We will conclude the course by considering non-European approaches to moral philosophy and the universal appeal of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Course requirements include (1) mandatory class attendance; (2) brief reading quizzes; and (3) three reflective essays (four to six pages in length) on assigned topics.